THE WOMEN’S SPORT CONFERENCE 2014
Remembering a day of inspiration - 30th October 2014
Thank you
Reflections from Helen Grant, Minister for Sport, and Ruth Holdaway, CEO Women in Sport

A day to remember
Relive the excitement as #WomensSportConf trended across the UK

England & Wales Cricket Board
Showcasing how women’s cricket has progressed

News from our partners
Words of advice and inspiration from SSE, Virgin Active, Sky Sports, Sport England, sports coach UK, English Institute of Sport, Newton and EY

Make this the year you...
How to make women’s sport even bigger in 2015

Supporting women’s sport
Find out more about the wider work of our sponsors and supporters.
Thank you

Reflections on the Women’s Sport Conference

Since taking on the role of Minister for Sport in October 2013, I have made women and sport one of my top priorities. I want to see women enjoying sport; playing, watching and working in sport, free from unnecessary obstacles or social prejudices.

My vision for the Women’s Sport Conference was to bring together the key players in women’s sport and provide a forum for exchanging ideas and developing solutions. We started the conversation, but it’s important we capitalise on the enthusiasm and passion from the event and harness that energy as we look to the future.

On the day of the conference, together with my Women and Sport Advisory Board, we published our interim report. I am continuing to work with the Board to further our priority areas to bring about lasting change in women’s sport.

The Sport England campaign This Girl Can is also playing a huge part in challenging stereotypes and changing attitudes about women’s sport, so I urge you to get involved!

We were so lucky to have such fantastic people speaking at the conference and delivering breakout sessions. Whether you attended the conference or not, I hope these reflections of the day will re-inspire you to further the women’s sport agenda in your own field of work.

We at Women in Sport have been overwhelmed by how many of you left Lord’s that day feeling inspired to do things differently. I hope that this is helpful round up of the conversations and debates of the day.

We believe that women’s sport is reaching a turning point, and 2015 is already shaping up to be another great year.

We unveiled our new name and strategy at the conference. We are now Women in Sport, combining 30 years of heritage in the sector with a future of transforming sport for the benefit of every woman and girl in the UK.

We believe in the power of sport, a place where women and girls can come together and get involved. In that spirit, we want to collaborate, celebrate and change the world of sport for women and girls, from the inside.

It is an exciting new chapter for us a charity, and one we hope you will continue to support us on. Keep in touch with us at www.womeninsport.org and @womeninsport_uk

Celebrating an incredible year

Thank you all for attending the first Transforming Sport Women’s Sport Conference, and for making the day the success we all hoped it would be.

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At 3pm on the afternoon of 30 October, 250 people in a room at Lord’s Cricket Ground got the Women’s Sport Conference trending at number 1 in the UK. Everyone who attended talked about the buzz of excitement in the room, the exciting speakers, the thought provoking conversations over tea and scones.

We have gathered the tweets of the day, some of which are shown on this page. Why not remind yourself of some of the things we talked about?

You can find the rest on Storify.
News from our partners

ECB were delighted to be the major NGB sponsor of the recent Transforming Sport event, which highlighted the successes and future opportunities that exist for women’s sport.

The event gave ECB the opportunity to showcase how cricket has progressed in providing opportunities for women and girls to take part. We were able to provide valuable insight on how commercial investment into women’s sport is possible and should become more typical throughout sport in the future. The event itself provided some really engaging and motivating announcements including the upcoming This Girl Can campaign – which aims to reduce people judging women on their involvement in sport – ECB are fully supportive of this campaign and will utilise it to enhance what we do within cricket. ECB are fully committed to providing opportunities for all to take part – watch our One Game video here.

Moving forward, ECB want to continue to be at the forefront of providing more opportunities for women and girls. To complement the messages at the event we will continue to build on our progress in the following areas:

- Increasing opportunities for women and girls to participate in activities through a participant led approach
- Improving marketing and communication materials to increase participation
- Giving women more chances in cricket such as leadership, coaching, officiating, administrating and playing

Over the next few years we can showcase some great cricket which will make significant contributions to increasing sports participation for women. Australia will try to recapture the Ashes in England over the 2015 summer and this starts the build up to the ICC Women’s World Cup in 2017 which will be hosted in England and Wales.

These events will provide ECB and Cricket the opportunity to increase commercial and media investment into cricket and women’s sport.

Transforming Sport is going to act as the catalyst for change... together we have the power to change the landscape and show sport is a great choice for everyone.

For more information on women’s cricket and our activity please view here www.ecb.co.uk/womens

Make your sport attractive to potential participants, the media or investors. Don’t be afraid to break traditions and do something different and innovative.

Leshia Hawkins, Business Development Manager, England and Wales Cricket Board

We were lucky to have incredible speakers and sessions at the conference, and we have asked them to share some words of advice and inspiration from the day.

Clare Connor

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Back in October, Lords Cricket Ground hosted the first national Women’s Sport Conference, and SSE was proud to support such a game-changing event.

Hosted by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Women in Sport, the event asked why there were differences between men and women in sport and aimed to transform sport for women, both for professional athletes and for women and girls who want to participate at any level.

The day was action packed, and included guest speakers, panel discussions and a radio broadcast. The speakers, including Judy Murray, Captain of British Fed Cup team, were inspirational and showed a true passion to change sport for women, and the panel discussions opened up the debate around how to make that change.

SSE is a diverse business with a core focus on equality and diversity, and after our successful sponsorship of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, and ongoing partnership with SportsAid to operate the SSE Next Generation programme, SSE was well placed to support such an important conference.

The event also offered a deeper understanding of how SSE can continue to raise the profile of women in sport across the UK and Ireland, with a key focus on diversity and equality. This is particularly poignant given only 0.4% of all sports sponsorship money is spent on women’s sport.

The benefits of participating in sport are not just related to maintaining your fitness. Women who participate in sport, at any level, gain confidence and courage, are adaptable to change and have a passion for excellence, all traits that are effective in business as well as on the sports field.

Our responsibility as a business means that we will maintain and develop our diversity focus. We will evolve our long term agreement with our Next Generation programme, to assist talented young girls in sport, by increasing our female athlete intake in 2015.

For more information on SportsAid and our Next Generation programme please visit www.moreforyou.sse.co.uk and www.sportsaid.org.uk
There is increasing conversation about how different partners can collaboratively tackle the critical issue of physical inactivity amongst girls. Crucially, this is coupled with recognition that innovative public, private and third sector partnerships are key to engaging girls in transforming their sport and physical activity behaviours for themselves.

The AttrActive Project, a collaboration between Virgin Active, Women in Sport and Handsworth Grange Community Sports College, asked the question: how do we engage girls in designing, delivering and communicating physical effective interventions in order to inspire them to be more active? The AttrActive Project engaged over 100 girls aged 11-16 in the issue of girls’ physical inactivity within their school and provided them with the tools to create the solution for themselves. In only 10 weeks the project had a significant impact on the girls, particularly in building confidence and self-esteem:

- 91% were inspired by the Active Inspiration programme to be more physically active;
- 86% said that taking part in the Active Inspiration programme has made them feel more confident about themselves.

Watch the project’s inspiring films:

Click below to discover what was presented at breakout sessions on the day.
Sponsorship Can Level the Playing Field for Women

In 2015, the women’s Boat Race between Oxford and Cambridge, Newton’s fifth race as sponsor, will take place on the same day, over the same 6.8km course as the world-famous (men’s) Boat Race – for the first time ever in the race’s 88-year history.

The story of how equality is rapidly being achieved in this event convinces me that now is the moment for business to back women’s sports.

In 2010 Newton was considering different sponsorship possibilities. Simply putting our name on a shirt worn by an already well-known team didn’t resonate. We wanted to be actively involved as a sponsor and influence the evolution of an event. As we looked beyond the obvious, I was genuinely shocked to discover that the women’s Boat Race had no money in it.

The following year, for a not-so princely initial sum, the front pages of national newspapers carried a picture of the Oxford crew, with Natalie Redgrave (daughter of legendary Sir Steve) celebrating triumphant, and “Newton” writ large across her shirt. On advertising alone, our initial investment had more than paid off.

Following that success, we tentatively suggested raising our stakes to back the women at the right level to get them to the Tideway. We were pushing on an open door.

Both clubs had long dreamed of this, and the decision was made – the women would go to the Tideway, and since September 2012, the women’s clubs have received equal funding to the men’s.

The rags-to-riches story of the women at the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Clubs is only the tip of the iceberg of opportunities for companies to develop women’s sports.

The figures of commercial investment in female sport and its media coverage are pitiful, yet viewer data suggests a passionate interest exists. Companies can help meet this demand – in 2015, owing to Newton’s sponsorship, the BBC will be covering the women’s Boat Race live.

I am convinced that more success for girls on the school playing field can help level the playing field at work. It’s easy to talk about an Olympic legacy – through financing, businesses can create a virtuous circle. What’s to lose?
At EY we have seen firsthand the power of workplace diversity, and we are committed to contributing to a sporting legacy of inclusion, excellence, integrity and respect. We believe that business itself is a team sport, and we strive to build a better working world by expanding opportunities for women leaders in all sectors. We have a long history of creating and convening networks, helping female entrepreneurs scale their companies and driving the global dialogue around the advancement of women.

By uniting the power of sport with the power of women leaders around the world, we believe the impact is increased exponentially. That’s why we are proud to have established the Women Athletes Business Network (WABN) to help more elite women athletes become exceptional leaders as they retire from sport. By building a bridge between athletes and top women leaders, we can create a support network that will contribute to individual success, inspire the next generation, enrich communities and spur economies around the world.

**The online community.**

We are building a powerful network of elite women athletes who are making an impact outside of their sport. We will connect these inspiring women with EY's robust business network around the world. This community is designed to share lessons learned from career transitions, mentor and open doors, create opportunities and inspire the next generation.

Our online community provides elite female athletes with the opportunity to network with each other, share experiences, ask questions and seek advice on post-sport careers. WABN members can also connect online with successful businesswomen on a variety of career and leadership topics.

In partnership with the International Women’s Forum (IWF), we’ve created a customized Mentoring Program for 25 elite athletes per year. Mentees are chosen for this program based on their unique potential to become impactful leaders outside of their sport.

**Stories of inspiration.**

We will highlight the success stories of elite women athletes who have made a positive impact outside of their sport and share how they made a successful post-sport transition into their chosen career. We will also show how sport has influenced some of today’s most powerful women worldwide.

**The impact of women’s advancement in sport and society.**

To help guide this journey, we will commission new research to help us understand (1) the connections between sport and leadership and (2) the societal and economic impact that a woman’s access to and participation in sport can have on education, health and global economic development.

**Making the connection: women, sport and leadership**

A background in sport can improve a woman’s leadership potential and help her land a job, according to women executives surveyed by the EY Women Athletes Business Network and espnW. Just what is it about sport participation that can help speed girls and women down the path to success?

- The top three leadership skills developed by sport
  - **Mentorship skills**
  - **The ability to see projects through completion**
  - **Team building**

**Does sport help?**

A resounding “hurrah” on their communities and the world around them.

**Why athletes are fit for jobs**

Two out of three respondents say a candidate’s background in sport would be a positive influence when making a hiring decision.

**Candidates with a sport background are thought to have the following traits:**

1. Strong work ethic
2. Team players
3. Determined

**“Sport teaches intangible leadership skills that can’t be taught in the classroom.”**

Dell Breucker-Hartnack
Global Vice Chair, Public Policy, EY, a US Title IX basketball scholarship recipient and one of the World’s 100 Most Powerful Women, according to Forbes

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Our goal is to broaden the impact that elite women athletes — who are, by nature, high achievers, influential leaders and team players — can make on not only the next generation of women in sport but also on their communities and the world around them.

Find out more at www.ey.com/womenathletesnetwork or follow us on Twitter @EYWomenAthletes
Sport England’s bold new campaign tackling head on the barriers that stop millions of women being more active launched in January and has quickly caught fire, becoming a huge talking point across the country and the globe.

First announced by CEO Jennie Price at Transforming Sport: The Women’s Sport Conference, This Girl Can is the first campaign of its kind to feature women of all shapes, sizes and sporting abilities that sweat and jiggle as they exercise.

The campaign comes as research, carried out by Sport England, revealed two million fewer women than men play sport regularly. The driving force behind its creation is the insight that a fear of judgment - on appearance, ability or how they chose to spend time on themselves - puts women of all ages off exercising.

And it has clearly struck a chord with women all over the country as well as across the globe!

As ads aired on prime time TV, cinema and shopping centre screens and billboards across England, it quickly spread via social media ignited discussion and debate as far afield as US, Canada, Russia and across Europe. To date the TV ad has been viewed more than 13.4 million times on YouTube and Facebook and the overwhelming response has been positive.

With the campaign launched, Sport England is now focussed on working with partners across sports sector to activate the campaign and bring it to life on the ground for woman across England.

To join the conversation, log on to Thisgirlcan.co.uk, find us on Facebook use hashtag #thisgirlcan
Make this year the year you...

1. Get behind *This Girl Can*, the fantastic new campaign from Sport England.
2. Support Glamour magazine’s great campaign to say no to sexism in sport.
3. Get networked, join the Women’s Sport Network.
4. Get on board, take part and Get Inspired.
5. Watch women play, get along to one of the many fixtures on the women’s sport calendar.
A big thank you to all our sponsors for making the first Women’s Sport Conference such a success.