

Huge Christmas legacy boost for hundreds of local sports clubs

350 local community sports groups are celebrating today after being offered a total of £17.4 million in Olympic legacy funding from Sport England's Inspired Facilities Fund.

The fund is part of the £135 million Places People Play National Lottery-funded legacy programme that is bringing the magic of a home Olympic and Paralympic Games into communities across England. All 350 facilities will carry the London 2012 Inspire mark – celebrating the link to the Games.



Oxford Boxing Academy is one of 350 facilities to receive Olympic legacy funding

Sport England's Chair, Richard Lewis, said: "For hundreds of clubs and tens of thousands of people, 2012 will be the year their local sports facilities got better.

"We've had unprecedented demand for this fund, which has really hit the mark with sports clubs. It shows we're offering the sporting legacy that people want."

The investments announced today will breathe new life into tired facilities that can be unattractive to sports participants, difficult to maintain and run. Grants have also been offered to convert existing buildings into venues that are suitable for grassroots sport and to allow local clubs to buy the facilities they use.

The investments include:

- £46,000 to buy a new permanent home for a boxing club in Oxford that was at risk of being closed down
- £28,000 to resurface two tennis courts at Windermere Lawn Tennis club, where tree roots had made the existing courts unsafe
- £50,000 to replace the roof at Worcester Citizens' Swimming Pool which currently has a number of serious leaks that were threatening its future
- £50,000 to upgrade a 35-year-old clubhouse at Great Eccleston cricket club in Preston, including disabled access with changing and toilet facilities.

Minister for Sport and the Olympics, Hugh Robertson MP, said: "We want to use the Olympic and Paralympics next summer to inspire a generation to get involved in sport across the country. This is why as part of the £135 million Places People Play legacy programme we invited community sports clubs to apply for funding to upgrade their facilities."

Inspired Facilities has been designed to be as simple and accessible as possible for potential applicants, with a shorter form and a catalogue of ready-made options to choose from. This is the first of five funding rounds of Inspired Facilities; the second round opens on 1 February 2012, offering hundreds more local

groups the chance to bid for a further £10 million of funding.

Places People Play is being delivered by Sport England. We are working in partnership with the British Olympic Association (BOA) and the British Paralympic Association (BPA) with the backing of The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) and the London 2012 Inspire mark.

LOCOG Chair, Seb Coe, said: “This is a fantastic funding project that will deliver a real legacy from the London 2012 Games. It will provide a whole range of sporting opportunities for young people through improved facilities and will I hope inspire them to take up sport.”

Today’s announcement was welcomed by the Local Government Association. Cllr Chris White, Chair of its Culture, Tourism and Sport Board, said: “In spite of budget pressures, councils are striving to keep supporting local sports clubs and want to work with them in creating a lasting and meaningful Olympic and Paralympic legacy. This much-needed funding will hopefully act as a catalyst to further strengthen local partnerships between councils and sports clubs and get more people playing sport.”

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