**Protect Where We Play – Template email/letter to MPs**

Copy to: policy@sportandrecreation.org.uk

Dear [insert MP name here]

I am writing as your constituent in support of the [Protect Where We Play campaign](http://sportandrecreation.org.uk/campaigns-and-policy/campaigns-and-influencing/protect-where-we-play) urge you to use your influence as my local MP to lobby the Government to rethink its [proposals to weaken planning protections for playing fields](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/bureaucratic-burden-lifted-to-speed-up-building-in-growth-agenda).

Given the Government’s ambition to build 1.5 million homes over this parliament, the proposal to remove Sport England as a statutory consultee from the planning system will remove critical safeguards which protect playing fields from development and risk the loss of vital community assets for current and future generations. Once a playing field is gone, it is gone forever.

Removal of Sport England as a statutory consultee will also reduce the weight given to sport, recreation and physical activity in the planning system and negatively impact the quality and provision of wider community sports facilities which are essential to improving health and wellbeing.

Sport, recreation and physical activity delivers enormous benefits to people in our local community and across the country – providing over £107bn annually in improved health and wellbeing and reduced costs to the NHS and wider public services. Every £1 invested in sport and physical activity generates over £4 in economic and social value.

Playing fields and pitches are essential to our local community being active, healthy and happy. They deliver at least £2bn in improved wellbeing every year and help support almost 4 million people to be active. They are particularly crucial for children and young people – supporting 1 million children to participate in a wide range of sports and activities and, for some, to take their first steps towards becoming our future sporting stars. They are also places where our communities can come together, enjoy being active outdoors and connect with nature.

My family regularly use [insert local playing field here] and I am therefore deeply concerned by the Government’s proposals to weaken planning protections for playing fields. I therefore urge you, as my local MP, to support the Protect Where We Play campaign and lobby the Government to rethink its approach for the benefit of everyone in our local community.

Yours sincerely