



## MAJOR SPORTS EVENTS STRATEGY FOR THE SOUTH EAST REGION



## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this Strategy is to identify the ways in which major sports events can generate the maximum benefits for the Region, expressed in terms of the goals set for the agencies in the partnership.

The South East has much to offer, providing an unrivalled experience for the visitor. An appealing mix of high quality beautiful countryside, a long and varied coastline, areas of outstanding natural beauty, numerous attractive historic cities and towns all provide a magnificent setting for sport, and all are in the enviable location as the gateway to England.

As a region we have many world-class venues. We are proud to host Stoke Mandeville, the home of disability sport. The region is famous for world-renowned brands and events such as Brands Hatch for motor racing, the Epsom Derby for horse racing, Henley Regatta, Blenheim Palace for eventing, Cowes Week, show jumping at Hickstead. In 2006 the spectacular Dorney Lake will host the World Rowing Championships.

In 2005 Sport England cooperated with the South East England Development Agency, the South East Cultural Consortium and Tourism South East to employ Strategic Leisure Ltd to prepare a Major Sports Events Strategy Framework for the South East Region.

The research showed that major sports events don't just attract more business and leisure visitors to the region. They also help raise the profile of the regional offer, helping to attract inward investors, making the South East special and distinctive. The study also demonstrated that the people of the South East benefit economically and socially and major sports events contribute significantly to the quality of life in the South East. Sport brings us together, it enriches our lives, it inspires us.

Sports Events South East was formed as an outcome of the research. By working strategically and in partnership we can capitalise on major sports events across the region. This will create greater potential to boost economic growth making the South East a competitive, professional and desirable destination for hosting sports events.

The partnership can only reap these beneficial outcomes if we all work with a wide range of external partners in the Region. This Strategy has been developed in consultation with such partners, and represents an agreed approach to this important area of work.

Sue Mappin  
Chair Major Sports Events Steering Group



## CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Important Considerations
3. Key Opportunities
4. Making The Strategy Happen
5. Implementing The Strategy
6. What Major Sports Events Should be Supported



## SOME IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

'Major' sports events in this Strategy are those events that are recognised by National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGBs) as being of International Significance. All such events offer a number of sporting benefits. All domestic participants can benefit from home advantage, and a local competition gives the opportunity to young athletes to sample international competition without the expense and upheaval of international travel. National Governing Bodies of Sport can enhance their international reputations and British Sport in general can enhance its reputation in international sport.

However, not all events that are 'major' in terms of sporting outcomes are important in terms of other types of benefit. The range of key opportunities shown overleaf, requires particular types of major events in order to be achieved.

Conversely, smaller, high quality events can have significant impact within a local economy, and in minority sport. Relative to their size some will provide value for money to certain agencies and other partners seeking particular outcomes. For example, the County Youth Games provide excellent sports development opportunities and so deserve Sport England South East's support.

Nonetheless, there is the potential to hold major sports events in the South East that will deliver benefits consistent with the strategic aims of a number of the agencies involved in the partnership described above, as well as the strategic aims of other partners in the Region.

Not all of the potential benefits are caused directly by staging events. A strategic approach is needed to ensure that the required benefits are delivered by the particular event.

It is unlikely that any one event will provide all the agencies in the partnership with all the outcomes they are seeking. It will be necessary to take a 'portfolio' view, whereby all the benefits sought by the partners are provided over the course of a year's portfolio of supported events, and each individual event achieves at least a minimum number of the benefits, relative to the level of support required from one or more agencies.

If the portfolio approach is to work, there needs to be a systematic framework in place to evaluate major sports events in advance, so that any funding decisions by any partners to this Strategy can be based on transparent criteria which deliver the partner's objectives in a cost effective way.

It is relatively easy to demonstrate the benefit of events in terms of economic impact and media exposure, but less so for quality of life issues such as health, sports development and life long learning effects. The evaluation of an event needs to be proportionate to the scale of the event.



## KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAJOR SPORTS EVENTS IN THE SOUTH EAST REGION

### CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

Events can play a key role in supporting the industries of the 3 identified sports clusters identified in the South East; motor racing, marine sports and equestrian sports.

### TOURISM

Events can be a key component in high value sports tourism. Events can promote the region as a destination for watersports, golf, cycling, riding and other sports.

### MARKETING INDUSTRIAL ADVANTAGE

The hosting of successful events can convey the image of a 'can-do' city or region. Visiting international athletes, officials and particularly media personnel can go away with a positive image, which can be transferred into advantageous investment decisions within any aspect of the regional economy. Manchester's economic renaissance after the Commonwealth Games is one example.

### LOCATIONAL ADVANTAGE

The unique relationship between the South East Region and mainland Europe, along with excellent airport connections, means the Region is ideally suited to hold European and World level events.

### LONDON 2012

The proximity of the Region to the London 2012 site in East London, along with the rowing venue in the Region at Dorney Lake, offers excellent opportunities to benefit from the 2012 Games in many ways.

### REGENERATION

Events such as Cowes Week and the Open Golf at Sandwich can integrate high profile sport into regeneration programmes focused on areas of deprivation. Such events give pride and profile to communities, as well as generating direct and indirect economic benefits.

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Permanent venues such as Brands Hatch and Hickstead can provide permanent employment, often in direct support of industry clusters. One off events provide casual work and employment in peripatetic support industries such as security.

### VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT

Events provide the opportunity for people to volunteer in sport. This may provide social engagement for some, and transferable employment skills for others. It also helps to bring new people into sports volunteering, who can then help with grass roots sport.

### SPORTS DEVELOPMENT LEGACY

Events can provide a legacy of participation in sport. Spectators can become enthused to try a sport, casual participants can be encouraged to increase their participation and their performance level, and associated 'have a go' opportunities can provide the first experience of a new sport for some. Mass participation events such as the Great South Run can be particularly effective in this regard.

### SUBSIDIARY MARKETING

The interest generated by events can provide an opportunity for agencies and external partners to launch or highlight other programmes at meetings called in association with an event.

### DEVELOPMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Events can prove to be a catalyst to provide new sporting and ancillary infrastructure. It can also encourage improvements in existing infrastructure of both types.

### PLACE MARKETING

TV and media coverage of major sports events can be very influential in enhancing the perceived image of particular locations



Picture courtesy of John Carter

## MAKING THE STRATEGY HAPPEN

### THE ROLE OF THE PARTNERSHIP AGENCIES IN PROMOTING THIS STRATEGY

The key to a successful realisation of the strategy is the concept of partnership – different interests working together and pooling resources and expertise to drive the strategy forward. These partnerships need to be real, based on trust and teamwork. There are a large number of partners who have a strong role to play and our collective commitment is crucial – everyone has a role to play.

SEEDA, SESE, TSE and SECC will carry out the following roles in order to maximise the benefits from these key opportunities

- Take a lead role in developing the Strategy in consultation with other external partners
- Enhance communication and co-ordination between external partners
- Highlight and maximise the benefits of major sports events to deliver on their strategic priorities
- Take a strategic approach to existing and future sporting infrastructure for events
- Develop competitive advantage for the Region by gathering and sharing knowledge
- Assist external partners to play to their strengths and maximise the benefits from events
- Enhance economies of scale and value for money by using a portfolio approach to events
- Establish and support a Major Sports Events Forum for external partners in the Region
- Monitor and evaluate the success of this work in terms of the benefits sought

## IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

Key priorities for the implementation of this Strategy for all relevant organisations are as follows –

- Co-ordinate and share information on the existing and potential portfolio of events in the Region
- Ensure that the role of UK Sport in securing major sports events is recognised and that work to implement this strategy is developed in consultation with UK Sport as appropriate.
- Compile an authoritative and up to date calendar of events, and a database of bids for events
- Provide information to ensure that an up to date regional database of venues and ancillary accommodation is maintained.
- Develop transparent appraisal, monitoring and evaluation procedures by which to decide in advance which events meet strategic priorities and what level of investment or other support will be relevant.
- Ensure that events have robust monitoring and evaluation systems in place, by which they can demonstrate the contribution they make to a range of desirable benefits, many of which are shown in the 'key opportunities' section above.
- Make use of the substantial data available from both the UK and abroad concerning the benefits of events to assess and benchmark decision making in the South East.
- Determine where to invest support or money into events in order to add value and to achieve the benefits identified by the relevant organisation.
- Take actions to protect existing and established events in the Region, where these events meet the appropriate criteria.
- Support and assist bids from the Region to host new events, provided that the proposed event meets the appropriate criteria.
- Enhance the benefits deriving from existing events, such as encouraging visitors to stay an extra night, in order to enhance the economic and tourism impact, or encouraging organisers to enhance the sports development legacy of existing events.
- Develop a regional knowledge base in major sports events to underpin current activities and to inform future policy and activity. To learn from both positive and negative experiences.
- Develop intellectual capital in event management that is retained within the Region to help give the Region competitive advantage in the global market place.
- Act as advocates for major sports events and their benefits to the Region, in order to enthuse potential collaborators from all fields and to gain support from those who control events.
- Support events that show the potential to develop into events achieving desired benefits, provided that the event has a clear and achievable development plan as to how to deliver these benefits in future years.
- Acknowledge that the lead-in times for many major sports events are surprisingly long, and this means that organisations may need to take a long-term view of the benefits that will be achieved.
- Co-operate with and assist the South East Major Sports Events Forum to deliver these key priorities in a 'multi-agency' approach that demonstrates genuine partnership.
- Work with the Major Sports Events Manager to deliver these key priorities, and to add value to existing and new events in the South East Region.



## WHICH MAJOR SPORTS EVENTS SHOULD BE SUPPORTED AND ENCOURAGED?

The portfolio approach to the development and support of events means that different organisations may support and encourage different events, as they are primarily focussed on different benefits and outcomes. However, in many cases the benefits sought overlap, and so different organisations may find common ground in supporting particular events.

Partners to this Strategy may like to consider supporting or assisting events that demonstrate one or more of the following features –

- Are consistent with the content of this Strategy
- Achieve one or more of the benefits required by their own organisation and by other partners to this Strategy in a cost effective manner
- Contain a sports development legacy that encourages participation in sport and activity
- Require minimal infrastructure investment or which are linked to planned infrastructure upgrades
- Provide a boost to the economy during off peak periods to maximise economic benefit
- Deliver a genuine economic return on investment
- Deliver a range of social returns that benefit a community directly or indirectly
- Engender a sense of civic pride amongst local residents
- Achieve a high media profile domestically and internationally
- Showcase the South East and its attributes in a positive manner
- Develop transferable skills amongst volunteers, coaches, officials and other participants
- Are major international sports events with high kudos and wide appeal
- Have the potential to become regular features of the South East sporting calendar
- Are available deliverable within the regional ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ regional infrastructure





## PARTNERS



### **SOUTH EAST ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

Most relevant strategic document – the Regional Economic Strategy

Website – [www.seeda.co.uk](http://www.seeda.co.uk)

Address - Berkeley House, Cross Lanes, Guildford, Surrey GU 1 1YA Phone 01483 484200



### **SPORT ENGLAND SOUTH EAST**

Most relevant strategic document – Mission: Possible – The South East Plan for Sport

Website – [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org)

Address – 51a Church Street, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire RG 4 8AX Phone 0118 948 3311



### **SOUTH EAST CULTURAL CONSORTIUM**

Most relevant strategic document – the Cultural Cornerstone

Website – [www.culturesoutheast.org.uk](http://www.culturesoutheast.org.uk)

Address - Government Office for the South East, Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 4GA Phone 01483 882275/01483 882696



### **TOURISM SOUTH EAST**

Most relevant strategic document – Sports Resorts

Website – [www.tourismsoutheast.co.uk](http://www.tourismsoutheast.co.uk)

Address – 18 Pantiles Chambers, 85 High Street, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1XP

Phone 01892 506865

The Major Sports Events Manager is hosted by Tourism South East at the above address