

Guidance notes and background information relating to Sport England's consultation: 'Funding sport in your community – have your say'

Thank you for taking time to read these notes and being prepared to respond to this consultation.

This is a consultation by Sport England to establish how National Lottery funding can support community sport.

It is important because they are asking you how you want them to share out the money. This is your chance to let them know – and the reason we are excited is because as a non-priority sport, gliding (the BGA) and the people who take part in it are rarely consulted.

Sport England has about £45m per annum to spend on what they call 'community sport', i.e. funding the volunteer-run sporting activities that real people take part in. Being Sport England, this is only relevant to the English clubs.

According to the consultation document available from www.sportengland.org/lotteryconsultation or the consultation help line on 0845 850 8508, filling out the on-line questionnaire shouldn't take more than 20 minutes.

However, originating as it does from a Government department, it does contain jargon and some knowledge is assumed. If you are not used to dealing with funding it may take you longer to read the information and fathom out a relevant answer. These notes have been prepared in order to give you some background information, bust some jargon and highlight issues pertinent to gliding. It is probably best to read them alongside the consultation document and fill it in as you go.

Both people I know who have completed the on-line form have lost all comments and had to start again. I checked with the helpline and they do not send you a copy of your submission and there is no way of saving it.

I used the on-line form, then copied all my comments out by hand, onto the printed out pdf (so that I had a record of the BGA's response), then watched in horror as the system wiped my form clean when I tried to submit it...

Therefore, you may prefer to just download the pdf document, fill it in and send it to the address supplied.

How to use these guidance notes

1. Read the section and question(s) on the consultation document
2. Read the corresponding section in these notes
3. Re-read the consultation document
4. Write your comments

Background

Sport England launched their latest strategy on 6th June 2008. It concentrates on sporting activity, and is designed to strengthen 'community' sport, i.e. sports facilities and activities that real people who live in ordinary places use and take part in. They have split the strategy into three areas:

- excel (developing talent)
- sustain (keeping people involved)
- grow (get more people involved)

They want quality facilities and to get more people taking part. They expect to achieve this by encouraging greater partnership working - increasing numbers of community sports clubs

to working in partnership with each other and with the public and private sectors (i.e. local authorities and businesses).

In terms of support to aid progress in English sport, Sport England is looking to strengthen the County Sports Partnerships so that community sports clubs have the support they require. For some sports (the priority sports), Sport England are funding National Governing Bodies (NGBs) directly. Gliding is not on the priority list, so the BGA will not be receiving this direct support.

Overview – structuring the distribution of four proposed funds (Qs 1-5)

Sport England is going to provide another form of financial support, based on funding specific projects - hence this consultation. They are proposing to create 4 different pots of money:

- Themed rounds – for getting and keeping participants – larger projects
- Facilities investment – very large projects for major sports facilities
- Small grants – for small but effective projects
- Innovation funds – for projects that develop and share best practice

They have been designed so that between them, they cover a full spectrum of potential projects with plenty of scope for a wide range of projects. Hooray!

Q3 – Here they are aiming to set the level of financial commitment required from third parties in order for a sports club to access Sport England funding. Clearly the larger projects require match funding and evidence that the funding from third parties is in place. They are also asking whether Sport England Funding should be half or a third of the total project funding.

It would not be appropriate to ask for these commitments for small grants.

Themed Rounds (Qs 6-8)

Proposal: *Capital and/or revenue projects over £10k or £30k or £50k that grow or sustain participation.*

This is where the majority of the available funding will go – they hint that the themes are likely to cover areas that will be important to the development of sport.

Sport England also says they are looking for sustainable investment in facilities that community based sports clubs need to ensure their participants enjoy a high quality experience. (CASC status is a clear demonstration that yours is a community club.)

They want to know what figure to have as a minimum amount. £10k is a better amount as it will allow funding to go further and there will be no overall gaps. £10k-£30k can make a serious difference to a well planned project. The alternative is for clubs to embellish a project so that it qualifies for a higher threshold... unlikely to be a healthy approach.

Plenty of scope for gliding club projects – do you know of any GC projects that have not been with the aim of improving the lot for their membership?!

Facilities Investment (Q9)

Proposal: *a small number of capital only projects.*

At a recent briefing, it was clear that Sport England want people to make the most of what they currently have, rather than replacing buildings for the sake of it. So this funding will be used for good quality projects where it has been proved that there is a real need, and they will be expecting partnership working with the public and private sectors to create multi-sports facilities. Of the four, it is unlikely (but not wholly impossible) that anyone can create a gliding related project that would qualify for the 'facilities investment' pot.

Small Grants (Q10)

Proposal: *Revenue and small capital expenditure £300 - £10k projects*

Probably the area of most use to gliding clubs, it is likely to be akin to the successful and popular 'Awards for All' lottery pot. Sport England is looking to fund new equipment, coaching (what Sport England term 'coaching' is what we know as 'instructing'), leadership, and school-club links etc. The only down side is that perhaps £10m pa won't go far enough...

Innovation Fund (Q11)

Proposal: *Capital and/or revenue funds £10k-£500k that share innovations in growing participation and sustaining lifelong involvement with sport.*

Sounds good and there are aspects of gliding where we lead the way in people of all ages enjoying sport together from cradle to (very) OAP... We shall have to wait and read the criteria to find out whether gliding projects really will suit Sport England's plans.

I find it hard to understand why the upper level needs to be so high. Sport England seems to be looking at community development with this one. My previous experience in community development (specifically distributing funding to and supporting projects in deprived inner city areas) has shown that it is perfectly possible to create a quality pilot project with documentation to allow for replication elsewhere with £100k or £150k. That way, the money gets to go further too...

Application and Awards Process (Qs 12-15)

The proposed 3 months is not long – with some funders, 6 (or even 9) months is the norm.

The time taken to receive a reply regarding the success of your application is only a really serious issue if you haven't planned effectively. Being able to access advice is invaluable and if the trade off for having access to such advice is waiting longer for an answer, then it is well worth it.

Q.13

The BGA, gliding's NGB has an excellent knowledge of clubs. Other sports' NGBs are also likely to understand their respective clubs, and/or have Regional Officers who do.

Sport England has an increasingly effective network of County Sports Partnerships which in turn have good local knowledge through Community Sports Networks – but they can only ever know about the sports clubs they already know about, so as ever, it's up to individual sports clubs to make contact. This network would make a good natural knowledge and information resource for Sport England.

All National Lottery funds make use of demographic information (statistics stored on computers) to inform them the populations living in specific areas. Unfortunately, results in rural areas can often be masked – especially in areas with high numbers of retirees where average household income figures can easily be slewed upwards. This is why real, 'living' local information supplied by a trusted Officer who knows the club and area is so important.

Q.15 Monitoring and evaluating a project can become a full-time occupation in itself; taking valuable time and money, and diluting the overall effectiveness of the lottery funding. It can be a reason as a club why you would not accept funding from some funders. Yet if a sizeable amount of money is being granted to a club, the funder has to be able to account for it to show that the money has been used effectively. So balance between checking it hasn't been misused and letting people get on with it the real matter in hand is required. Annual reporting should suffice, with a one-off report at the end of the grant for small amounts.

Features of the Community Investment Fund (Qs 16-17)

This section offers you a chance to influence features for the future – ask yourself what features are important to your gliding club, or would make a difference to you, if you were completing an application on behalf of your club.

Other issues (Q18)

Remember that the NGBs for Sport England's priority sports will already be getting mainstream funding from Sport England. No doubt their sports clubs will also be putting in for this funding too. Is it worth requesting that non-priority sports get a fair go? One potential solution is the ring-fencing of funding based on different categories of sport.

Questions about your organisation (Q19)

Type of organisation community or voluntary

Your role if you are an instructor – say 'volunteer coach' (because you are one and this is the terminology they will identify with)

Membership of NGB the BGA doesn't currently have numbers, so either write the club's name or just say 'yes'

Jargon Buster

a more detailed jargon buster is available from <http://www.cafonline.org/pdf/jargonbuster-issue1.pdf>

<i>Capital</i>	Money spent on tangible items – equipment , buildings
<i>Revenue</i>	Money spent in intangible items – salaries, training
<i>Partnership</i>	Two or more organisations working together in a formal manner for a common aim. Formal because there is a written 'Partnership Agreement' in place
<i>Community Sports Network</i>	Network of sports clubs in a district, normally co-ordinated by District Council Sports Officer
<i>County Sports Partnership</i>	Sport England funded organisations (1 per County) exists to support local sport
<i>CASC</i>	Community Amateur Sports Club – does what it says on the tin. The value as a community sports facility is rewarded with certain tax and rate reliefs