



**street  
games**  
briefing paper

**Report Subject:**  
**Handball in a doorstep  
sport setting**

**Handball at StreetGames**

Many StreetGames projects are finding that handball is proving to be popular activity. During Year 6 (October 2011- September 2012) StreetGames projects:

- Provided 154 handball sessions.
- Attracting 621 participants to handball sessions.
- Generating 2,071 handball attendances.

The development of two new Handball leadership courses during Year 6 (October 2011 – September 2012); 'Handball Activator' and 'Girls4Gold', will help to upskill the StreetGames workforce of coaches and volunteers and enable more handball sessions to be delivered within our network in the coming years. The deployment of inflatable handball goals in September 2012 to a range of

StreetGames projects will also help to enable more projects to deliver handball sessions.

**What works well in StreetGames settings**

StreetGames projects delivering handball have found that the following tends to work in a doorstep sport setting:

**Place**

- Holding regular StreetGames handball sessions at neighbourhood facilities - within the subjective neighbourhood of the disadvantaged community to negate any reliance on car travel or territorial issues.
- Non-traditional facilities are often used, including MUGAs, recreation areas, youth and community centres. Therefore, coaches need to be flexible and able to adapt

<sup>i</sup> StreetGames data included in the report has been sourced from the 2009 – 2010 Quarterly Monitoring reports provided from the 120 projects included within the StreetGames Network.



# Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

their sessions so that they are appropriate for non-traditional venues and a non-club based environment.

## Time

- Consultation with young people is essential; to ensure that they have input into sessions and a sense of ownership and that they are provided at a convenient time and place to them. Most projects provide evening sessions rather than after school slots.

## Style

- The style of delivery tends to be informal.
- Most participants are new to handball and have never tried the sport before, although there are some projects where handball has long been established – such as Liverpool and Newham. Therefore, most sessions will focus on giving participants the opportunity to ‘have a go’; perhaps introducing just a few short skill based exercises or shooting practice at the start of the session, followed by a game.
- A multi-sport element is often also included to provide variety and attract a diverse range of participants – particularly at sessions where the participants are all new to handball.
- Sessions may include internal matches rather than a formal league/competitive structure. Although there are opportunities to take part in competition via the StreetGames regional festivals and tournaments.
- Open access sessions will attract both males and females and in our experience, they are happy to participate in

mixed gender handball sessions; although a higher proportion usually tend to be male.

## Cost

- Affordable pricing is essential - sessions often charge a nominal fee (such as 50p or £1 per session) to ensure that a value is attached to the sessions.
- Some sessions are provided free of charge– with subsidised funding sourced from a range of partners which could include local authorities, the Police, Community Safety Partnerships, Housing Associations, PCTs and external funding grants.

## Coaches and Volunteers

- The skills of those delivering the sessions are critical. Coaches need to have a good rapport and be able to interact well with participants, as well as having good delivery skills to ensure that sessions are fun, interesting and challenging.
- The engagement and up skilling of local volunteers is extremely important. Not only in terms of the support they provide, but as StreetGames volunteers tend to be recruited internally they act as role models to younger participants and can relate well to those attending.

## Retention

- The following factors are considered to be important in terms of retention/minimising drop-out:
  - Ensuring that the sessions are varied, fun and interesting.



# Background Facts for Doorstep Sport

- The use of rewards/awards – such as certificates and medals.
- Personal contact between the coach and participants to build relationships, provide positive feedback and check they are coming to the next session.
- Internal tournaments and taking part in larger tournaments and festivals (such as those provided via the StreetGames network).
- Regular sessions.
- Providing participants with a diverse range of pathways – which may involve becoming a volunteer at the sessions, access to sports related training/qualifications such as CSLA courses or moving on to join local clubs/teams.
- Promotion mainly takes place via outreach work and links into youth clubs and centres – to directly engage with young people. Some projects provide taster sessions within schools and at community events and will also distribute information and leaflets into schools, youth clubs and local homes.

## StreetGames

StreetGames is the only national charity dedicated to developing sport with disadvantaged communities. It works across the country to try and reverse this long-standing trend and make sport accessible to all regardless of their social circumstances.

A national partner of Sport England, StreetGames is creating networks at national and local levels to strengthen the commitment to doorstep sport, as well as seeking significant funding to make the StreetGames projects sustainable. StreetGames' ambition is to link new doorstep sport with sports clubs, National Governing Bodies of Sport programmes, local authority services, and primary care trust projects.

Recognised by the London 2012 Olympic & Paralympic Games Inspire Mark, StreetGames Legacy Leaders is creating a lasting legacy of doorstep sport in the UK.

## Partnerships

- The development of partnerships with other community organisations is essential and should include those beyond the sport/leisure sector, such as Youth Services, the Police, Youth Offending Teams and Health sector. Partners can help develop sessions, provide joint funding, promote sessions or refer participants.
- Projects highlight a range of benefits from belonging to the StreetGames network which include:
  - Access to regional tournaments and festivals.
  - Regular opportunities to share ideas, gain information on best practice and attend relevant training sessions.
  - A recognised brand/kit.
  - Support with volunteer development.
- England Handball has been working directly with a number of StreetGames projects to develop the sport within a doorstep sport environment which has been beneficial.
- Projects have suggested that additional NGB support would be helpful in terms of providing guest/subsidised coaching sessions at doorstep sport projects.<sup>i</sup>

