

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**HISTORIAN CALLS FOR URGENT REINVIGORATION OF SPORTING STRATEGY
POST-OLYMPICS**

Historian Professor Kevin Jefferys has called for a restoration of a sense of direction, urgency and coherence in government sporting policy through a bold, wide-ranging statement of intent for sport in a new History & Policy paper, [On your marks... formulating sports policy and Britain's Olympic legacy](#), launched today at an event with the Sports Think Tank and award winning journalist Mihir Bose.

Professor Jefferys said:

'To deliver Britain's Olympic legacy, there needs to be a fresh, new statement of national sport policy, with buy-in at the highest levels of government. This should include a re-evaluation of the role of the Minister for Sport, better integrating school sport with community initiatives, and focusing on deliverable targets in return for investment.

'History shows that sport policy has the greatest impact on the nation's sporting, health and educational ambitions when it is bold, innovative and truly joined up across government, with full Prime Ministerial support. In the past, this has best been achieved by the governments of Harold Wilson, John Major and

Tony Blair. These are the precedents the Coalition government should look to for inspiration today.'

Today's event raised important issues about the future of sports policy. It was suggested school sport must be better integrated into broader sporting policy. A wider public debate must take place concerning the respective funding given to community and elite sport and whether the current levels are appropriate. The role of the Sports Minister needs to be reviewed and sport embedded within wider public policy. Finally, attendees expressed a desire for a broader, more coherent legacy from London 2012.

Professor Jefferys' timely study provides the first exploration of the causes and consequences of the increased interaction between sport and the state since 1945.

Director of the Sports Think Tank, Andy Reed said:

'This offers us a unique opportunity to reflect on our rich and unique sporting heritage, build on the lessons of the past and reassess sport's role in society. It is time for the government, those who lead the sports sector and companies that invest in sport to openly debate these key issues and set a clear, long-term and integrated strategy for sports policy in the coming decades. This will be the test of our true Olympic legacy.'

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Notes for Editors:

- o Kevin Jefferys' History & Policy paper, *On your marks... formulating sport policy and Britain's Olympic legacy*, is published today at <http://www.historyandpolicy.org/papers/policy-paper-133.html>.
- o This paper was launched today, along with Professor Jefferys' book, *Sport and Politics in Modern Britain: the Road to 2012* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), at a breakfast discussion event at King's College London today, supported by Palgrave Macmillan, Plymouth University and History & Policy.
- o Andy Reed, Director of the Sports Think Tank, Chair of the Sport and Recreation Alliance and former MP for Loughborough chaired a panel discussion with award winning journalist and author Mihir

Bose and Professor of Contemporary History at Plymouth University Kevin Jefferys to an audience of policy makers and opinion formers.

The Sports Think Tank is a new, independent organization with the aim of advancing the education of the public in sports policy, in particular by promoting and publishing research for the public benefit in all aspects of sports policy. Our website is: www.sportsthinktank.com and you can follow us on twitter: [@sport thinktank](https://twitter.com/sportthinktank).

History & Policy, based at King's College London, is an independent, national initiative, working to improve public policy through a better understanding of history: www.historyandpolicy.org. Twitter: [@HistoryPolicy](https://twitter.com/HistoryPolicy). For further information, and to interview Kevin Jefferys, contact Mel Porter, Public Affairs Manager: mel.porter@kcl.ac.uk / 020 7848 7041 or 07979 867765.

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