



# THE TALENT PLAN FOR ENGLAND

CREATING THE WORLD'S BEST TALENT SYSTEM





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# OUR AMBITION

## ENGLAND AND GREAT BRITAIN'S PLACE AS A SPORTING SUPERPOWER CAN NOT BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED

England enjoyed record performances at the Commonwealth Games in Australia, while English athletes made up more than 80% of the hugely successful Team GB and Paralympics GB in the most recent Olympic and Paralympic Games.

We've also seen individuals and teams from many sports become world and European champions.

This success has been made possible by excellent performance programmes underpinned by effective talent systems.

We've invested in talent pathways for many years and we're proud of what has been achieved. In this plan we're building on success, with the stated aim of creating the world's best sporting talent system.

The world's best talent system is one that keeps on winning, so producing more and better athletes and performances remains a prime objective.

All athletes and coaches know that standing still is going backwards. **We believe continued success should not be taken for granted.**

Athletes and coaches also know that there's always room for improvement, so what could we improve about the talent system?

We can certainly improve our understanding of the athlete experience and the effect that it has on the individuals and the success of the talent system. The 'Culture Health Check' report was commissioned by UK Sport in 2017 after a series of athlete welfare concerns, and while more than 90% of athletes and staff said they were proud to be part of their performance programmes, there were concerns over giving feedback and mental health support.

While this research covered world class performance programmes only, we must ensure that a positive, inclusive culture exists in talent pathways before athletes get anywhere near international level.

The experience that (mostly young) athletes receive will have a lasting effect on not only their sporting performance, but also their mental and physical health. Young people enter the talent system with great ambitions and aspirations and while most of them will never represent England or GB, they should leave the talent system having fulfilled their potential and relished the opportunity. **We believe that training to win and enjoying the experience are not mutually exclusive.**

Secondly, as fans of GB and England we want to see sports teams that reflect the best of our nation and our population, in all its diversity.



We have a concern that not only the culture of talent pathways, but also the sheer cost of being talented, may be a real barrier to this. Helping all young athletes to fulfil their potential is our objective, producing national teams we can both relate to and be proud of. **We believe that how we win is as important as what we win.**

Our strategy *Towards an Active Nation*, published in May 2016, sets out our vision for how we want everyone in England regardless of age, background or level of ability to feel able to engage in sport and physical activity.

In doing so, it also set out a desire to ensure that those responsible for the delivery of sport strive to meet their needs and value them as customers.

This is equally true within the talent system. British and English sport has proved the talent and high-performance system is capable of remarkable things when it puts its collective mind to a task. The world's best talent system is an ambitious and achievable vision.

**Phil Smith**  
Executive Director of Sport



# AN OVERVIEW OF THE TALENT SYSTEM

This section describes the England talent system, outlines in brief how we work with key partners and provides some working definitions of terminology often used to describe various aspects of the Talent Pathway.

The talent and talent development area is extensively studied and researched, and there is a healthy debate and some contention as to how talent should be defined and how it is best identified and developed. This is to be welcomed as we strive to be the world's best.

Notwithstanding this, in this section, to help provide clarity of understanding, we share what we mean when certain words or phrases are used. In doing so we have adopted a practical approach acknowledging that knowledge and understanding will evolve. We will keep abreast of the latest research and continue to refine our approach based on current best practice.

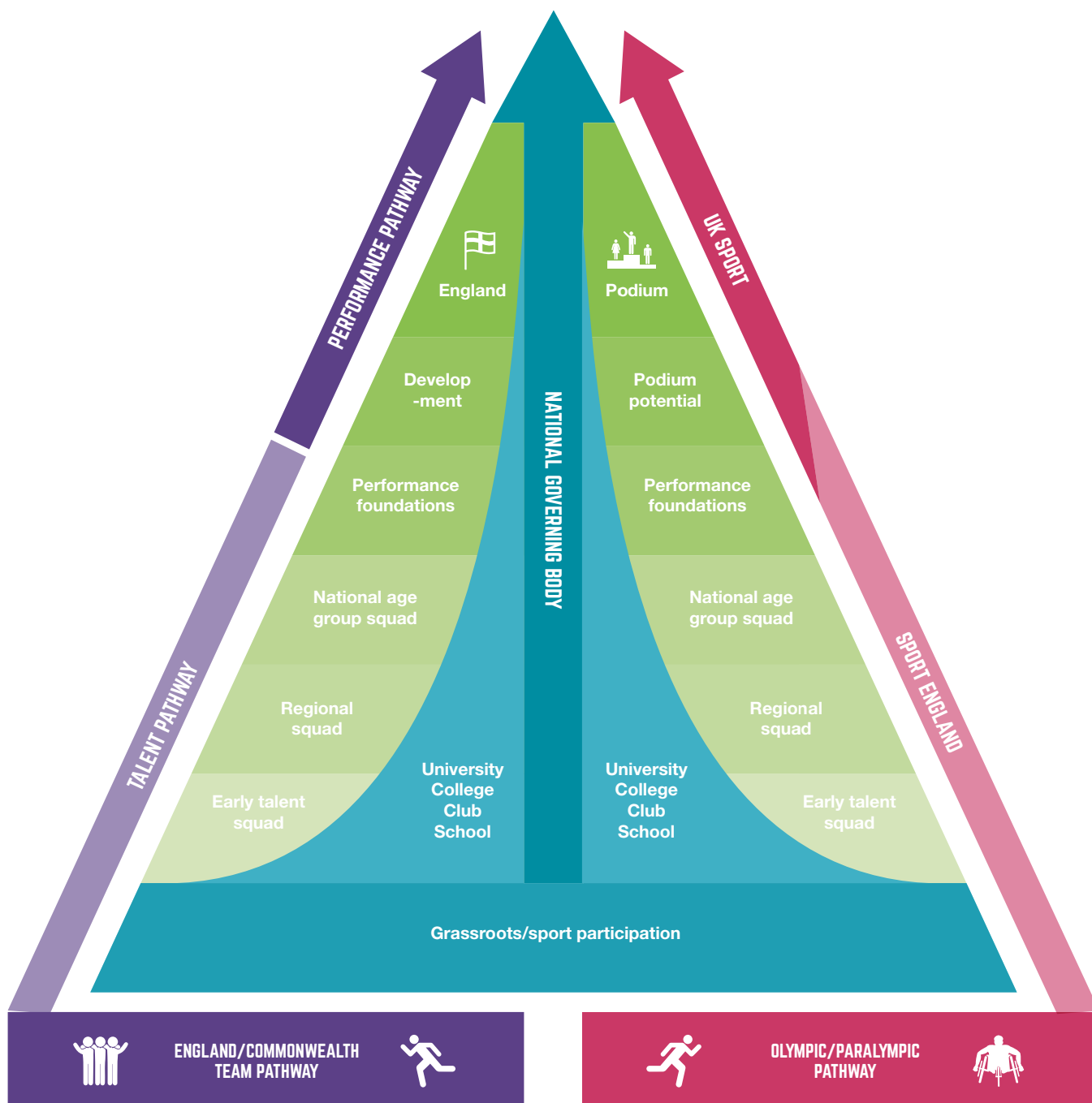
We've committed in the region of £85 million of investment into the England talent system for the 2017-21 funding cycle, and currently fund England Talent Pathways (ETPs) in 43 sports.

Amongst them are a mix of Olympic and Paralympic sports, some of which deliver programmes across Great Britain and Northern Ireland and are in receipt of World Class Programme funding from UK Sport.

Additionally, there are a significant number of Commonwealth Games, individual, team and disability sports which are not in receipt of UK Sport funding and therefore their performance pathways are resourced in other ways.

Collectively these ETPs are significant in their scale – there are around 60,000 selected athletes within ETP programmes and 200,000 aspiring, predominantly young, athletes accessing coaching and competition as part of entry level national governing body talent programmes.

**FIGURE 1:** A schematic to demonstrate the typical stages of the talent development pathway. The left-hand side denotes an England/Commonwealth team pathway and the right-hand side represents an Olympic/Paralympic pathway.





## HOW SPORT ENGLAND AND UK SPORT ALIGN



UK Sport currently targets investment and support to Olympic and Paralympic sports with credible medal potential for athletes across the UK.



The Performance Pathway spans the Podium and Podium Potential stages, which are typically when an athlete is respectively four or eight years out from an Olympic and Paralympic Games.



The 'World Class Programme environment' is defined as the Podium and Podium Potential activity of these UK Sport-funded Great Britain and Northern Ireland World Class Programmes.



Sport England, like the other home country sports councils, invests in and supports the stages prior to the Performance Pathway for English athletes and programmes, and this is known as the Talent Pathway.



The key interface between the two agencies and their respective investment programmes is the stage known as Performance Foundations.



Performance Foundations is defined as sports-specific programmes where "a selected cohort of highly talented athletes within the upper levels of the Home Country Talent Pathways are identified, confirmed and prepared to meet the increased demands of the World Class Programme environment."



## ENGLAND TALENT PATHWAY



***THE ROUTE RELATING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF TALENTED ATHLETES, ABOUT WHICH THE STAGES, STRUCTURES, POLICIES, PRACTICES AND PARTNERS/STAKEHOLDERS ARE ORGANISED***

The England Talent Pathway (ETP) is an integral part of both the UK's high-performance system and those structures underpinning England senior high performance and national teams. When referring to the talent pathway, we're describing all the moving parts that support the development and progression of the athletes.

National governing bodies (NGBs) tend to organise their support for athletes around certain age groups, or stages of development and performance.

These pathway stages are ideally linked to each other by a common development curriculum or framework, which is essentially a recipe, designed to develop optimal performance at a senior level, which is delivered, by specialist coaches and sport science practitioners.



Athletes progress through stages of the pathway by way of milestone events (e.g. age-related banding, competition results, education changes) or skill-based criteria. There are other system partners and stakeholders who provide support to athletes at different stages on the pathway, for example:

We're committed to working with all stakeholders and partners to ensure we optimise the journey for the athlete, their support network, and the workforce.

<b>County Sports Partnerships (CSPs)</b>	There is a nationwide network of 43 CSPs which are committed to improving lives by growing grassroots sport and physical activity in their communities.
<b>Local authorities and local government</b>	Local authorities and councils play a central role in the provision of community and recreation facilities, from local parks to leisure centres.
<b>Education institutions</b>	Schools, colleges and third level education providers facilitate participation and progress in sports through their sports clubs and teams and the associated training and competition opportunities for young and developing athletes.
<b>SportsAid</b>	SportsAid is a national charity which supports aspiring international athletes (the vast majority are aged 12 to 18) by providing them with a financial award to help towards training and competition costs.
<b>Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS)</b>	TASS is a Sport England-funded partnership between talented athletes, education institutions and NGBs. The scheme helps athletes in education (aged 16 plus) to get the best from their sporting and academic careers.
<b>Backing the Best</b>	Backing the Best is a Sport England scheme (managed by SportsAid) which supports the families of aspiring athletes in the early stages of their career, who might feel competitive sport is out of their financial reach.
<b>Diploma in Sporting Excellence (DISE)</b>	Formerly known as the Advanced Level Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence, DISE is a sports performance programme which provides a structured training and development route for talented young athletes (aged 16-19).
<b>Clubs</b>	Typically, clubs are affiliated to a NGB and they provide and facilitate the 'daily training' facilities, camaraderie, coaching and governance structures necessary to support talented athletes.
<b>National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs)</b>	NGBs are typically responsible for managing their specific sport within England/UK, including but not limited to: affiliating to the international federation/governing body, selecting and nominating international teams, upholding the rules of the sport, training and qualification of key roles and personnel and organising the training and competition pathways and structures for both recreational and competitive participation.

## WHAT IS TALENT?



### ***TALENT CAN BE THOUGHT OF AS A MULTIDIMENSIONAL PACKAGE OF CHARACTERISTICS AND ABILITIES***

There's an ongoing discussion as to what talent is and how the individual has acquired it.

Has it arisen because of nature (genetics), nurture (the environment) or even nature via nurture?

Notwithstanding the ongoing debate and continuing study in this area, what is apparent is that talent is challenging to define and to observe.

From a practical perspective, within the talent system it is most useful for us to consider how can we, within the training and competition pathways we are responsible for, optimally identify and develop the characteristics and abilities deemed to be necessary for achieving future senior international success in sport and within each sport.

For many reasons this is not easy:

- We may not see evidence of some or all these characteristics and abilities until, for example, an athlete reaches full maturity, a coach meets their development needs, or they have the opportunity to train in a way or an environment appropriate to their unique needs.
- We know that for many sports, performance (i.e. competition results), particularly at a young age, does not necessarily equal talent. A system that confines itself solely to the identification of talent based on current performances (such as winners of junior competitions) will not necessarily pick up those with the most long-term potential.

In summary, we risk missing out on potentially talented athletes unless we take a broader and more long-term view. However, selections based on more abstract and less immediately observable characteristics or competencies, as opposed to selections based on results alone, are often more difficult to justify to parents, other stakeholders or the athletes themselves.

We recognise that this is a complex area and we'll strive to work with sports to better inform and evidence what it means to be talented in their sport, in parallel to considering how best to support the progression of those athletes who show it.





## TALENT INCLUSION



### ***CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT WHICH IS INCLUSIVE AND WHERE PROHIBITIVE BARRIERS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AND ACTIVELY REMOVED***

We want to ensure England Talent Pathways (ETPs) are accessible to everyone who has the ability and potential regardless of background or circumstance.

Presently, many sports would appear to be unsuccessful in identifying and recruiting talent from under-represented groups in the UK, which is ultimately narrowing the potential pool of talent.

In addition to the potential performance gains of drawing from a wider pool of talent, we want to make our national teams more reflective of the population so they are more relevant to the nation. The key task is to ensure we create a system that seeks to identify and remove prohibitive barriers (those that may disproportionately affect the progression of athletes from certain groups or backgrounds) and thereby enable anyone who has the characteristics and ability, required to succeed, to fulfill their potential.

Many sports have acted to increase the appeal of their sport so that their recreational participants and workforce are more reflective of the population. It's unclear at this stage whether these actions have had any significant impact on talent pathways as current insight is patchy and ranges from evidence to anecdotal.

We've therefore commissioned research so we have a comprehensive, up to date picture of the demographics of the talent and high-performance sport system. This data will help us to identify if talent pathways are consistent with the demography of grassroots participants and the population. The conclusions will inform the commissioning of further research, so we can improve our understanding of the existing barriers that prevent under-represented groups accessing ETPs.

We want to collaborate with, and invest our resources in, organisations who share our passion to tackle this important area and are prepared to critically review their current system and adopt an innovative approach to the future.

We will seek to collaborate with new partners, beyond the NGB sector, to identify and develop talent from under-represented groups in other environments (e.g. education) or locations.

We'll strive to bridge the gap between any inclusion initiatives within recreational sport and the ETPs. We will also support national governing bodies to explore any cultural, structural, operational or administrative barriers within their talent pathways, which might be limiting their appeal in attracting promising talent or leading to a loss of talent through the pathway.



## INCLUSION IN TALENT DOES NOT MEAN:

You have to forfeit winning medals or creating a high performing environment.

You have to match the UK/England demographics of age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and gender identity to the exact percentage.

You cannot create challenging training sessions for athletes or implement demanding training schedules.

To increase take-up of your sport by people from lower socio-economic groups, you have to fund training, travel and equipment.



## INCLUSION IN TALENT DOES MEAN:

Renewed emphasis on the culture and environment created within talent pathways. You should be open and flexible to accommodating athletes' needs and feel comfortable asking athletes about themselves and how you can help them to train and perform optimally. Thinking about being inclusive doesn't detract from striving and training hard.

You should know who's in your talent pathway and know who your wider participants are so you can understand barriers that prevent people progressing into your talent system. This knowledge will help you attract participants, develop athletes in your talent system and increase your talent pool.

That you create an open and inclusive environment where a group that is under-represented would not feel 'out of place' or unwelcome when taking part in your sport.

You should know who in your pathway may be having difficulties which stem from their financial circumstances. You should carefully consider the geography of talent hubs and training activity and consider its impact on the progression of talented athletes from all parts of England.



## EXAMPLE:

Athletes should feel comfortable being open about themselves. If, for example, it's Ramadan, you may need to adapt the training demands of an athlete who is fasting, or have a conversation with an athlete about how best to accommodate their schedule of prayers.

By understanding the demographics of young participants in your sport and ETP, you can uncover patterns in behaviour. You may notice that females drop out at critical lifestyle transitions. You could address the issue by focusing lifestyle support around transitions and thereby retain more female athletes in your sport.

Athletes should be able to be themselves in a sport environment. For example, an LGBT athlete would feel comfortable being 'out' in the changing room as the environment allows people to be themselves – by ensuring that any homophobic/biphobic/transphobic language is immediately challenged and made clear it's not tolerated.

By knowing who in your ETP may be affected by their financial circumstances you would, for example, be able to apply for funding awards for athletes such as Backing the Best. You may be able to partner with organisations or businesses to provide equipment at a lower cost and adapt training schedules to cater for athletes who may have to use public transport to get to training.

## TALENT WORKFORCE



**COMPRISED OF A WIDE AND VARIED GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS WITH A BLEND OF VOLUNTARY AND PROFESSIONAL ROLES, WORKING TOGETHER TO DELIVER OUR ENGLAND TALENT PATHWAYS**

The Talent Workforce comprises of individuals fulfilling leadership, management, administrative, coaching, officiating, sports science and people development functions.

Some work within national governing body talent programmes, either contracted or employed directly by NGBs. Many others are employed by organisations partnered with NGBs to deliver local talent development or high-performance programmes, often within education environments or community facilities. The system continues to be underpinned by an extraordinary network of committed volunteers introducing large numbers of young people to sport and nurturing their development into and within talent pathways.

Talented athletes are a dedicated and committed group who need be challenged and supported in almost equal measure if their rate of progress is to be optimal.

Hence the England Talent Pathway (ETP) workforce, particularly pathway leaders and coaches, are central figures in influencing talented athletes' development and advising and supporting them and their families. We want to upskill the talent workforce in order that ETPs facilitate optimal progression, deliver a positive experience and do so in an inclusive way.

Like the athletes they work with, a coach or pathway leader's own journey in developing their specialism will be non-linear, experiential and influenced by their working environment and support structures.

The need for appropriately skilled people at all stages of the talent pathway who are supported to create sustainable high performing environments, is an essential ingredient for all sports.

We'll collaborate with sports and other sport system stakeholders to provide targeted learning and development opportunities to better support and develop ETP leaders, coaches and support teams.

We'll be proactive in addressing priority areas like mental health and wellbeing, adoption of robust policies and procedures and embedding key governance and leadership practices.



## TALENTED ATHLETES



### ***AN ATHLETE WHO SHOWS THE POTENTIAL TO DEVELOP THE SKILLS AND BEHAVIOURS OF THEIR SPORT TO A WORLD-CLASS STANDARD***

Athletes selected by their national governing bodies to the England Talent Pathway will have shown some characteristics or abilities to indicate that they have the potential to perform.

Whilst an athlete on the talent pathway may often be deemed 'talented', first and foremost, they are a person who displays a high level of engagement with their sport and they show it through a commitment to training and competition.

We need to be mindful that only a small minority of these athletes will ultimately represent the nation at a senior international level, therefore the development journey itself should be similarly valuable as the destination.

We advocate a holistic (whole person) approach to development, whereby the athlete's individual development needs as a person are met in tandem with their technical talent development needs.

This will likely include support for dual career (i.e. education and sporting development), increased awareness of mental health and wellbeing and due consideration to their age and stage of sport development.

We'll work with NGBs to use an informed, evidence-based talent identification and selection approach which is broader in its outlook than just relatively simple and discrete performance measures. We'll also challenge and support NGBs to create and publish an athlete-centred development framework/curriculum used to guide all talent development stakeholders, ensuring it has an appropriate long-term focus on the development of that person as a whole, not just as an athlete.



## TALENT DEVELOPMENT



### ***A COMPLEX AND OFTEN NON-LINEAR PROCESS, IT'S THE PRACTICE OF DEVELOPING ATHLETES TO PERFORM TO THEIR POTENTIAL***

At each stage of the talent pathway, pathway leaders, coaches (both England Talent Pathway (ETP) and/or club) and the workforce more broadly, are tasked with encouraging and advancing sport-specific skillsets and behaviours in the athletes they are engaged with.

Developing an athlete's talent (or developing talent in an athlete) so that they can reach their full potential, requires a keen awareness of the individual, their stage of development and a working knowledge of the factors that impact talent development in general alongside those specific to their sport.

This process is complex and there are several factors to consider if we're to best support their progression.

For young athletes, issues such as biological and chronological development (i.e. their physical maturity relative to their age), relative age effect (i.e. the time of year an athlete was born) and the mental and psychological skills for transitioning between stages of the pathway, are all important.

Transitioning between stages is often a source of uncertainty and pressure for young athletes, and we know that only a minority of athletes progress in a linear way.

Therefore, within the context of an athlete's development environment, it's key to ensure that athletes are appropriately inducted into, and supported to progress through, the pathway. If or when they drop out, there should be due process to ensure they remain engaged in the sport.

While it's difficult to accurately quantify exactly how long it may take to reach the top of any given sport (studies indicate anywhere from 3,500 to 10,000 hours or 10 years of practice), we do know it's presently a long and costly journey.

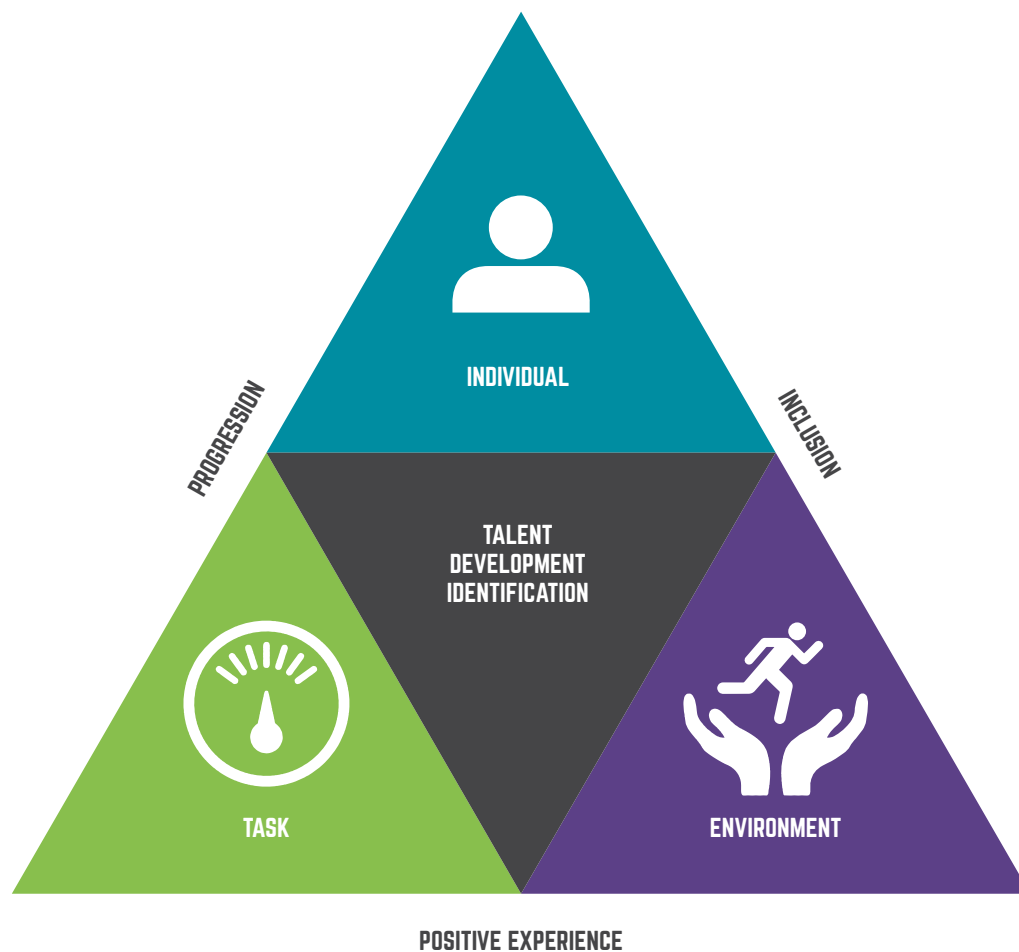
In addition, we also know there is not a level playing field when it comes to supporting an athlete on an ETP.

Participation is a significant commitment both in terms of finances and time, and an individual's access to these resources differ significantly.

This cost can vary according to the sport and geography, and it's likely that these factors may disproportionately impact the take-up, or the progression, of athletes from certain backgrounds.

We'll encourage sports leaders and coaches to ensure that their developmental policies and practices account for the many factors associated with developing talent in (young) athletes. We'll work with national governing bodies to create pathways that are inclusive and have multiple entry points to cater for the various routes athletes may take as they progress on their sporting and educational journey.

**FIGURE 2:** The interaction of factors affecting talent development and identification (adapted from Newell ,1986).



For example, at a given time, athletes deemed as talented will be determined by an interaction between **individual**, **environmental** and **task** constraints.



### INDIVIDUAL

Chronological age  
Maturation status  
Training experiences  
Psychological characteristics



### ENVIRONMENT

Support  
Coaching quality  
Sport policy  
Cultural importance  
Availability of facilities



### TASK

Speed  
Power  
Endurance  
Flexibility  
Balance  
Coordination  
Decision-making



## TALENT DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENT



**ABOVE AND BEYOND A TRAINING VENUE, THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES THE ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICES AND CULTURE THAT INFLUENCE AN ATHLETE'S DEVELOPMENT AND EXPERIENCE**

An inclusive and vibrant environment that nurtures learning and facilitates age and stage appropriate practice, play, training and competition, can be described as an optimal talent development environment. This may be a specific place or training venue, the mix of people in attendance, the atmosphere, the training design or indeed the culture which is often summarised as “what you see, hear and feel”.

Athletes on an England Talent Pathway (ETP) will encounter multiple environments, which could include: ETP camps, school teams, the club ‘daily training environment’ and of course their home and family support system.

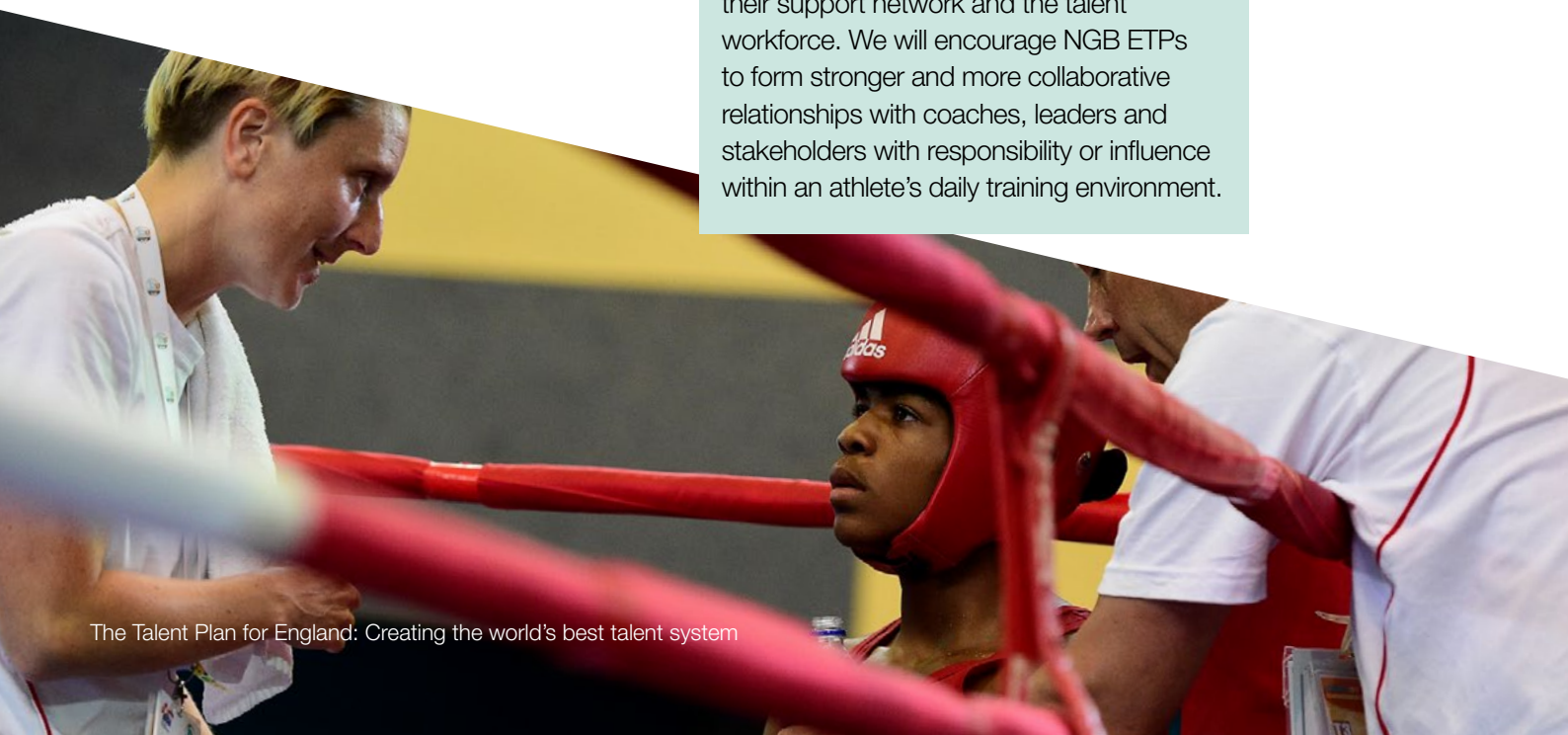
It's key for the many stakeholders, including coaches, teachers and parents, to recognise the part they play in influencing the development of the person and their responsibility to ensure there's sufficient collaboration and engagement to optimise the experience of the athlete and the workforce.

Designing an optimal talent development environment requires someone in a leadership position to maintain an appropriate focus upon it.

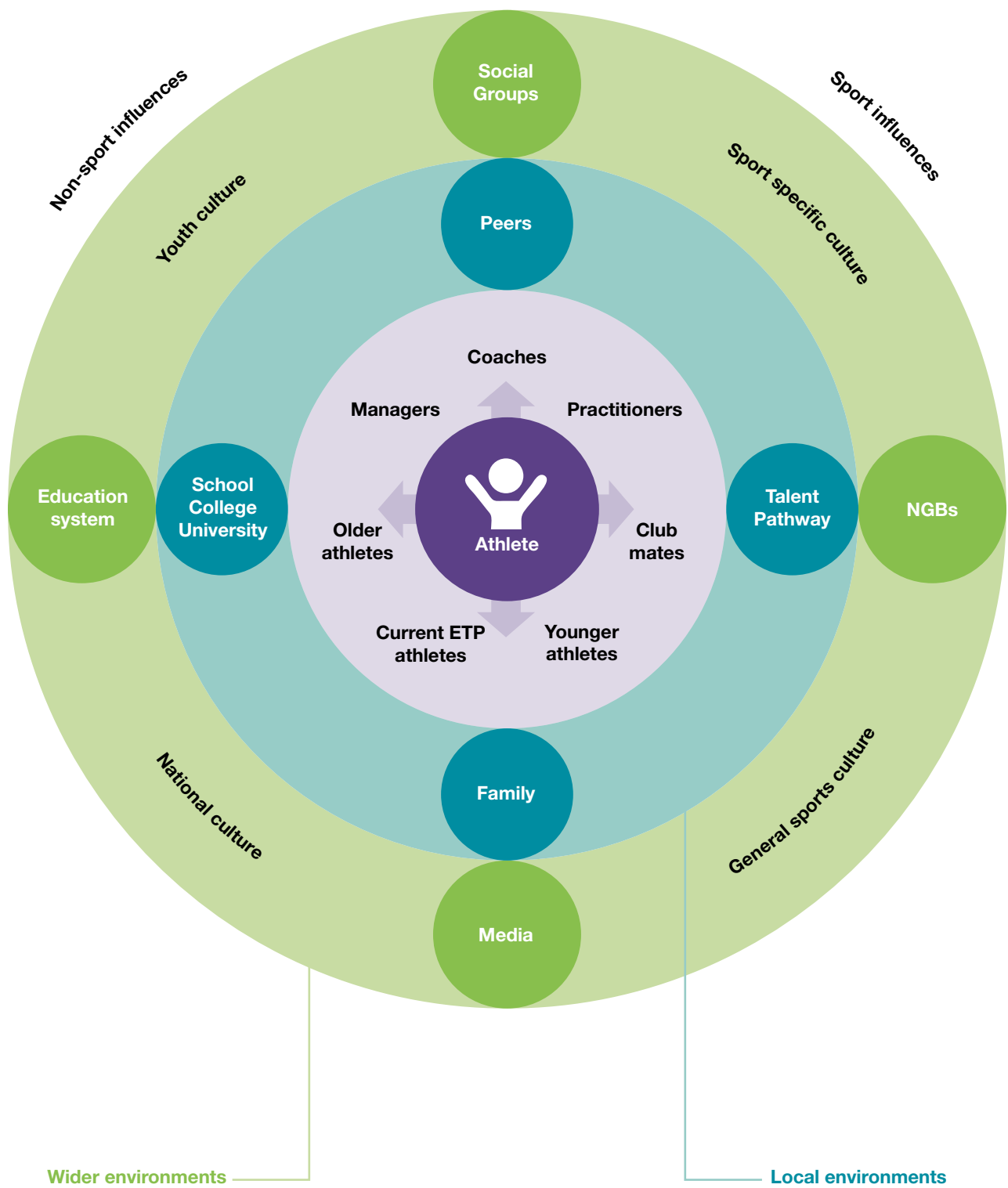
We will work with national governing bodies (NGBs) to ensure sports have positive development environments with an appropriate culture, which puts athlete development at the heart of systematic, management and recruitment decisions.

We believe an optimal environment affords individual athletes (and coaches) the chance to be themselves and to grow as an individual as well as part of a team – to thrive rather than survive.

We'll work with NGB ETP leaders and coaches to provide clarity about the philosophy underpinning their culture and ensure there's a reliable and consistent way of sharing that with their athletes, their support network and the talent workforce. We will encourage NGB ETPs to form stronger and more collaborative relationships with coaches, leaders and stakeholders with responsibility or influence within an athlete's daily training environment.



**FIGURE 3:** An example outline of a talented athlete's development environment (adapted from Henriksen, 2010).



# OUR OBJECTIVES

## PROGRESSION

Develop a talent system in England that produces higher quality athletes throughout the entire pathway, including performance foundations.

Create environments which deliver a positive development experience and encourage retention in the sport system.



80% of 2016 Olympic and Paralympic medallists and UK Sport World Class Programme Athletes originate from England.



Team England were second in the 2018 Commonwealth Games medal table with 136 medals.

## INCLUSION

Ensure England Talent Pathways are accessible and inclusive to all who have the ability and potential.



Create an environment which is inclusive and where prohibitive barriers have been identified and actively removed.





# OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding principles	Our commitment
 <p>We wish to create the world's <b>best sporting talent system</b>, which consistently delivers results.</p>	<p>We'll support sports to enhance their talent pathways and strive for optimal alignment between England talent programmes and subsequent high-performance programmes.</p>
 <p>We believe that providing a <b>positive talent development experience</b> for all stakeholders within a sustainable high performing culture will achieve optimal results.</p>	<p>We'll work with UK Sport, UK Anti-Doping (UKAD) and other partners to ensure sports have an appropriate culture, operate with integrity, advocate clean sport, and have robust policies and procedures in place.</p>
 <p>We want people to be better for being in the England talent system, and advocate a <b>holistic development</b> approach. The journey and the growth of individuals is an end in itself.</p>	<p>We'll promote dual career and strive to embed a development approach that develops the whole person, supporting their educational development in concert with their technical and sporting proficiency.</p>
 <p>We're passionate about athlete welfare and the <b>parity of physical and mental wellbeing</b>.</p>	<p>We'll advocate for the parity of physical and mental wellbeing. We will ensure talent leads and coaches in funded England Talent Pathways have access to appropriate mental health awareness/mental health first aid training.</p>
 <p>We believe national teams should <b>strive to be representative</b> of the population they represent.</p>	<p>We'll create a system which is inclusive and enables everyone to achieve their potential.</p>
 <p>We believe that an inspired, effective and well-supported <b>workforce is crucial</b> to the creation of a sustainable high performing system which delivers excellent developmental experiences for all.</p>	<p>We'll invest in people development and the principles of inclusive leadership. We'll ensure inclusion is embedded into every aspect of our talent pathway, including the recruitment and functions of the talent workforce.</p>
 <p>We recognise that athlete development is <b>complex and non-linear</b>.</p>	<p>We'll reward organisations for their role in long-term development and encourage collaboration.</p>

# IMPLEMENTING THE TALENT PLAN

We've defined five key strategies that will help realise our objectives of progression and inclusion.

## OUR KEY STRATEGIES



# TALENT DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

*WORK WITH AND ACROSS SPORTS TO ENCOURAGE COLLABORATION AND THE WIDESPREAD ADOPTION OF CURRENT BEST PRACTICE IN TALENT IDENTIFICATION, DEVELOPMENT, POSITIVE EXPERIENCE AND TALENT INCLUSION.*

## ACTIONS

**DEVELOP TALENT PATHWAY GUIDELINES DOCUMENTING THE KEY COMPONENTS OF AN INCLUSIVE, PROGRESSIVE AND HIGH-QUALITY PATHWAY TO WORLD CLASS FOR TALENT LEADS AND COACHES.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- A 'go-to' resource referencing the fundamental areas of a high performing and sustainable talent pathway and applying the latest research and insight in talent.
- These guidelines will be developed in conjunction with our colleagues in Home Country Sport Councils, UK Sport and the English Institute of Sport.

**CREATE A NEW NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY PATHWAY REVIEW TOOL, SUPPORTING SPORTS TO BENCHMARK THEIR TALENT PATHWAY AND PRIORITISE KEY FOCUS AREAS.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- A framework and benchmarking tool that enables sports to evaluate their current processes, performances and key development priorities.
- This Pathway review will be aligned with our colleagues in Home Country Sport Councils, UK Sport and the English Institute of Sport.

**DEVELOP AND DEFINE SPORT ENGLAND'S ENGLAND TALENT PATHWAY (ETP) APPROACH TO WELFARE AND WELLBEING AND TAILOR INTERVENTIONS FOR SPORTS.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- In our support of the ETP workforce and athletes, we'll consider the outcomes of the Duty of Care Report, UK Sport's Culture Health Check and the sport system's focus on mental health and wellbeing.
- This ETP approach will amplify the ongoing work in Sport England and that of other system stakeholders such as the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, UK Anti-Doping, UK Sport and the English Institute of Sport.

# TALENT RESEARCH AND INSIGHT

*COMMISSION, REVIEW AND SHARE RESEARCH AND INSIGHT IN ORDER TO INFORM OUR APPROACH AND DISSEMINATE GOOD PRACTICE IN ORDER TO ACCELERATE ATHLETE PROGRESSION, IMPROVE ATHLETE EXPERIENCE AND IMPROVE TALENT INCLUSION.*

## ACTIONS

**COMMISSION A MULTI-PHASE RESEARCH PROJECT TO UNDERSTAND AND INVESTIGATE CURRENT BARRIERS AND HIGH ATTRITION RATES FOR UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS IN ETPS.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- We'll commission a quantitative research project with the aim to understand the current demographic of talent programmes in England by collating insight and research from NGBs and other stakeholders.
- We'll coordinate an expert steering group who will critically analyse key findings and advise and challenge key staff in this area.
- We'll use the findings to inform our short, medium and long-term approach to improving Inclusion in the talent system.

**DEVELOP AND DELIVER AN ATHLETE FOCUSED SURVEY TO UNDERSTAND AND BENCHMARK POSITIVE EXPERIENCE, INCLUDING CULTURE, IN ETPS.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- An opportunity to better understand the experiences of athletes in the ETP and explore what motivates them, and how engaged they are in their daily training environment (club, school etc.) and their ETP programme.
- This research will strive to dovetail with current or upcoming activity in the sport system, e.g. NGBs own surveys, UK Coaching Surveys and the UK Sport Culture Health Check etc.



# TALENT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

***FACILITATE TARGETED LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR TALENT PATHWAY LEADERS AND COACHES IN ORDER TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP THE SKILLS OF AN INCREASINGLY DIVERSE WORKFORCE.***

## ACTIONS

**IN CONJUNCTION WITH OUR EXISTING PARTNERS AND PROVIDERS, WE'LL DELIVER PRIORITY SEMINARS FOR TALENT PATHWAY LEADERS AND COACHES THAT FOCUS ON INCLUSION, CULTURE, WELLBEING AND LEADING SUCCESSFUL TALENT PATHWAYS.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- A programme of learning and development events for ETP leaders with the opportunity of increasing networking and collaboration.
- Sharing of key learnings and insight from the broader high-performance system for the benefit of the talent pathway.
- Support for Talent Pathway leaders to embed inclusion and diversity in ETPs.

**SUPPORT SPORTS TO FOSTER A LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT CULTURE WITHIN THEIR ETP.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- Support for sports to create a coach development model that encourages a lifelong learning journey.
- Evolving a better understanding of the role of the coach developer within the context of the talent pathway.
- The creation of, and support for, a cross-sport community of coach developers and mentors.

**PROACTIVELY FORM NEW PARTNERSHIPS WITH CHARITIES, ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS TO DELIVER SPECIFIC INTERVENTIONS AROUND KEY THEMES.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- New relationships with specialist charities and organisations to deliver bespoke interventions for pathway leaders and coaches regarding mental health, wellbeing and inclusion.
- Work with our established partners to channel and champion these approaches.

# TALENT SYSTEM INVESTMENT AND INITIATIVES

*IMPROVE PROGRESSION, POSITIVE EXPERIENCE AND INCLUSION WITHIN ENGLAND TALENT PATHWAYS BY PERFORMANCE MANAGING OUR EXISTING INVESTMENTS AND CREATING NEW INVESTMENT PROGRAMMES WHERE APPROPRIATE.*

## ACTIONS

**OVERSEE THE SPORT ENGLAND INVESTMENT INTO NGB ENGLAND TALENT PATHWAYS.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- We'll performance manage our investments to drive maximum value and deliver optimal outcomes.
- We'll work to ensure our aspirations regarding progression, positive experience and inclusion are embedded within our existing investments.

**PILOT INITIATIVES TO INCREASE INCLUSIVE PRACTICES IN TALENT IN ORDER TO ENSURE PATHWAYS ARE INCREASINGLY REFLECTIVE OF PARTICIPATION LEVELS AND THE OVERALL POPULATION.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- Opening of a £5 million Talent Inclusion fund to support projects and environments that share our aim to build more representative talent pathways.
- We'll conduct pilots for talent that aim to bridge the gap between inclusive participation activities and established talent programmes.

**CONTINUE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH PARTNERS IN THE DELIVERY OF DIPLOMA IN SPORTING EXCELLENCE, TALENTED ATHLETE SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME, SPORTSAID AND BACKING THE BEST IN RELATION TO OUR PRIMARY AIMS OF PROGRESSION AND INCLUSION.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- A review of current processes, policies and practices will be conducted to map out the contributions of each programme to the talent landscape.
- We'll work to ensure that there are common and consistent principles applied in relation to the application process, the selection criteria and alignment of the programmes in relation to our talent strategy.

**PROMPTLY PROVIDE CLARITY WITH REGARDS TO SPORT ENGLAND'S APPROACH AND INVESTMENT TO SUPPORT THE EFFORTS OF TEAM ENGLAND AT THE 2022 COMMONWEALTH GAMES IN BIRMINGHAM.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- We will comprehensively review our investment to Commonwealth Games England and individual sport medal preparation programmes for the 2018 Commonwealth Games in the Gold Coast.
- We'll work with key stakeholders to explore workforce and athlete development opportunities arising from hosting the 2022 Commonwealth Games.
- We'll work with colleagues at Commonwealth Games England, UK Sport, the Home Country Sports Councils, the British Olympic Association and the British Paralympic Association, to ensure Team England is well prepared in the context of a home games.
- We'll clarify our intentions with regard to any possible investment to support the delivery and preparation of Team England in a timely fashion to enable partners to optimally plan for 2022.

# TALENT COMMUNICATIONS

*RAISE THE PROFILE OF SPORT ENGLAND'S TALENT WORK AND SHOWCASE THE IMPACT OF OUR INVESTMENTS, IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF SPORT ENGLAND'S TALENT OBJECTIVES.*

## ACTIONS

**LAUNCH THE ENGLAND TALENT PLAN AND UNDERTAKE A CORRESPONDING UPDATE OF OTHER COMMUNICATION CHANNELS, ENSURING CONSISTENT MESSAGES AND CLARITY OF OBJECTIVES AND PROGRESS.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- A published Talent Plan incorporating guiding principles and outlining key implementation areas.
- A series of consultations with sports and England Talent Pathway leads to share the plan and discuss implications and opportunities for national governing bodies and key partners.

**INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF CURRENT INFORMATION REGARDING TALENT AND TALENT INCLUSION THROUGH AN UPDATED WEBSITE AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- A talent inclusion communications plan and calendar that highlights significant religious events and times of the year of cultural significance to help increase awareness and understanding of under-represented groups.
- An updated website to showcase best practise through role models, case studies and specific campaigns for key work areas.

**ENGAGE WITH SPECIFIC SECTORS AND SPORTS SYSTEM COLLEAGUES TO SHARE KEY MESSAGES AROUND PROGRESSION, POSITIVE EXPERIENCE AND INCLUSION.**

### **What this will mean in practice...**

- Building and evolving relationships with other sectors like education and health to leverage their influence on a young person's sporting experience and athletic development.
- Supporting other sectors and sport system colleagues with key messages and evidence based recommendations on how to promote and achieve progression and inclusion in the talent system.





# UPCOMING ACTIVITY

Area	Activity	2018		2019		
		Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3
Talent Development Practice	Talent Pathway Guidelines					
	NGB Pathway Review					
	Welfare and wellbeing workshops					
Talent research and insight	Inclusion research					
	Athlete-focused survey					
Talent Workforce Development	ETP Leader's workshops					
	Coach Developer workshops					
	Development Curriculum workshops					
Talent System Investment and initiatives	Inclusion initiatives					
	Commonwealth Games 2022					
Talent Communications	Talent Plan					
	Website updates					

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

## THE EQUALITY ACT 2010 AND THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

The Equality Act 2010 replaced all previous legislation, for example, Equal Pay Act 1970, Race Relations Act 1965, which was designed to protect certain groups from discrimination and brought everything together under one act. The Equality Act 2010 protects nine groups from discrimination, harassment and bullying, known as the Protected Characteristics, they are: age, sex, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment (Bill in progress to replace with Gender Identity), pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership.

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP

Socio-economic group is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, but it's recognised that people in lower socio-economic groups often experience societal inequalities in areas such as health, education and sport.

We recognise that there are barriers to participation in the talent and high-performance system for many people from lower socio-economic groups. Research suggests that parents of athletes in talent pathways spent £7,000 per year on their child's sport.

## UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS

The term 'under-represented groups' refers to groups of people who are not represented in a certain area e.g. a sport, a workplace, a team etc. So, if the athletes in your talent pathway are, for example, predominantly white females, then under-represented groups in your sport would be males and females from a black, Asian and minority ethnic background and males from white backgrounds.

Using 'under-represented groups' is often more appropriate than talking about 'diverse groups' or 'diverse people' because what's diverse for one person isn't for another. For example, if I am bisexual then a 'diverse' person for me may be a straight (heterosexual) person but if you're straight then a diverse person in your eyes may be lesbian, gay, or bisexual. When you talk about 'diverse people' it's unclear what's meant as it's dependent on the interpretation of the person reading/listening. Whereas when you talk about under-represented groups, it's actually about the gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation etc. of the groups who are not represented in your sport, workforce, team etc.

## PERFORMANCE FOUNDATIONS

Performance Foundations is defined as sports-specific programmes where "a selected cohort of highly talented athletes within the upper levels of the Home Nation Talent Pathways are identified, confirmed and prepared to meet the increased demands of the World Class Programme environment". This relationship brings together both organisations' respective expertise and involvement in this area.



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August 2018