

## **Introduction**

This report provides an outline of both the national training day and mentoring that have taken place during the extension period and the impact they have had on the Sporting Champions and the programmes supported.

## **Sporting Champions National Athlete Development Day** **28th September 2016 – Birmingham Ibis Hotel (Central)**

The final Sporting Champions training took place in Birmingham, on the 28th September 2016, just prior to the programme formally closing, with **21 athletes** in attendance. The day had different outcomes compared to previous training days, as it focused on the athletes' **future development** and **signposting** them to a variety of different exit routes. It was an ideal opportunity to empower the athlete to think about the skills they had developed, both as part of the programme and in their journey to elite level, and where they could harness these skills and continue working as an athlete mentor/role model. The day, was planned well in advance and time was taken to consider the athletes needs in transitioning from the Sporting Champions programme.

The outcomes for the day were for the athletes:

- 1. To have a clear understanding of Sport England's Sport Strategy "Towards an Active Nation".**
- 2. To be aware of the skills required to diversify in the current landscape.**
- 3. To gain further knowledge of other organisations/opportunities where athlete role models are deployed.**
- 4. To celebrate the successful impact of the Sporting Champions programme.**

Craig Heap, a highly experience Sporting Champion, was asked to deliver this training, not only because of his vast knowledge and experience working as a role model / mentor, but also because he has made the **successful transition** into retirement from elite sport and developed new "products" and worked across different sectors.

Craig was inspirational in his delivery throughout the day and left the group feeling energized and excited by the future. Assisting Craig was John Merne (Sport England), Andy Barrow (an experienced Sporting Champion and public speaker), Leon Lloyd (Athlete Transition Specialist), Claire Bennett (Dame Kelly Holmes Trust) and Martin Corck (Inspired Exchange). The objective was to utilise the depth of experience from all of these speakers to share how and where athletes could be deployed in the future. It was also about presenting a solid support system and identifying potential exit routes so that athletes felt supported and motivated to continue inspiring others after the programme had ended.

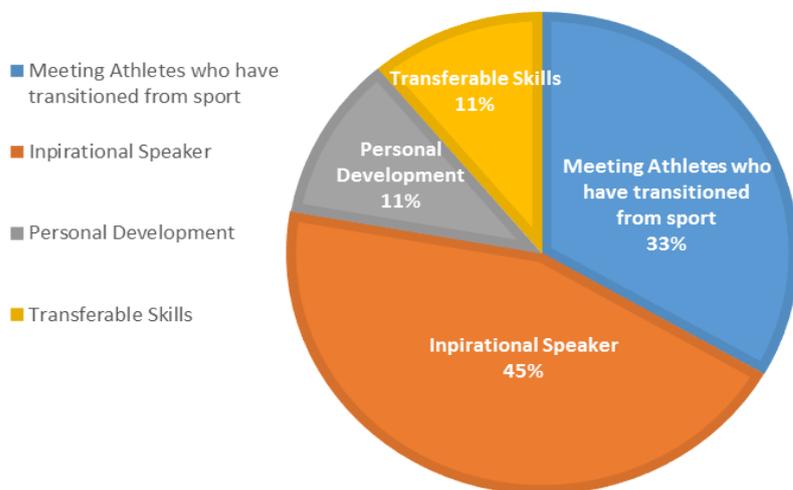
The session was a huge success and the **top three learnings** from the day were:

Know your audience/ their outcomes and develop different delivery methods so its relevant and appropriate for each audience.

Many opportunities out there; sport gives you so many skills for life e.g. resilience, adaptable.

Identify your USP, build your personal brand; grow your own profile, and learn to improve/develop your own delivery constantly.

## WHAT ATHLETES FOUND MOST BENEFICIAL ABOUT THE TRAINING DAY



Athlete feedback from the day also emphasises the positive impact, comments including –

*“The successful transition stories of retired athletes, gives me confidence to move on in life.” Sporting Champion*

*“Information on potential athlete mentor programmes where I can continue my personal development & working opportunities with your people/other programmes was great.” Sporting Champion*

There was a great sense of pride around what the Sporting Champions programme has achieved in terms of **raising aspirations** of young people, but also a positive energy about what would be possible in the future. Athletes not only gained further knowledge of Sport England’s Towards an Active Nation” strategy, but also had the chance to reflect on their many **transferable** skills and what they have to offer in any future deployment opportunities. From the athlete feedback there was real value in hearing from athletes who had been through a similar **transition process** and having the opportunity to network with others.

The feedback also showed that there is still a demand for this type of training, where athletes can share with others and feel they are being listened to and still cared about. With this in mind, the athletes were signposted to a variety of opportunities including -

- Signing up to a new speaker offer (Inspired Athletes) introduced by Inspired Exchange;
- Enrolling on the Dame Kelly Holmes Trust’s GiveBack team.





## **Sporting Champions' Regional Athlete Mentors**

All Sporting Champions have the opportunity to access one of **the Regional Athlete Team Leaders** team to help them plan, develop and reflect on their visits to positive effect. There are also a range of resources relevant to the various types of programme visits available online that the Sporting Champions can access to support their preparations for visits and the notes are designed for busy Sporting Champions to utilise as planning sheets, checklists and alike. New members of the Sporting Champions team have received 1:1 support prior to and after their initial visit to a project to ensure they understand both the key messages related to a specific programme and how to gather all the appropriate information from the deliverer in order to plan their session effectively.

### **Athlete Team Leaders 2016:**

- London and South East – Lee Shinkin
- North– Charlotte Hartley
- Midlands & East – Tom Davis
- South West – David Hill