

CMS 81654/DC

Michael White
Hon Secretary
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department for
culture, media
and sport

12 December 2007

Dear Michael

Thank you for your letter of 18 October enclosing a petition from the Association of GB Athletics Clubs.

I note the concerns raised in your petition of fears that Sport England are prioritising funding for mass participation over the development of grass roots coaching and club development and the performance of England Athletics.

Government set a clear priority for this spending review 2005-2008 to increase adult (16+) participation in grass roots sport. Government also recognises that developing the capacity of grass roots sports through investing in clubs, coaches and volunteers is key to supporting this aim and the health of grass roots sport.

Looking forward, our aim is to create a world class sporting nation for 2012 and beyond. As the Secretary of State recently announced, Sport England's new focus will support this aim by delivering an excellent sporting infrastructure from the grass roots up.

We have made coaching a priority through the UK Coaching Framework, already having committed over £60 million between 2004 and 2008 on measures to improve coaching. The framework will ensure skilled coaches support children, players and athletes at all stages in their development – creating a coaching system which is number one in the world by 2016.


GERRY SUTCLIFFE