

# Sport Northern Ireland

Annual Review 2008-09



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I am delighted to introduce the 2008-09 Sport Northern Ireland Annual Review. What a journey the past 12 months have been. I am extremely proud to be able to present the work of this organisation to you and reflect, not just on the success of 2008-09 but, on the upcoming challenges and opportunities we face in 2009-10.

This annual review is testament, not only to the progress achieved by Sport Northern Ireland staff but, to the strength of the partnerships which have been built over the years. The successes highlighted in this document tell the story of what these partnerships are achieving.

As you know Sport Northern Ireland is dedicated to developing people in sport, especially young people, and providing facilities for people of every age group and ability to be able to participate, enjoy and perform sport and physical activity. We want everyone to benefit from the enjoyment and individual sense of achievement that participating in sport brings, and from the excitement and pride generated by strong performances.

Sport is often justified by its contribution to other areas of Northern Ireland life, such as health, social and economic development, education, and community development. While these benefits are extremely valued, they are not the reason that we get passionate about sport. At Sport Northern Ireland we believe in the enjoyment and sense of achievement that sporting participation can bring to anyone, regardless of age, income, background or level of ability.

Sport Northern Ireland's role in helping to secure the staging of local, national and international events in the UK has never been more evident than in 2008-09 with events such as the Between the Bridges Charity Run, the ICC World Twenty20 Qualifier, the British and World Blind Golf Championships, and the World One Armed Golf Championships being held in Northern Ireland. Sporting events provide an excellent platform to inspire young people to participate in sport, for talented athletes to raise their game, and instill a feeling of possibility among individuals, teams and society. On a smaller scale, community events can excite and encourage people to adopt community spirit, giving people a focus.

I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to my colleagues on the Board who have given their time and considerable expertise so readily on behalf of sport in Northern Ireland. I also wish to thank the Chief Executive Eamonn McCartan, and staff at Sport Northern Ireland, whose commitment, dedication and considerable ability led to the achievement of our goals in 2008-09.

Finally, I would like to thank all involved in the ongoing delivery of sport in Northern Ireland – the volunteers, coaches, officials, administrators, athletes and participants – for their continued enthusiasm and dedication. Collectively we will continue to promote sport, encourage everyone to get involved and ensure that sport remains an integral part of life in Northern Ireland.





Sport Northern Ireland has been working in partnership with the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) to develop a new ten-year Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation in Northern Ireland – ‘Sport Matters’. I am motivated by this Strategy; it is an ambitious document which sets out the case for ongoing and increased investment in sport and physical recreation to deliver a range of sporting, education and health outcomes over the period 2009-2019.

Its vision of “a culture of lifelong enjoyment and success in sport” itself encapsulates what we are aiming to achieve; ensuring people have access to locally available sporting facilities, encouraging high quality participation in sport from childhood right through to adulthood, and enabling talented athletes to compete and win at the highest levels in their sports.

There are three key elements to this Strategy...

#### Firstly **Participation**

One of the fundamental principles of Sport Northern Ireland is to increase participation in sport. And an important accelerant of participation will be the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Therefore the “participation legacy” from the 2012 Games is of crucial importance. We must utilise the enthusiasm for sport that will grow in the build up to 2012, and convert it into long-term participation by both young people and adults beyond 2012.

The second key element of the Strategy is **Performance Sport**. Northern Ireland has sporting talent that is equal to anywhere else in the world. Furthermore the people of Northern Ireland value success at international level and this is clearly evident in the pride we have in Jason Smyth, Michael McKillop,

Paddy Barnes and Wendy Hovenaghel – our Olympic and Paralympics heroes. Watching the performance of our athletes in Beijing earlier this year was evidence of the true value of sport. For those of us with a day-to-day involvement in sport, occasions such as this drive home the truly unique importance and significance of sport.

However if we are to continue to succeed we need to put in place the right sporting systems. In short we must create an environment where our athletes can succeed. It is here that the Sports Institute Northern Ireland (SINI) will come into play, delivering, in partnership with Sport Northern Ireland, specific development programmes for athletes and coaches, building skills and cutting edge practice to enable the athletes and coaches to become world-class.

With the conclusion of Beijing, the spotlight has now moved on to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The bar continues to be raised, both in terms of the physical staging of the Games and the performance of the Northern Ireland athletes. London 2012 promises to be an incredible inspiration, not only to athletes, but to the coaches, officials and volunteers from Northern Ireland who will be involved when London hosts the greatest show on earth.

The third and final key element of the Strategy is **Places** - undoubtedly fit for purpose facilities are integral for participants at all levels. Quality, accessible facilities are essential in encouraging people of all ages and abilities to take part in regular physical activity and sport. Sport Northern Ireland is committed to improving and creating new facilities which will help support increased participation and to develop sporting talent.

My thanks go to all those organisations and individuals who have worked with Sport Northern Ireland to further the development of sport in Northern Ireland. On behalf of Sport Northern Ireland I look forward to your continued co-operation and support.







# Participation and Facilities

There are many benefits to be accrued from participating in sport and physical recreation, particularly health. Sport contributes to tackling health issues such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and mental health issues. It also enables both physical and psychological development while providing a vehicle for enjoyment and fun, but also ensuring people have access to locally available sporting facilities.

Sport Northern Ireland's Participation and Facilities Unit support sporting opportunities to increase participation levels in sport and physical recreation among people – of all ages and abilities, and to promote lifelong physical activity. This relies on a range of developments and interventions; places for sport, coaches, governing bodies, volunteers, events, quality programmes based on best practice, and marketing and promotion. Sport Northern Ireland is working on many fronts to deliver improvements across all these areas in Northern Ireland.

## Sport in Our Community

Sport in Our Community is a four year programme, investing £3.6m from the Sports Lottery Fund into 34 innovative and creative projects which aim to meet at least one of the three cross-cutting programme themes:

1. Development and improvement of physical literacy;
2. Development of opportunities for people with disabilities; and/or
3. Creation of sport or physical activity in areas of high social need for those who have not previously had a sustained interest in sport or physical activity.

A total of 386,914 participants were recorded in End of Year Reports submitted by the projects to 31 March 2009, representing an increase of 52% on figures reported at the end of the Year 2. Key highlights included: an increase of 15,352 women and girl participants representing 42% of the total participants; an increase of 26,588 young participants representing 37% on figures reported in Year 2, and an increase of 2,132 older participants representing 123% on figures reported in Year 2.

During Year 3 participation by disabled people increased by 49% to 1,897 individuals. Projects reported developing partnerships with a range of community and sporting organisations, and in particular with Disability Sports Northern Ireland (DSNI) to develop further the opportunities for people with a disability.

An increase of 590 participants from minority ethnic communities was reported, representing 90% on figures reported in Year 2. In addition specific programmes were delivered to target minority ethnic communities.

The number of individual health referrals to projects increased by 30% to 366 during the reporting year. A number of projects reported programmes targeting public health, specifically obesity, with the aim of educating families of the benefits of physical activity and healthy lifestyles.

Three Physical Literacy Co-ordinators (based within the NEELB, SEELB and SELB) supported teachers through increasing their confidence and ability to deliver physical education to 6,405 young people in primary schools.





## Community Sport Programme

This three year investment of £2.4m in 20 organisations was completed in June 2008. A programme Impact Review was published in December 2008 which highlighted the success of the programme in increasing participation in sport and physical recreation and specifically among under-represented groups. A total of 15,166 individuals participated during the final year – an increase of 26% on Year 1. Overall, female participation rose from 35% to 44% of total participants during the three years. Projects reported an increase of 24% in the number of participants from ethnic minority communities – including the Chinese, Indian and Irish Traveller community.

## Implementing Disability Mainstreaming Policy

Sport Northern Ireland invested over £150K in DSNI to support the implementation of its policy. Over 1200 people participated in sport and physical activity events organised by DSNI, with 97% of these being disabled participants.

Disability Awareness Training was delivered to Sport Northern Ireland and SINI staff; 'Including People with Disabilities in your Club' was delivered for Swim Ulster (12 participants), Athletics NI (21 participants), and Basketball NI (10 participants).

Three exploratory meetings were held with representatives of the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) during the year to discuss a joint approach to improving the sports opportunities available to blind and partially sighted people. As a result an agreement has been reached that DSNI and



RNIB will work jointly on the development of a 'Blind and Partially Sighted' specific programme in the early part of the new financial year. It is anticipated that this process will begin with the joint establishment of a blind sports steering/ advisory group, whose remit will be to identify and agree a three-four year action plan for blind sport in Northern Ireland. RNIB has agreed that DSNI should lead on this issue and that the agreed approach be incorporated into DSNI's new Development Plan.

In addition, following discussions, the Ulster Deaf Sports Council have now prepared a draft Development Plan, which will form the basis of a future funding application concerned with the employment of a Sports Development Officer.

Seven community events involving 822 participants were successfully organised during the year. A 'Come and Try It' day for people with disabilities was organised at the Ozone Complex, Belfast, in partnership with Belfast Community Sports Development Network and RNIB. Attendees were given the opportunity to try out different sports including Badminton, Boccia, Football, Goalball, Hand Cycling, New Age Kurling, Tandem Cycling, Wheelchair Basketball and Wheelchair Tennis; 62 people attended throughout the day.





## Inclusive Community Coaches Programme

Fifteen recruits from the sporting community across Northern Ireland have completed training as Inclusive Community Coaches. The training project established by DSNI, supported by Sport Northern Ireland and funded by Big Lottery, was set up to increase the number of organised participation opportunities available to people with disabilities in local communities throughout Northern Ireland. As a result of this innovative project, the sporting needs of people with a disability will be better addressed by ensuring that participation opportunities are provided in an inclusive environment – a sporting environment that focuses on enabling the participant rather than one which focuses on the individual's 'disability'.

The applicants covered 'Inclusive Games Training', 'Games for All Leadership', 'Disability Awareness', 'Coaching Sport Safely', 'Sports Injuries First Aid', and 'Child Protection'. The Inclusive Community Coaches now have the skills and

knowledge required to run a range of inclusive sports, games and multi-skills sessions for children and adults with disabilities. During 2008-09 the coaches delivered 197 hours of coaching in various activities including Adapted Table Top Games, Boccia, Goalball, New Age Kurling, and Zone Hockey.

## Physical Literacy Research Project

A number of essential phases at the early stages of a child's experience of physical activity provide the foundation of the Lifelong Involvement in Sport and Physical Activity (LISPA) model. These three phases - Active Start, Fundamentals, and Learning to Play and Practice - collectively provide opportunities for the development of physical literacy. A range of Sport Northern Ireland investment initiatives have therefore prioritised projects aimed at promoting the development of physical literacy.

The impact and effectiveness of these projects should be measurable so that Sport Northern Ireland has empirical evidence to demonstrate the value of public investment in this area of work in order to justify and attract further interest and investment in physical literacy. An authoritative and effective assessment method for physical literacy would permit the efficacy of such programmes to be measured and assist in Sport Northern Ireland fulfilling its advocacy role.

A Research Partnership Team consisting of the University of Ulster, Jordanstown and Stranmillis University College, Belfast, was therefore commissioned to review the impact of the effectiveness of structured physical literacy programmes and to develop an appropriate assessment tool of physical literacy. The research findings and recommendations will be used by

Sport Northern Ireland to inform future policy within the area of physical literacy. Sport Northern Ireland also intends to make the research findings available to relevant agencies in Northern Ireland and beyond. It is anticipated that a range of key partners within the education system and coaching networks will be involved in the dissemination process.





## Active Communities

Launched in October 2008, Active Communities is an investment programme that seeks to employ, deploy and train a network of full-time and part-time sports coaches and leaders to deliver activities throughout Northern Ireland, with a view of increasing participation in sport and physical recreation, especially among under-represented groups.

Over the next five years and with an estimated investment of £14.7 million, Active Communities will provide investment into 11 consortia of district councils based on Model 11b of the Review of Public Administration Consultation (March 2005). Working in partnership with the consortia, Sport Northern Ireland is currently playing an active role in the creation of implementation plans within each of the 11 consortium areas, and is supporting the development of

effective partnerships between district councils and the other key stakeholders involved in supporting the development of sport in Northern Ireland.

Active Communities will support the creation of 100 full-time equivalent posts that will provide opportunities for 100,000 people to participate in sport and physical recreation.

## Awards for All

During 2008-09, Sport Northern Ireland invested a total of £478,531 in 71 successful projects through Awards for All. Each of these projects have supported increased participation and/or improved performances in sport in Northern Ireland.

At both UK and Northern Ireland levels, the Awards for All Programme has also undergone a series of changes throughout the year. Building on the learning from the programme, the four lottery distributors involved in Awards for All in Northern Ireland will launch their own tailored small grant programmes in 2009.

Accordingly, Sport Northern Ireland will launch a new small grants programme that will support organisations and projects that can contribute towards the targets identified in the ten-year Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation in Northern Ireland - 'Sport Matters'.







## Countryside Recreation

Sport Northern Ireland's investment in Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN) and the governing bodies for outdoor adventure sports has resulted in some remarkable successes in 2008-09...

Along with creating facilities and opportunities for outdoor recreation, CAAN is also tasked with carrying out research on behalf of their sponsoring departments. A significant piece of research this year was investigating the trends in outdoor recreation from 1995–2008. This covered 23 separate outdoor recreation sports and was directly comparable to a similar piece of work carried out in 1995.

In the ensuing 13 years the number of venues used by nearly all sports for outdoor recreation has increased by 340% and the participation level for these sports has increased by 152%. The research also highlighted that participation by under-represented groups including women, those with disabilities and those from ethnic minority groups was low.

Northern Ireland Orienteering was highlighted within the report as one of the governing bodies that has been working to create opportunities for disabled people through "Trail O" – which is a fully accessible orienteering course. Northern Ireland Orienteering has also had extensive links with schools as orienteering is a unique sport in that it links closely with the maths and geography curriculum areas. Over 960 children took part in schools' orienteering competitions during the year.







Mountaineering Ireland has also had an extremely successful year with two new clubs established in Fermanagh and Millisle – based at climbing walls. A new schools programme based at the Ozone climbing wall has given 40 young people regular climbing opportunities and provided a direct link to the club at the Ozone. Mountaineering Ireland has also run a talent identification programme with input and support from Sport Northern Ireland, and have set up a new development structure for their junior squad as a result of this programme.

Although much of the Canoe Association's emphasis is on increasing participation in the sport, in which it works closely with CAAN, they have had tremendous success throughout the year on the performance side. The surf squad continued its successes with excellent results at the British Open which was hosted at Portrush, and the squad is looking forward to the 2009 World Championships – where the juniors hope to retain their titles as 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the World!



# Tollymore Mountain Centre

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Tollymore Mountain Centre (TMC), Sport Northern Ireland's National Outdoor Training Centre, has continued to provide a wide range of introductory, skills and leadership training and assessment courses in mountaineering and canoesport; as well as a wide range of multi-activity and team development programmes for organisations.

In 2008-09, TMC provided 4986 student days on a range of courses, including 646 on leadership courses and 1243 on skills courses. TMC continues to influence and be involved in the development of a range of governing body qualifications in mountaineering and canoesport, and plays a key role in the development and introduction of UK Coaching Certificate canoesport qualifications and a Climbing Wall Award scheme.

With a significant budget of £5 million TMC's exciting redevelopment of the centre is progressing; in 2008, Glasgiven Contracts were appointed as the construction team and work on the redevelopment of the centre commenced in February 2009.

The anticipated new centre, which is due to open in 2010, will be a 'state of the art' national facility, with the ability to provide an extensive range of courses to a wider range of groups and individuals from throughout Northern Ireland.

To view the range of courses available and keep up-to-date with the new build log onto **[www.tollymore.com](http://www.tollymore.com)**





'Building Sport', a capital programme from Sport Northern Ireland's Lottery Fund, aims to provide partnership funding for major capital projects that will increase access to opportunities for sporting development and participation for as many people as possible; particularly in disadvantaged communities to enable older people, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and other underrepresented groups to participate in sporting activities.

Each unique project addresses essential sporting criteria:

- Increasing participation in sport;
- Being sustainable;
- Addressing the factors of social need;
- Tackling social exclusion;
- Promoting equality of opportunity and good community relations;
- Promoting sporting excellence;
- Addressing health inequalities; and
- Providing the structures for long-term athlete development.

This investment by Sport Northern Ireland's Lottery Fund is a major contribution in tackling social injustice and inequalities. The programme demonstrates the ability of sport to heal divided communities, improve health and well-being, and lift those most disadvantaged out of the poverty of aspiration.

The following case study illustrates the benefits resulting from this type of Sport Northern Ireland investment.



## Moyola Park Association Football Club

Moyola Park Association Football Club was awarded a grant of £1.55m by Sport Northern Ireland towards the development of a new playing pitch and associated facilities at Mill Meadow, Bridge Street, Castledawson.

In deciding to embark on this ambitious project Moyola Park AFC had the twofold aim of providing an appropriate setting for the growing number of young people wishing to

become involved with the club through mini soccer, youth football and ladies' football and a facility which would enable the male adult senior team to play at the highest level of intermediate football.

As well as a full size FIFA 2\* 3rd generation artificial turf playing pitch the development will include dugouts, pitch and ground perimeter fencing, car parking, a 200 seat covered accommodation stand and a pavilion with four team changing rooms, two officials' changing areas, an indoor multi sport area, a committee room and toilet facilities for spectators.

The Sport Northern Ireland Places for Sport Programme is designed to assist with the delivery of the new ten-year Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation in Northern Ireland – 'Sport Matters', to provide a vision of 'a culture of lifelong enjoyment and success in sport'. To achieve this vision, the Strategy recognises the need to develop a range of new, improved and shared sports facilities to a standard comparable with other regions in the UK.

The programme specifically focuses on five areas:

1. Pitches and other outdoor sports surfaces e.g. athletic tracks, tennis courts, etc;
2. Indoor specialised sports surfaces;
3. Floodlighting for training pitches and main pitches (only available for strategically important venues);

4. Buildings - construction of a new two or four changing room pavilion/extensions to existing changing pavilions where there is a demonstrated need for additional provision; and
5. Purchase of equipment - equipment must be based permanently in one location and must be new and not replacement or maintenance equipment.

The following case study illustrates the benefits resulting from this type of Sport Northern Ireland investment.

## Coleraine Riding for the Disabled

A purpose built facility, the Coleraine Equestrian Arena at Castleroe, has been many years in the planning and, at last, the first step of the building programme has been taken.

Sport Northern Ireland are providing £1.2 million, plus funding for a Sports Development Officer for development of Disability Sports in the area. It is strongly believed the project will develop into a 'Centre of Excellence' which will facilitate the development of sporting opportunities for people with disabilities through the whole North Coast area.

The new complex will house an equestrian arena, clubroom, offices, stables, storage and function rooms, and the site will be further developed to include extra stables and barns, a riding/driving track through the 'forest', and the development of a 'wildlife and wetlands' sanctuary on the site.





The Stadia Safety Programme aims to assist the 'owners' of major soccer, rugby and GAA grounds, on a strategic basis, to ensure the safety and comfort of spectators attending fixtures played at their venues.

The strategic objectives of the programme are to:

- Improve health and safety compliance with existing and proposed legislation;
- Increase spectator numbers and to increase the number of under-represented groups attending matches;
- Improve the comfort of spectator accommodation within venues; and
- Improve co-operation between owners of venues and both the Police and Statutory agencies.

During 2008-09 Sport Northern Ireland worked with a number of applicants at various stages in the programme.

During the year three main projects were completed:



## Armagh GAA

This project significantly improved the current safety arrangements at the venue with the safe capacity of the venue now 15,600 (1,800 seated and 13,800 standing). This work included upgrading the west, north and south terraces and building part of the east stand.

Following completion, Armagh GAA County Board is now able to hold their games at the Athletic Grounds for the first time since 2002.

A further programme of works has been identified which will further increase the capacity of the venue to approximately 18,200.



## Portadown FC

This project significantly improved the current safety arrangements at the venue with the safe capacity of the venue now 3,940 (2,740 seated and 1,200 standing).

The project involved the construction of a new stand, with the following facilities:

- Seating for 1,800;
- Crowd Control Room;
- A designated family enclosure;

- 3 viewing platforms for 20 disabled persons, with access;
- 2 sets of male, female and disabled toilets;
- Steward's Room;
- First Aid Room; and
- Two automated turnstiles.

Future development, which the club anticipate happening in the next 5-10 years, will see the replacement of the main grandstand with a 2,300 seated stand which will result in the venue achieving the aims of the IFA Facilities Strategy (5,000 seated capacity).

## Cliftonville FC

Sport Northern Ireland funded work significantly improved the safety arrangements at the venue and increased the overall safe capacity of the venue to 2,530 (all seated) which is an increase of 1,234.

The project included the construction of a new stand, with the following facilities:

- Seating for 1,650;
- Toilets (male, female and disabled);
- Access ramp and viewing platform for 20 disabled persons;
- A designated family bay;
- Stewards Room;
- First Aid Room; and
- Exit gate.

The project also provided:

- A toilet block at the visitors stand;
- A Crowd Control Room, with CCTV and PA system;
- Four automated turnstiles at the visitors entrance; and
- Clear and concise signage.

Future development for the venue include the provision of changing facilities and the demolition of the grandstand, a covered touch line stand with 650 seats will replace the grandstand. The capacity of the venue will be 3,000 which in turn will meet (Union of European Football Associations) UEFA requirements. Subject to planning, the club envisages completion within five years.



## Safety of Sports Grounds

The Safety of Sports Grounds (NI) Order 2006 was enacted in February 2006, however, a significant number of Articles were not implemented at that time particularly those relating to the certification of grounds with a capacity of over 5,000 and the certification of stands with a capacity exceeding 500 at smaller venues.

In January 2009, DCAL advised the Culture, Arts and Leisure committee that the certification processes would be completed by the end of December 2009. Sport Northern Ireland was asked to draft criteria for assessing the potential capacity of venues and stands, and these were submitted to and agreed by DCAL in February 2009. Having engaged with the district councils and governing bodies of Gaelic sport, rugby and soccer, 77 venues were identified as having a potential capacity of 5,000 or more. Visits of these venues were carried out by staff of the Facilities Unit between February and April 2009, and the capacities assessed against the agreed criteria. Sixty of these venues were assessed of having a capacity exceeding 5,000 and DCAL were notified accordingly.

Following discussions between DCAL, Sport Northern Ireland and the governing bodies, 32 venues were identified as having potential to hold significant fixtures and these were forwarded for designation.

DCAL have prepared regulations to be placed before the Assembly for the designation of these venues. The remaining venues will be considered for designation at a later date. It is anticipated that the statutory process for the regulations will be completed in October of this year and the venues will be

designated by 31 December 2009. It is anticipated that it will take district councils between two and six months to issue safety certificates. The certificates will state the safe capacity of the respective venues and include a number of terms and conditions to ensure the safety of spectators attending fixtures.

In the interim period Sport Northern Ireland has prepared guidance documentation on the behalf of DCAL that will be issued to the district councils. Sport Northern Ireland has also prepared training seminar presentations that will be delivered to the district councils, the Police Service Northern Ireland, the Fire and Rescue Service, the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service, governing bodies, and clubs during September, October and November 2009.

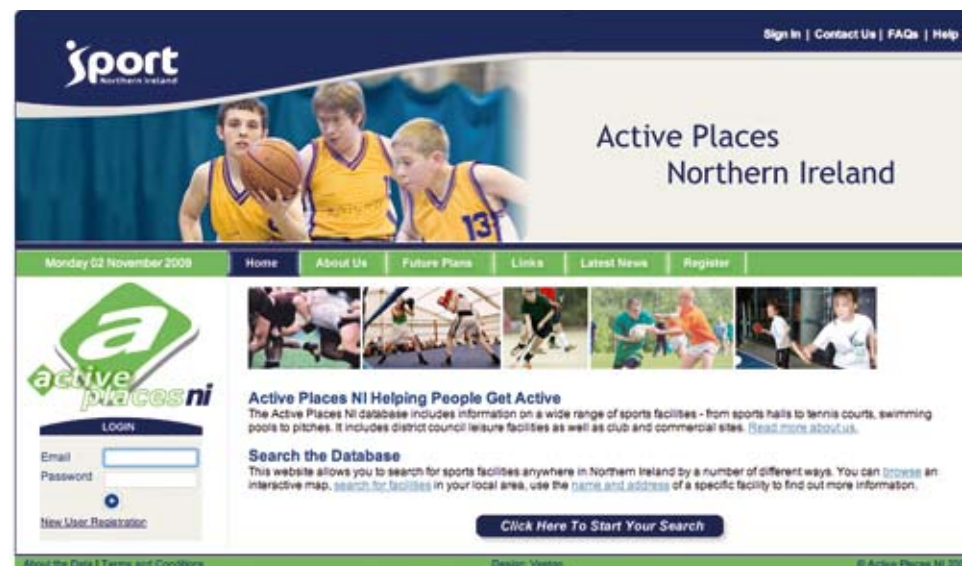
The Facilities Unit is also working on templates for safety certificates, appeals, application forms, etc. and these will be forwarded to DCAL.

A consultation process has commenced regarding Public Order legislation to complement the safety legislation.

## Active Places/Facilities Database Update

The Facilities Unit continued to establish and promote positive working relationships with the current 26 District Councils and the five Education and Library Boards. A number of key representatives from each of these organisations assisted Sport Northern Ireland with our biennial audit of sports facilities. Thanks to their input, the Facilities Database/ Active Places NI now has over 6000 individual sports facilities recorded throughout Northern Ireland. These resources, along with our Geographic Information System have established Sport Northern Ireland as a key consultee in the facility planning process. Currently Sport Northern Ireland receives large numbers of weekly requests for facility planning support from both internal and external partners.

To view log onto [www.sportni.net/activeplaces](http://www.sportni.net/activeplaces)



## Active Places Research Report 2009 - Bridging the Gap

The Active Places Research Report 2009 - Bridging the Gap was launched; this report presents the findings of Sport Northern Ireland's facilities research, and outlines the challenges ahead in addressing the shortfall in key sports facilities in Northern Ireland. It's the first report of its kind in Northern Ireland and it provides an opportunity for all sports facility providers to address the shortfall in a manner that meets the needs of the local population. This report can be downloaded from [www.sportni.net](http://www.sportni.net)



## Pre Games Training Camps

Sport Northern Ireland was represented in the technical group for the Pre Games Training Camps and DCAL sit on the overall committee. 26 local venues are accredited for the Olympics, with three hubs for the Paralympics.

Sport Northern Ireland worked with venue operators to populate and update the Northern Ireland section of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) website, and related documentation was circulated to International Olympic Committee members.

Sport Northern Ireland was represented on a working group that involved DCAL, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB), Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association (CLOA) and others to promote the Northern Ireland accredited venues and to help DCAL achieve their objective in attracting 10 teams pre to 2012. Sport Northern Ireland are also working with the governing bodies and other influential figures and contacts built up over the years to utilise their personal contacts in attracting teams to Northern Ireland.

Sport Northern Ireland representatives, along with our partner organisations, have been attending major sporting events to promote Northern Ireland at home and abroad, and to network with decision makers. Sport Northern Ireland, CLOA and DCAL were part of the LOCOG delegation to Beijing for the official launch of the LOCOG website and publicity documentation, and made presentations to representatives of the National Olympic Committees in attendance. Sport Northern Ireland Chief Executive Eamonn McCartan also represented Sport Northern Ireland by presenting to the National Paralympics Committees in August

2008. Sport Northern Ireland developed publicity documents with NITB and DCAL in electronic and written format.

Northern Ireland is disadvantaged for geographical reasons and there are added cost implications. There are a number of significantly better facilities elsewhere in the UK. Other European countries that are close to London are offering attractive financial packages to encourage teams to use their facilities.

The bigger countries require the finest facilities and are making arrangements to use the best facilities and those closest in proximity to London. Smaller countries will make their decision as to where to be situated in the final months before the 2012 Olympics. These are the countries that Sport Northern Ireland needs to foster relationships with in the imminent future.

Further information can be obtained from [www.raiseyourgame2012.net](http://www.raiseyourgame2012.net)





## Department of Education

For a number of years Sport Northern Ireland has attempted to influence the Department of Education's (DENI) 'Building Handbook' which offers design guidance for all new or refurbished school build projects. This document is dated and the guidance in relation to sports facilities does not compliment the standards recommended by the governing bodies.

In the past year the Facilities Team have made significant progress with DENI, and are pleased to be working with the Department as a key partner in sports facility development. In March 2009, following a number of communications between Sport Northern Ireland and DENI, the Department of Education requested design guidance from Sport Northern Ireland and are considering making appropriate amendments to the 'Building Handbook'.

In addition, Sport Northern Ireland has also discussed the concept of 'community use' and will continue to work with DENI in order to promote and maximise the positive impact that school sports facilities can have on local communities in Northern Ireland.

The proposed 50m swimming pool project will form part of a new leisure centre at Valentine Playing Fields in Bangor. The project costs are estimated to be £41,197K, of which £23,944K relates to the eligible elements of the 50m swimming pool. The applicant organisation has requested £15,000K and is presently satisfying Elite Facilities Programme Stage Three requirements and working 'at risk' to meet Stage Four requirements.

The 50m swimming pool provides for:

- The optimum technical requirements of Swim Ulster Ltd. and Swim Ireland;
- Operational plans that provide for the optimum operational requirements of Swim Ulster Ltd.;
- A partnership philosophy with Swim Ulster Ltd, SINI, Sport Northern Ireland, local clubs, education sector, community agencies and representative bodies to facilitate increased participation, improve performance standards and facilitate high profile international events;
- A detailed sports development plan that provides for targeting marketing and outreach to under-represented, socially excluded/TSN, inactive groups and an involved approach to the development of not only swimming, but the increase in participation and performance standards of the other aquatic disciplines against the principles of the Long Term Athlete Development Model;
- Plans to host a significant number of events per year and development of an Aquatics Events Strategy with key partners; and
- A Performance Development Centre and a partnership with the SINI.







# Performance Sport

Sport Northern Ireland is committed to developing a world-class sporting system in Northern Ireland, enabling athletes and teams to maximise their sporting potential and reach their optimum level of performance.

Sport Northern Ireland's Performance Sport Team works to bring about an environment that will enable athletes to improve athletic performance.

# Beijing Olympic and Paralympic Games

The Beijing Games were a huge sporting success, particularly for Northern Ireland athletes, which will leave a lasting, positive legacy. Beijing delivered wonderful elite sport, superb organisation, stunning venues and spectacular ceremonies. They were truly a unique opportunity to show young people that dreams, ambitions and aspirations can be achieved with passion and hard work. You only need to look at success stories such as Jason Smyth who has brought home two gold medals and set new world records, and Michael McKillop who brought home a gold medal at this year's Paralympic Games, to see what can be achieved with determination and support. The athletes' dedication has shown that anything is possible.





# Beijing Olympic and Paralympic Games

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## Olympic Games

Athlete	Sport	Achievement
Richard Archibald	Rowing	4th Semi-Finals - Lightweight Fours
Paddy Barnes	Boxing	Bronze Medal – Light Flyweight
Andrew Bree	Swimming	New Irish Record - 11th overall, 2:10.16 200m Breaststroke
Alan Campbell	Rowing	5th Final - Single Scull
Richard Chambers	Rowing	5th Final - Lightweight Fours
Emma Davis	Triathlon	37th - Improved World Ranking
Philip Deignan	Cycling	81st
Wendy Houvenaghel	Cycling	Silver Medal - 3km Individual Pursuit
Stephen Milne	Sailing	13th
Melanie Nocher	Swimming	New Irish Record - 20th overall, 2:12.29 200m Backstroke

## Paralympic Games

Athlete	Sport	Achievement
Eilish Byrne	Equestrian – Dressage	11th Individual Championship and 8th Individual Freestyle Test
Stephen Campbell	Swimming	Clocked a new Irish record and PB of 5.28.43 finishing 10th overall - 400m (S11) Freestyle Event 10th overall in the heat - 100m (S11) Butterfly Event 15th overall - 100m (S11) Freestyle Event
Hannah Clarke	Swimming	Finished 5th in the heat clocking a new PB and Irish Record of 2.06.33 - 100m (SB5) Women's Breaststroke
Karen Cromie	Rowing	5th Final - Mixed Double Sculls
Jonathan Cummings	Swimming	New Irish Record of 1:29.25 finishing 8th overall - 100m (S6) Backstroke Final Finished 5th in heat although he swam a Personal Best record of 5:50.54 - 400m (S6)
Mark Jones	Football (7-a-side)	The Irish team finished in 6th place overall
Michael McKillop	Athletics	Gold Medal in 800m (T37) setting new Paralympic World Record of 1:59.39
Jason Smyth	Athletics	Two gold medals in the 200m and 100m (T13) events, setting new Paralympic World Records of 21.43 and 10.62



# Astonishing Medal Count

In 2008-09 36 medals were won by athletes from the governing bodies in which Sport Northern Ireland invests in and/or athletes on the athlete support programme.



	EVENT/SPORT	MEDAL
OLYMPIC/PARALYMPIC MEDALS		
Jason Smyth	100m Athletics	Gold
Jason Smyth	200m Athletics	Gold
Michael McKillop	800m Athletics	Gold
Paddy Barnes	Boxing	Bronze
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS		
Khris Meeke	Rally	Gold
Tommy McCarthy	Boxing	Bronze
WORLD CUPS		
Alan Campbell	Rowing	Gold
Richard Chambers	Rowing	Silver
Matthew Rooney	Judo	Bronze
EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS		
Niall McVeigh	Badminton	Gold (Individuals)
Niall McVeigh	Badminton	Silver (Doubles)
Laura D'Urso	Rowing	Gold
Peter Chambers	Rowing	Gold
Johnny Mitchell	Rowing	Silver
Thomas Little	Rowing	Silver
Mark Nesbitt	Archery	Silver
Eamon O'Kane	Boxing	Bronze
Cricket U17 Squad	Cricket	Gold
Cricket U23 Squad	Cricket U19 Squad	Gold
Cricket Senior Squad	Cricket U19 Squad	Gold
Cricket U19 Squad	Cricket U19 Squad	Silver

# Astonishing Medal Count

## MISCELLANEOUS (EQUIVALENT TO WORLD, INTERNATIONAL, EUROPEAN EVENT OR COMMONWEALTH LEVEL)

Stephen Gallagher	Cycling (UCI)	Gold
Mark Nesbitt	Archery (Youth Olympics)	Gold
Mark Nesbitt	Archery (Youth Olympics)	Gold
Hannah Lewis	Athletics (CWYG)	Silver
Edward Moubrey	Athletics (CWYG)	Bronze
Ciara Mageean	Athletics (CWYG)	Bronze
Sean Duffy	Boxing (CWYG)	Silver
Paul Hyland	Boxing (CWYG)	Bronze
Chelsey Wilson	Swimming (CWYG)	Silver
Chelsey Wilson	Swimming (CWYG)	Bronze
Conor Leaney	Swimming (CWYG)	Bronze
Matthew Hall	Shooting (CWYG)	Silver
Cricket Senior Squad	Cricket (Inter-continental Cup)	Gold
Irish Seniors Rugby	Rugby (Triple Crown)	Gold
Irish Seniors Rugby	Rugby (Six Nations)	Gold



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# Sports Institute Northern Ireland

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## Providing Aspiring Athletes with a Springboard to Success

Based at the University of Ulster, Jordanstown Campus, SINI continues to prove itself to be a successful partnership between Sport Northern Ireland and the University.

When an athlete becomes a SINI athlete they have access to a high level of performance support. Each athlete is individually screened and a specific programme is tailored for their exact needs. Athletes have access to the following support services:

- Programme Planning;
- Sports Medicine;
- Performance Science;
- Strength and Conditioning; and
- Performance Skills.

SINI also delivers, in partnership with Sport Northern Ireland, specific development programmes for athletes and coaches, endeavoring to build skills and gain exposure to cutting to edge practice to enable the athletes and coaches to become world class.

SINI continues to deliver vital support services to a range of athletes from sports including Gaelic football, hockey, rugby, and individual athletes from the sports of; bowls, cricket, cycling, judo, rowing, sailing, squash, swimming, triathlon, and water skiing.



## SINI Warm Weather Training Camp

SINI held it's first ever all service warm weather training camp for ten athletes from six different sports at the state of the art Vila Real de Santo Antonio training facilities in Portugal at the start of February. Athletes who travelled to Portugal included young Judo star Lisa Kearney, cyclist Connor McConvey, Rower Orlagh Duddy, Triathlon competitors Emma Davies and Aileen Morrison, sprinter Amy Foster as well as Double Paralympic Gold Medalist Jason Smyth.

The camp was designed to allow the athletes to complete

their warm weather training alongside service staff and fellow athletes. This is the first such camp that SINI have run and the SINI High Performance Manager Jo Hopkins believes that this is an essential part of the development of both SINI athletes and staff:

"It is essential for SINI to provide athletes with an integrated World Class support service both at home and abroad. Warm weather training camps are an integral part of any world class performance system and all of our top athletes have them built in to their performance plan. Many of our athletes often compete in warmer climates and these

# Sports Institute Northern Ireland

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camps give them a chance to adapt to different environments. They provide an opportunity for coaches and service providers to work one to one with athletes maximizing their input in an intense training block.

We are an integral part of each athlete's support team and this multi sport training camp provides a crucial opportunity for SINI staff to work with athletes and their coaches in an intensive, collaborative training environment, building trust and enhancing relationships. This is all crucial if we are to give the athletes the support they need to compete at world class level."

## Enhanced Capacity

SINI has worked hard this year to increase capacity and development of services through appointments of interns in Performance Science and Performance Skills and a Placement position in Strength and Conditioning.

In addition to the interns to assist with Performance Planning across a range of sports, former double Olympic rower Richard Archibald was appointed as Performance Coordinator.

This year SINI provided support to the Northern Ireland senior football soccer during their World Cup Qualification Campaign.

Further information can be obtained from [www.sini.co.uk](http://www.sini.co.uk)





# Governing Body Investment

## Systems and structures

Sport Northern Ireland acknowledges that governing bodies play a major role in the development of athletes. Sport Northern Ireland investment of £1,375,107 in 2008-09 enabling governing bodies to work towards putting in place the appropriate systems and structures to improve performance levels of the athletes.

## Staff

Sport Northern Ireland invests in governing bodies to employ 48 staff including posts including Business Development Managers, Performance Managers, Performance Coaches, Talent Identification Officers, Participation, Club and Coaching Development Officers, and Administration staff.

## Modern, fit for purpose organisations

The Modernisation Team continued to support governing bodies improve capacity in areas such as financial management, human resource management, board roles and responsibilities and policy development. Sport Northern Ireland also organised a number of training courses for governing bodies. Courses included 'Becoming a Charity', the 'Implementation of GIFT Aid', 'Line Management Training', and 'Line Managing for Board Members'.

In line with Sport Northern Ireland's Governing Body Investment Programme and its corporate objective of ensuring governing bodies are fit for purpose, Sport Northern Ireland continued to audit governing bodies to achieve this. A further two governing bodies achieved a reasonable level of assurance during 2008-09:

- Northern Ireland Archery Society
- UB Badminton Union of Ireland



# Talent Identification and Development

Sport Northern Ireland piloted several governing body programmes to assist in the development of talented athletes. These programmes were as follows:

## Route 2012

In partnership with Cycling Ireland and the Irish Sports Council, a cycling talent transfer programme was designed to identify talented athletes from a range of sports that could transfer successfully to track cycling. This was implemented by testing physical attributes to determine their suitability; with the potential to compete in the London 2012 Olympic Games.

## Talent Orientation Camp

Sport Northern Ireland's second Talent Orientation Camp held in August at the University of Ulster was a huge success. It provided a unique opportunity for 17 young athletes to receive an insight into the world of high performance sport and to critically reflect upon their own talent, ability and potential to succeed at the highest level.

Delivered by staff from Sport Northern Ireland, SINI, and the specific governing bodies involved the camp gave the athletes access to performance sport staff who ran a mix of conditioning, lifestyle, psychology and injury prevention sessions. Follow up sessions are ongoing with athletes

working with a staff member to develop their Physical Competencies on a weekly basis.

One of the highlights of the camp was a visit by Michael Carruth, the 1992 Olympic Welterweight Champion who gave participants an insight into what it was like to compete at Olympic level. The athletes heard how Michael managed to juggle his education and training and the sacrifices he had to make along the way to become an Olympic Champion.



## Skills Festivals

Sport Northern Ireland hosted a series of skills festivals, in conjunction with Sport North East, Sport South East, the Southern Area Sports Partnership, Ulster Hockey, Ulster Squash, and the Ulster Branch of the Badminton Union of Ireland. These are base level identification programmes aiming to identify young athletes with potential talent in the sports of badminton, hockey, squash, and tennis, offering support for their development through quality coaching.



# Coaching

The coaching strategy for Ireland was launched in September 2008 at the National Coaching Forum. The strategy, which was developed in partnership with Coaching Ireland and the Irish Sports Council, sets out the direction of coaching over the next four years and provides a framework for raising the standard and status of coaching on an all-island basis.

The UK Coaching Framework (2008-16) has progressed from the 'Building the Foundations' to the 'Delivering the Goals' phase with 31 sports. Each of the Home Country Sports Councils and UK Sport have now signed up to implementing the Framework over the next seven years.

The vision outlined in the Framework is to create a cohesive, ethical, inclusive and valued coaching system where skilled coaches support children, adults, players and athletes at all stages of their development in sport. The vision endeavours for this to be world-leading by 2016.

The Framework highlights how sports coach UK plans to work in close partnership with governing bodies and each of the Home Country Sports Councils to enhance the quality and quantity of coaches at all levels of sport. The objective is to help coaches play a key role in increasing sport participation, improving sporting performances and in building a clear career structure for coaches within a professionally regulated vocation.

Sport Northern Ireland continues to develop and improve the programme of generic coach education which it currently provides. With a tutor workforce of 50 skilled and available tutors in place, Sport Northern Ireland currently offers a range of 17 generic coach education courses across a range of topics. 200 workshops took place last year with over 2000 participants in attendance.



# Top Coaches Honoured

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The Sport Northern Ireland Coach of the Year Awards, held at the University of Ulster, was an ideal opportunity to raise not only the profile of coaches, but also to acknowledge and commend the contribution that they make to the success of Northern Ireland's sportsmen and women.

Present at the awards, sponsored by Podium4Sport, were 15 finalist coaches who had been nominated in the categories of Youth Sport, Young Athlete Development, Performance Sport, Disability and Lifetime Contribution. Coach Patrick McKillop received the top honour at the Sport Northern Ireland Coach of the Year awards.

Northern Ireland Football Manager Nigel Worthington presented Patrick with the Performance Athlete Coach Award and named overall Coach of the Year at the gala ceremony.

Other Category Winners:

- Youth Sport, Joe Norwood, Football
- Young Athlete Development, Dr Ian Walker, Volleyball
- Disability, Gerard McNulty, GAA
- Lifetime Contribution, Jim Nelson, GAA

Sport Northern Ireland continues to develop and improve the programme of generic coach education which it currently provides. With a tutor workforce of 50 skilled and available tutors in place, Sport Northern Ireland currently offers a range of 17 generic coach education courses across a range of topics. 200 workshops took place last year with over 2000 participants in attendance.



# Practitioner Development Programme

The Practitioner Development Programme focuses on developing a workforce of high performance coaches, sports scientists and medical practitioners with the necessary experience, skills and knowledge to improve athlete performance.

In the first year of the programme 13 practitioners received bursaries to further their career pathways. The funding has been used by the practitioners to attend high performance events, to observe high performance athletes, undertake a research project or placement, or to complete a higher education degree.

Practitioners attended a series of workshops delivered by Sport Northern Ireland in partnership with SINI. The workshops, based on a successful UK Sport model, include the development of high performance competencies essential for those working in a high performance environment; subjects include Striving for Excellence, Teamwork and Collaboration, Influencing, Understanding Others, Communication and Creative Thinking, and Innovative Solutions.

The second year of the programme opened for applications in November 2008; a total of 23 applications were received and 16 have been awarded.

## Anti-doping

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Anti-Doping information and education workshops were made available to all Northern Ireland athletes. These sessions, delivered by both the Irish Sports Council and UK Sport, were well attended and raised the awareness of Anti-Doping issues, beginning an important process of Anti-Doping Education within Northern Ireland.





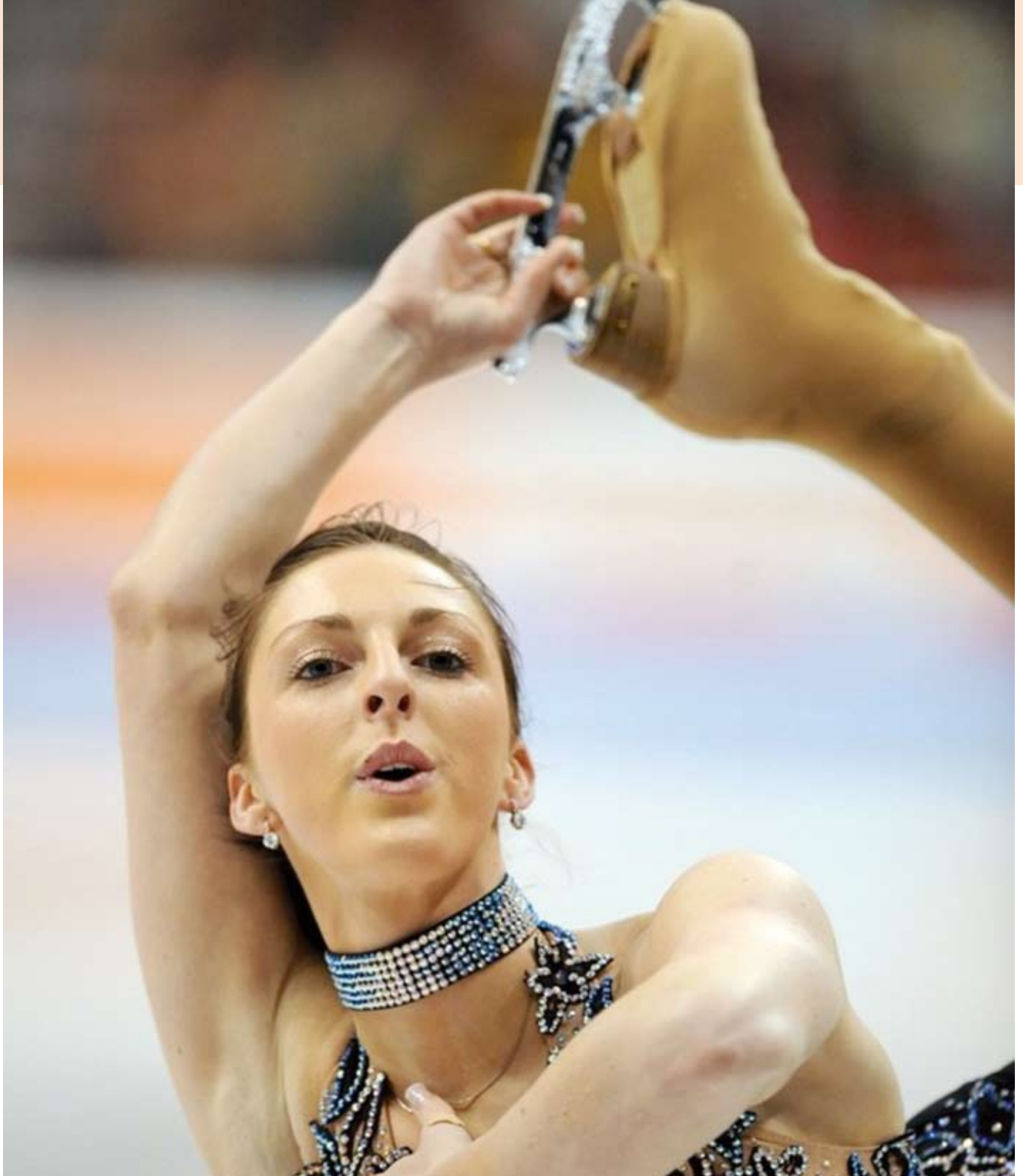
# Athlete Support Programme

**“Assisting Northern Ireland’s talented able-bodied and disabled sportspeople to improve their performance standards and achieve international sporting success”**

A total of 53 awards totaling £264,374 to 22 governing bodies were made under the Athlete Support Programme in 2008-09 in support of 51 individual and two squad training and competition programmes.

Funding from the Athlete Support Programme provides support towards coaching costs, personal training and preparation costs, sports science and sports medicine support, competition costs and personal equipment as identified in an athlete or team’s training and competition programme.

In addition to the above, 17 athletes benefited from Living Costs funding totaling £77,460. The Living Costs extension of the Athlete Support Programme aims to maximise an athlete’s potential by providing funding which will enable them to train on a full-time or part-time basis.



# Youth Games

## An emphasis on youth

Sport Northern Ireland was once again delighted to sponsor the Youth Games – a well established sporting initiative designed to boost young people's participation in sport.

Over 800 young people aged between 12 and 16 competed in sports including badminton, hockey, netball, table tennis, and volleyball. Playing on behalf of the Education and Library Boards, the Youth Games gives young talented athletes an opportunity to experience the adrenalin and expectation of taking part in a tournament of this size.

The Youth Games provide continued opportunities for talented young athletes not only to develop themselves and their sporting performances with some competitors going on to compete at County, Provincial and International Level, but also to interact with children from other schools and communities and build new friendships.



# UK School Games



## Talent shines at UK School Games

The third UK School Games, which took place in Bristol and Bath, were a huge success for competitors from Northern Ireland as they brought home a massive total of 26 medals.

The Games, an exciting initiative designed to encourage more young people to take part in sport and provide them with the experience of being involved in a major multi-sport competitive event, saw our local athletes battling for honours among 1500 competitors in nine sports over four days of competition.

Northern Ireland provided a mixed team of boys and girls to compete in nine sports; Northern Ireland athletes won medals in athletics (5), badminton (1), fencing (5), hockey (2), judo (6), and swimming (7).



# Events Programme

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“A Sport Northern Ireland programme to assist with the bidding for and running of sports events in Northern Ireland”



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A total of £72,000 was awarded to six events from the Events Programme:

Applicant	Event	Amount (£)
Event Direct	Northern Ireland International Horse Show	20,000
Northern Ireland Blind Golf	World Blind Golf Championships	16,000
Athletics Northern Ireland	Irish International Indoor Athletics	15,000
Northern Ireland Blind Golf	British Blind Golf Championships	8,000
Northern Ireland Archery Society	Euronations	8,000
Society One Armed Golfers	World One Armed Golf Championships	5,000
	TOTAL	72,000









# Sporting Events

Hosting major events is an opportune way to showcase what Northern Ireland has to offer, and enhance its image on the world stage.

Sporting events, large or small, provide an excellent platform to inspire young people to participate in sport, for talented athletes to raise their game, and instil a feeling of possibility among individuals, teams and society.

## Between the Bridges Charity Run

Nearly 5000 walkers, fun runners, joggers, club athletes and local personalities took to the Westlink/M1 to participate in the Between the Bridges Charity Run in aid of Northern Ireland Hospice.

Organised by Cumann Spóirt an Phobail with support from Sport Northern Ireland, Belfast City Council, Department for Regional Development, Community Relations Council, Belfast Media Group and Athletics Northern Ireland, this unique event marked the completion of the £103 million Westlink/M1 scheme.



## Belfast City Marathon

The 27th Belfast City Marathon was a huge success – with a record 15,000 runners taking to the streets of Belfast, making the occasion the biggest mass participation sports event in the Northern Ireland sports event calendar.

Ethiopia's Marashet Jumma smashed the women's record by more than two minutes; Jumma's time of 2:39:22 beat the previous best of 2:41:33, set by Lemma Urge in 2005.

It was a clean sweep of champions all round, as Kenya's John Mutai also held on to the men's crown with a time of 2:16:31.





## Six Nations Championship

Ireland claimed their first Grand Slam in 61 years in a sensational climax to the year's Six Nations Championship; with victories over England, Scotland, Wales, France and Italy for the first time since 1948.

Played at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff, the Irish team's performance and triumph brought a close to their winning season. The players, led by team captain Brian O'Driscoll, showed remarkable determination and will to win for Ireland.

The Grand Slam of 1948 was the beginning of a golden era... the team can now kick on and dominate Europe all the way to the World Cup in 2011.



## ICC World Twenty20 Qualifier

Organised by International Cricket Council (ICC), the ICC World Twenty20 Qualifier was played in August 2008 at Stormont, Belfast. Ireland competed with five fellow Associates in the four day tournament, with Ireland, Holland and Scotland successfully securing a place at the ICC World Twenty20 2009.

# Sporting Events

## Milk Cup

Since it began in 1983, the Milk Cup has grown into one of the most prestigious and successful soccer competitions in the world.

The competition brings together the finest of young footballing talent from across the globe; bringing the excitement and challenge of competing to the young players and officials and great entertainment for the spectators.

Many famous names have graced this competition in the

past with players such as Wayne Rooney, Ryan Giggs, David Beckham, Robbie Fowler and Peter Crouch all competing.

Now in its 26th year the Milk Cup is recognised as one of the most prestigious international youth football tournaments in Europe.

The 2008 event, once again sponsored by Sport Northern Ireland, didn't disappoint with Northern Ireland taking the Elite crown; Manchester United triumphing in the Premier section; and Everton came out top in the Junior category.



## Runher 8K

Sport Northern Ireland was a proud sponsor of the 2008 Belfast Telegraph Runher 8K; an event targeting women only.

Nearly 600 women and girls walked, jogged and ran around Ormeau Park for the inaugural 8k. The race was won by Paralympic star Karen Cromie who had just returned from Beijing, in a fantastic time of 27minutes and 42seconds. An elated Karen thought the event was an excellent opportunity to empower women of all ages to enjoy the walk, and would love to see more disabled people take part next year.







# Corporate Services

Corporate Services are seen to be the ‘backbone’ of Sport Northern Ireland – ensuring efficient and effective administration in sport.

The Corporate Services Unit provides a good working environment for the whole organisation through effective delivery of:

Financial Management; Human Resources; Information Technology; Internal Audit Procedures; Investment Assurance; Marketing; and Policy Planning and Research.



## Sport Northern Ireland... “One to Watch”

Sport Northern Ireland was accredited with “One to Watch” status by Best Companies, the work place engagement specialists behind the ‘Sunday Times Best Companies to Work For’.

The latest guide recognises Sport Northern Ireland as an organisation with great growth potential, and one committed to being one of the best employers in the UK.

Sport Northern Ireland is featured in the Best Companies Guide, an annual reference for graduates, which provides independent and unbiased information on some of the UK’s best workplaces. The 2008 edition is available at the following address: [www.bestcompaniesguide.co.uk](http://www.bestcompaniesguide.co.uk)

The Best Companies Accreditation was established to acknowledge corporate excellence in the workplace, setting constant standards for businesses of all sizes to aspire to, with results being drawn based upon an employee survey and company questionnaire.



Sport Northern Ireland is an organisation that is focused on promoting sport and the benefits that can be derived through sport; its aim is to make decisions that are based on evidence.

The Research Unit responds to the need to strengthen the evidence base for informed decision making in sport at all levels, and seeks to put in place a coherent framework for research and evaluation that is responsive to the research needs and priorities in the proposed Strategy as well as the wider social policy agenda.

Sport Northern Ireland commissions, communicates and disseminates research projects under the following thematic areas:

- Strategic Measurement and Monitoring Participation;
- Strategic Understanding;
- Impact Evaluation;
- Economic Modeling; and
- Communicating and Disseminating Research Findings.

In 2008-09, Sport Northern Ireland commissioned the following research projects, some of which were in collaboration with our key partners...

## Participant Development Literature Review

This review was written as all policies and programme must be underpinned and supported by on-going robust research. The review seeks to identify the main findings and principles associated with Participant Development, the methods

used to generate this information, and the strengths and weaknesses of the supporting research. The review looks at the operational definitions of participant development as well as the different models of participant development. It



also reviews the Biological domain, Psychological domain and Social domain of Participant Development making several recommendations on the role of Participant Development and the importance of interdisciplinary research within sports coaching research and independent evaluations regarding participant development models, research and proposals.

## The Assessment and Measurement of Physical Literacy in Children

The aim of this research project was to develop a Physical Literacy assessment tool for use with young children. This tool aimed to assess the core motor competencies of children who had received a structured Physical Literacy programme, compared to children who had not. Children's self-perceptions and attitudes towards physical activity and sport were also assessed.

The research found that the measurement tool developed was effective in revealing the differences between children's competence in performing locomotor, body management and object control skills. Furthermore, attitudes towards physical activity were high overall and showed no significant differences between those who received a structured programme and those who did not. However, children's self-perceptions were significantly different between the Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) and non-FMS groups with the FMS schools scoring more highly. This finding may be indicative of the holistic nature and delivery of the FMS programme which is designed to contribute to children's social, emotional and cognitive development beyond their movement skills.



## Survey of Public Attitudes Towards Sport & Physical Recreation 2008

in northern ireland



Summary of key findings

**sport**  
Northern Ireland

The lead agency for developing sport in Northern Ireland

and of sub-groups within it. The research also addresses levels of awareness of Sport Northern Ireland and assesses views as to what Sport Northern Ireland funding should be used for.

There were several key findings from the research such as 59% of those surveyed thought international sporting success by local athletes was very important and 97% agreed or strongly agreed that Sport Northern Ireland funding should go to develop young people with sporting talent.

## A Systematic Review of the Literature on Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in Sport and Recreation

This review examines participation in sport and physical recreation by black and minority ethnic communities, one of the segments of the population identified in the government's equality legislation. In conducting this review Sport Northern Ireland is concerned with how sporting opportunities might be extended and improved with the goal of informing policy and practice as the concern with increasing participation is twofold: to maximise the recruitment of talent; and to allow all sectors of society to enjoy the presumed benefits of sport.

## A Literature Review of Sexual Orientation in Sport

The sports council in the UK have recognised the social and legal imperatives for sports bodies to support participation among lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, and to oppose

homophobia and related discrimination in sport. The purpose of this study was to review and critique the literature on sexual orientation in sport in order to inform equality impact assessments, support the implementation of the UK sports councils' equality scheme and inform the advice given by these agencies on developing sports participation among those people and on tackling homophobia in sport. The review describes gaps in our knowledge, identifies further research needs and also makes policy recommendations.

All these publications can be downloaded from [www.sportni.net](http://www.sportni.net)

## Survey of Public Attitudes to Sport and Physical Recreation

The 2008 Survey of Public Attitudes to Sport and Physical Recreation was commissioned to assess the extent to which sport and physical recreation has a positive image amongst the population aged 16-70 in Northern Ireland as a whole

# Facts and Figures 2008-09







# 97,597

People participated in sport and physical activity across all Sport Northern Ireland investment areas



# 36

Medals were won by athletes from the governing bodies in which Sport Northern Ireland invests in and/or athletes on the Athlete Support Programme

# 13

Practitioners received bursaries through the Practitioner Development Programme



# 27,454

People from under-represented groups participated in sport and physical activity across all Sport Northern Ireland investment areas

# 6

Events supported through the Events Programme



# 53

Athletes/squads supported through the Athlete Support Programme



# 4,986

Student days provided by TMC



# 26

Local venues are accredited for the Olympics with three hubs for the Paralympics



# 71

Projects funded through Awards for All



# 5

Medals won at the 2008 Beijing Olympic and Paralympic Games

# Who's Who in Sport Northern Ireland

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## Sport Northern Ireland Board Members...

**Chair:** Dominic Walsh

**Vice Chair:** Alan Money Penny

**Members:**

Olive Brown

Murray Cowan

John D'Arcy

Una Duncan

Barry Macaulay

Brian McCargo

Hugh McCaughey

Maura Muldoon

Danny O'Connor

Jim Rodgers

Alan Strong

Patrick Turnbull

## Sport Northern Ireland Key Staff...

**Chief Executive**

Eamonn McCartan

**Director of Corporate Services**

Andrew Sloan

**Director of Performance Sport**

Shaun Ogle

**Director of Participation and Facilities**

Nick Harkness

