

Sport and recreation sector commit to tackling inequality

The appalling death of George Floyd, the global protests that have followed and the powerful message of the Black Lives Matter movement has made every section of society take notice and confront an ugly truth.

Sport and recreation has an influential role to bring about meaningful change and this period has rightly led the sector to reflect, listen, question, learn and openly discuss how to take positive action.

It is acknowledged that up to this point, we have not done enough.

It is time to confront racism and inequality that exists across sport, from grassroots participation through to the boardroom.

Research by the Sport and Recreation Alliance (2018) showed that four in ten (40%) of BAME participants have endured a negative experience in sport or physical activity settings, more than double that of white participants.

A 2020 Sport England report demonstrates that just over 50% of black people in England meet the recommended levels of physical activity each week.

The Diversity in Sport Governance report (2018/19) identified there is only 5% BAME board representation across Sport England and UK Sport funded organisations.

Constructive work has already been started to address a number of these problems including a committed effort to increase boardroom diversity, additional funding to tackle inequality and an array of inspiring inclusiveness projects from across the sport and recreation sector. This can only be seen as the start.

Systemic change must be made at all levels so that we can become truly reflective of our wonderfully diverse society. We can no longer rely on black role models at the elite level speaking out, we must join together to become better and to support every member of the sport and recreation community.

We must become more inclusive. We must create opportunities which are truly accessible. We must do more.

To help us achieve this, there has to be a commitment for a significant increase in resources and funding, as has been dedicated to address other areas of inequality. We have welcomed the recent news of the Sports Minister's decision to review the Sports Governance Code.

There is no easy solution and change will require a consolidated approach both from within and outside of our sector. It is time to face awkward questions, to become involved in uncomfortable conversations and to hold ourselves to account.

List of Signatories

Angling Trust
Archery GB
Associated Board of Dance
Association for Physical Education
Association of British Riding Schools
Association of Colleges
Badminton England
Basketball England
Boccia England
Bowls England
British American Football
British Association for Shooting and Conservation
British Blind Sport
British Canoeing
British Cycling
British Dodgeball
British Dressage
British Fencing
British Gymnastics
British Kite Flying Association
British Martial Arts and Boxing Association
British Mountaineering Council
British Nordic Walking
British Orienteering
British Para Table Tennis
British Rowing
British Shooting
British Showjumping
British Student Taekwondo Federation
British Triathlon
British Universities & Colleges Sport
British Water Ski & Wakeboard
British Weight Lifting
British Wrestling
EMD UK
England and Wales Cricket Board
England Boxing
England Golf
England Hockey
England Korfball
England Lacrosse
England Netball
England Squash
English Ice Hockey Association
English Indoor Bowling Association
English Karate Federation
Federation of English Karate Associations
Goalball UK
Golf Club Managers Association
Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby
Karate Union of Great Britain
Lawn Tennis Association
League Managers Association
Leap
Leicester-Shire and Rutland Sport
LimbPower
North Yorkshire Sport
Northern Counties Dance Teachers Association
Para Dance UK
Pentathlon GB
Rounders England
Rugby Football League
Rugby Football Union
Skateboard England & Skateboard GB
Snowsport England
Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent
Sport and Recreation Alliance
Swim England
Table Tennis England
The British Sub-Aqua Club
The Eton Fives Association
The Golf Foundation
The Keep Fit Association
The Laban Guild for Movement and Dance
The National Association of Karate and Martial Arts Schools
The Professional Golfers' Association
Trail Riders Fellowship
Triathlon England
UK Athletics
UK Ultimate
UKA Dance
Yorkshire Sport Foundation
Youth Sport Trust

*Many organisations in the sector have released, or plan to release, individual statements. The signatories above have confirmed their support to this statement released by the Sport and Recreation Alliance.