

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, WEDNESDAY 13 APRIL 2022**

**Birmingham 2022: Sport England invests further £600k to help more West Midlands communities get active**

As the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games approaches, Sport England has today announced that a further £600,000 of new funding has been made available for West Midlands community sport and physical activity projects.

Forming part of Sport England’s wider investment of over £30 million into the Games, the £600k fund, made up of National Lottery money, will be distributed to organisations across six Active Partnerships (AP) in the West Midlands. Active Partnerships work in the local areas to support individuals – particularly those who are inactive or from underrepresented groups – to find ways to be active.

The six West Midlands partnerships cover Birmingham, the Black Country, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Herefordshire & Worcestershire. Funding will support sport and physical activity in local communities in different ways - including tackling inequalities by supporting diversity and inclusion and connecting to the cultural vibrancy of the commonwealth.

Eligible community organisations can apply for between £100 and £2500 for their project or event. Applicants will be required to demonstrate how their project or event will support those who need it most or are from underrepresented groups, whilst aligning with the Commonwealth Games missions. These include:

* **Bringing people together**: celebrating sport and physical activity, connecting to the cultural vibrancy of the Commonwealth, and supporting cultural diversity and inclusion.
* **Improving health & wellbeing**: focus on participation in physical activity, including targeting those who are inactive, and supporting access to kit and equipment.
* **Helping the region to grow and succeed**: focus on supporting volunteers and workforce development.

**Phil Smith, Partnerships Director of Sport England, said:**

“We want to use Birmingham 2022 as a catalyst to help more people in the Midlands be active. We are investing around £30 million in doing that, and today’s new funds are for local groups to use to make sport and physical activity more accessible to more people. We are delivering the funding through our local Active Partnerships, to leave a legacy of more active and more connected communities after the Games.”

**Applications are now open in all Active Partnership areas, and applicants are encouraged to check with their local partnership on the closing date.** Each Active Partnership area has local priority audiences which they are looking to support, with details available through their website.

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editors**

For further information and interview opportunities please contact: media.team@sportengland.org

The six Active Partnerships are:

Sport Birmingham

Active Black Country

Together Active (Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent)

Think Active (Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire)

Energize Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin

Active Herefordshire & Worcestershire

**About Sport England**

Sport England is a public body and invests up to £300 million National Lottery and government money each year in projects and programmes that help people get active and play sport. It wants everyone in England, regardless of age, background, or level of ability, to feel able to engage in sport and physical activity. That’s why a lot of its work is specifically focused on helping people who do no, or very little, physical activity and groups who are typically less active - like women, disabled people and people on lower incomes.

**About the National Lottery**

* National Lottery players raise more than £30 million every week for good causes.
* Since The National Lottery’s first draw took place on 19 November 1994, more than £43 billion has been raised for good causes in the areas of arts, sport, heritage and community across the UK.
* Since 1994, The National Lottery has awarded more than 635,000 individual grants across the UK.
* The majority (70 per cent) of National Lottery grants are for £10,000 or less, helping small projects make a big difference in their community!
* For more information, please visit <https://www.lotterygoodcauses.org.uk>

**About The National Lottery's investment into the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games**

* The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games is a massive moment for the nation this year - an exciting chance to bring people together through sport and community activity.
* The National Lottery and Sport England are working together to maximise the impact of the Games, supporting the development of facilities for the event and leaving a lasting legacy that connects communities and encourages more people from all backgrounds to get active.
* As well as inspiring people and communities to get active, we want to work to keep them active. That is why The National Lottery is investing £3m into a Commonwealth Active Communities programme in the Black Country, Coventry, Birmingham and Solihull. This investment will put communities at the heart of local action, supporting people to move more on a daily basis where they live.
* The National Lottery is also investing £5.2m into the preparation of Team England in B2022 alongside supporting the next generation of talent to help Team GB and ParalympicsGB, with a particular focus on talent from backgrounds that are historically under-represented, so that the sport sector and our national teams better reflect British society.
* A further £4m funding has been allocated to the School Games, supporting more children and young people getting active. This will engage and encourage more children to get involved in the School Games, offering a wider range of physical activity by providing extra resources for schools, as well as supporting the national finals to take place in 2022
* Another £6.5m to support games programme National Governing Bodies to amplify participation opportunities with a focus on under-represented groups and tackling inequalities, and maximise digital opportunity within the sport sector to better connect clubs, programmes and leisure services to their local communities.
* Birmingham 2022 Festival is a six-month-long celebration that will spotlight creativity and culture in the West Midlands, showcasing to the world the rich and important stories and heritage that give this region its unique character. The festival has received a total of £6m from The National Lottery, with £3m from The National Lottery Heritage Fund and £3m from Arts Council England. This support, approximately half of the programme’s total funding requirement, will help to deliver over 300 brand-new creative works, invest in artists and create thousands of opportunities for local communities to participate. Through this work to bring together sports, heritage, and culture, Birmingham 2022 Festival aims to increase tourism and inward investment into the area.
* Outdoor and community screenings will tell the story of regional film, TV and talent from the Midlands, support will also be directed to the Indian Film Festival taking place in Birmingham over the summer of 2022.
* Young people across the West Midlands will be supported to access employment and volunteering opportunities, who otherwise might struggle to access these roles.
* The wide range of the National Lottery’s open grants programmes will provide opportunity for organisations and artists to put forward their own ideas for how they want to celebrate and build a legacy from the Games to maximise opportunities for community participation, training and volunteering, and cultural engagement.