

**Project Name:** Annual Sports Club Conference  
**Lead Agency:** St. Helens Council  
**Area:** St Helens  
**Website:** [www.sthelens.gov.uk](http://www.sthelens.gov.uk)

**Project brief:** St. Helens Council Sports Development team organises an annual sports club conference in October each year. The conference theme was 2012 and the impact the London Olympics and paralympics will have on clubs in St. Helens. The conference was the first event or initiative in Merseyside to be awarded the Inspire Mark.

This annual event is used by the Sports Development team to both update the clubs on development and opportunities in sport and secondly to consult with clubs on the development of policy and future services.

**Outcomes:** Over 60 of the boroughs sports clubs were represented at the conference, which attended, by over 100 coaches, officials and volunteers. The evening was a mixture of keynote speeches and land table discussions. The Sports Development team secured the services of two speakers with National reputation Andy Worthington MBE, Chair of the NW 2012 Steering Group and former member of the Sport England Board and David Shaw who recently retired as the Director of Academies at the Rugby Union.

As a direct response to urgent needs identified on the night, safeguarding courses were arranged and within two months 30 volunteers had completed accredited training. Other outcomes from the 2009 conference have been; the development of a winter sports pitch allocation policy, a review of the council's junior pricing policy - to extend the eligibility age up to 21 years for those in full time education and the creation of an annual club recruitment week to run in September each year.

Many of the priorities identified by the clubs have been included in the new Active St. Helens Strategy, which sets out the boroughs inspiration for physical activity and sport up to 2015.

