



# Enabling Athletes To Thrive

## A Performance Sport Strategy for Jersey

NOVEMBER 2023



# Foreword

The shared ambition of this Government is for Jersey to be a place where everyone can thrive, and sport can play its part in achieving this by improving lives and strengthening communities.

I have also committed to embracing the power of sport to enrich our local economy and promote Jersey internationally. Supporting our talented athletes, who so often fly the flag for our island around the world, is an important part of how we work to deliver this.

I am therefore delighted to launch Jersey's first ever performance sport strategy – Enabling Athletes to Thrive.

The strategy marks the beginning of a change in the way we recognise the value of performance sport and support those directly involved in it, and I look forward to seeing the benefits it will bring to our athletes, coaches and community in the years to come.

In an island the size of Jersey it is not realistic to expect that we can provide locally all that our most talented athletes across all sports may need in order to realise their potential. What we can do is work to enable and empower athletes and the support systems around them to ensure that being an Islander is not a barrier to performance. Nor should a person's background or family circumstances prevent someone with the talent and potential from being able to thrive as a performance athlete.

Importantly, this strategy also places athlete wellbeing at its heart and recognises that effective support does not finish when the medals dry up or the performances stop but includes the transition out of top-level competition also.

I am grateful to all those who have contributed to the development of this strategy; the many athletes, coaches, parents, carers, clubs and associations who have provided their insight and knowledge.

By working together we really can help Jersey's most talented athletes to achieve their potential and thrive.



**Deputy Lucy Stephenson**  
**Assistant Minister with Responsibility for Sport**

# Introduction

Jersey has a proud sporting history. Our athletes have competed at World Championships and Olympic Games and have won Open Golf Championships and Commonwealth Games medals. They have captained England at netball and played sports such as football, hockey, badminton and rugby for England. Our cricketers regularly compete on the international stage at high levels and in front of worldwide television audiences.

These performances instil a sense of pride in both our athletes and our Island and can encourage others to participate and become involved in sport. Performance athletes are role models for our community, inspiring others to succeed and leading to positive national and international exposure for Jersey.

If we want to continue to enable such performances, our athletes need our support. High performances do not happen by chance – they start in our schools, our clubs and our community so we need a collaborative, coordinated and targeted approach, centred around the needs of athletes themselves. We want to enable all performance pathway athletes to thrive and achieve success by removing some of the financial barriers to performance sport and working towards levelling the playing field.

The most important element in sport is the people involved. Success, in terms of helping people achieve their potential, relies on putting people at the centre of what sport does. National and international reviews have highlighted the importance of ensuring a safe, fair and inclusive environment for all athletes and coaches. Our role is therefore wider than targeting medal success – it is to enable and empower performances that inspire Islanders within environments that value wellbeing.

## Inspiring an Active Jersey

This strategy forms part of the Government of Jersey's Inspiring an Active Jersey Strategy<sup>1</sup> which sets an ambition for inspiring performances by the establishment of a performance pathway that supports athletes to fulfil their potential to perform on the national and international stage.

## Creating this strategy

In creating this strategy, we spoke with a range of stakeholders including current and retired athletes, parents, coaches, sports organisations and athlete support personnel. In addition, we used the findings and recommendations from the 'Small Island Athlete Migration'<sup>2</sup> report to inform our thinking and discussions.

We also looked at performance pathways from other jurisdictions as well as current developments in sport, particularly with regard to athlete welfare. The Duty of Care in Sport Report<sup>3</sup> questioned whether sport's balance between welfare and winning is right and highlighted the necessity of putting people – their safety, wellbeing and welfare – at the centre of what sport does. We will ensure that the best interests of athletes are always at the heart of what we do through collaborating with them and the team around them and tailoring support to meet their needs.

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<sup>1</sup> [Inspiring an Active Jersey Strategy \(gov.je\)](https://www.gov.je/inspiring-an-active-jersey-strategy)

<sup>2</sup> Harrison, Vickers & Cartigny, 'Small Island Athlete Migration: Migration Decisions, Experiences and Support for Athletes from Small Island Nations' (2022)

<sup>3</sup> Gov.uk, 'Duty of Care in Sport: Independent Report to Government, Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson DBE, DL' (2017)

# Foundations for performance sport

All athletes begin their journey into performance sport with a solid foundation achieved through participation in sport and physical activity.

The Long-Term Athlete Development Model is a framework spanning infancy to adulthood and recognises both participation and performance pathways. This performance sport strategy will build on programmes of sport and physical activity provided by schools, sports clubs and associations, Jersey Sport and private businesses.

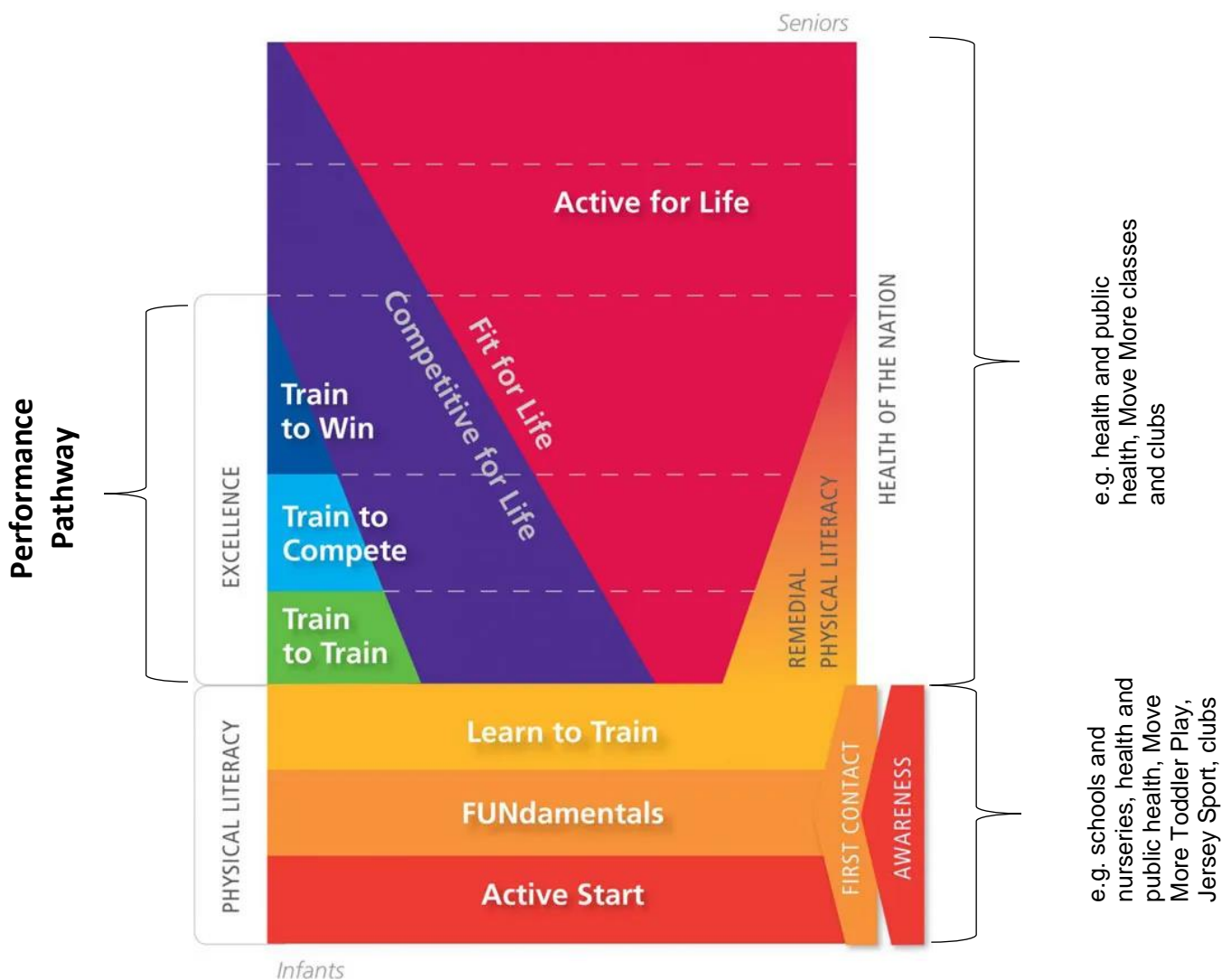


Figure 1: [The Long-Term Athlete Development Model](#)

## Partners in Performance Sport

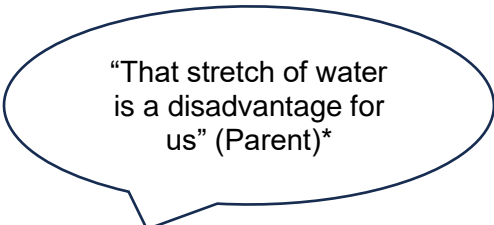
Whilst athletes are at the heart of performance sport, any talent pathway relies on working collaboratively with a range of partners. In addition to athletes, in Jersey this will include:

- Parents/carers and families of athletes
- Schools, colleges and universities
- Sports clubs and associations
- National Governing Bodies
- Athlete Support Personnel
- Commonwealth Games Association of Jersey
- Island Games Association of Jersey
- Jersey Sports Association for the Disabled
- Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme (TASS)
- Strive Academy
- Jersey Sport

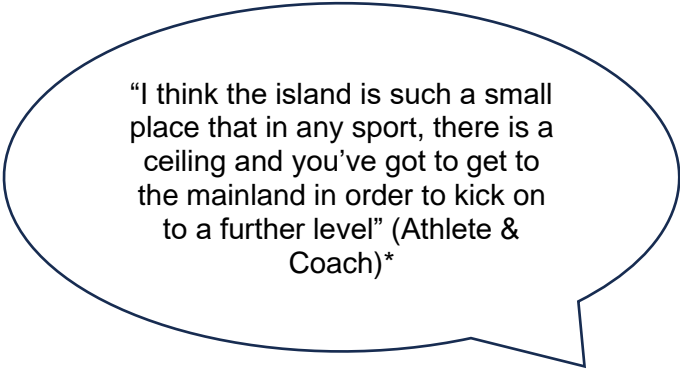
## Talent Inclusion

The Government is committed to ensuring that talented athletes are able to access the performance pathway, regardless of background or circumstance. This will include parasport pathways.

The cost of performance sport, and the additional costs for Jersey athletes and their families to travel off-island for training and competition, means that many talented athletes are unable to continue in performance sport<sup>4</sup>. By providing financial and other support outlined in this strategy, we will remove some of the barriers to performance sport and work to ensure a level playing field.



“That stretch of water is a disadvantage for us” (Parent)\*



“I think the island is such a small place that in any sport, there is a ceiling and you’ve got to get to the mainland in order to kick on to a further level” (Athlete & Coach)\*

*\*Quotes from ‘Small Island Athlete Migration: Migration Decisions, Experiences and Support for Athletes from Small Island Nations’ (2022) Harrison, Vickers & Cartigny*

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<sup>4</sup> [Athlete survey | SportsAid](#)

## Eligibility

Any athlete who reaches the required criteria, will be eligible to apply for the pathway. The criteria for transitioning in to and out of the pathway will be developed by the Performance Manager together with an independent appeals process.

We will ensure that the criteria and appeals process are fair, easy to understand, accessible and transparent.

The pathway will have the following stages as part of a model for long-term athlete development (LTAD)<sup>5</sup> with the aim of progressively increasing performance and supporting the demands of performance sport as well as providing support for those transitioning from the pathway.

Figure 2: Pathway Stages

<b>Post High Performance</b> <i>(Active for Life)</i>	<b>Transition:</b> Athletes that no longer meet the performance criteria or retire receive appropriate support to transition from the pathway
<b>High Performance</b> <i>(Train to Compete/ Train to Win)</i>	<b>Performing:</b> Athletes have an Individual Performance Plan that describes agreed targets, which they are consistently meeting, together with agreed support to achieve those targets
<b>Pre High Performance</b> <i>(Train to Train)</i>	<b>Talent ID and Transition:</b> Athletes that demonstrate future winning capabilities against specific criteria will develop and confirm the required attributes, attitudes and motivation to join the pathway

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<sup>5</sup> [LTAD model](#)

# The Vision, Mission, Goals and Values

**Vision:** Enabling athletes to thrive

**Mission:** Work in partnership to deliver a performance system that enables our athletes to achieve at their highest level

**Goals:** Talented athletes are better supported and prepared for performance sport  
Coaches have the skills and qualifications to better support performance athletes  
High level competition and training is easier to access

**Values:** Collaboration, Excellence, Integrity, Wellbeing

The strategy focuses on three strands of support which stakeholders have told us would make the most difference:

- 1. Athletes:** athletes are at the core of any successful performance programme. We will work to ensure that they are better supported and prepared for performance sport.
- 2. Coaches:** around every athlete is a team to help them succeed and a good coach is a key partner in an athlete's journey to success. We will help coaches to get the skills and qualifications they need to better support performance athletes.
- 3. Travel:** opportunities to access higher level competition and training are limited in Jersey so we will work to facilitate easier access to off-island opportunities. In addition, by hosting competitions and training camps in Jersey, we can enrich the opportunities for both competitors and spectators.

These strands are also referenced in many of the pillars of success<sup>6</sup> which studies show are indicators for performance sport, including financial support, coaching provision/coach development, access to (inter)national competition, talent identification/development and career support.

## Measuring Success

Performance measures will be developed in conjunction with partners and the manager of the performance programme.

## Next Steps

Subject to approval of the 2024-2027 Government Plan, suitable delivery partners will be sought to implement the strategy from 2024.

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<sup>6</sup> De Bosscher, Shibli, Westerbeek and van Bottenburg, 'Successful elite sport policies: an international comparison in 15 nations (SPLISS 2.0)' (2015)

# What we aim to deliver

ATHLETES	COACHES	TRAVEL
Talented athletes are better supported and prepared for performance sport	Coaches have the skills and qualifications to better support performance athletes	High level competition and training is easier to access
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of Performance Manager to create performance pathway</li> <li>• Tailored and graded support to include: lifestyle support, strength &amp; conditioning coaching, nutrition, medical, sport science, psychology, media training, sponsorship, and any other appropriate support</li> <li>• Increased funding to travel off-island to competitions and training camps</li> <li>• Access to better quality coaching               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ local coaches have higher qualifications</li> <li>○ local coaches are upskilled by off-island coaches</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Peer mentoring and support network (on and off-island) so that athletes and their families know how they will be treated and where to go if they need advice, support &amp; guidance</li> <li>• Access to regular Anti-Doping education programme</li> <li>• Athletes with performance potential are identified and supported at an earlier stage through stakeholder networks (eg parents, schools, NGBs, FE &amp; HE institutions &amp; professional setups)</li> <li>• Duty of Care Charter established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of Performance Manager to create coach performance pathway</li> <li>• Local coaches have higher level qualifications</li> <li>• Local coaches have opportunities to work and/or study with coaches off-island</li> <li>• Coach mentoring network (on and off-island) so that coaches and other athlete support personnel know how they will be treated and where to go if they need advice, support &amp; guidance</li> <li>• Access to regular Anti-Doping education</li> <li>• Coaches are able to identify and support athletes with performance pathway potential at an earlier stage through stakeholder networks (eg parents, schools, NGBs, FE &amp; HE institutions &amp; professional setups)</li> <li>• Duty of Care Charter established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased funding to travel off-island to competitions and training camps</li> <li>• Development of partnerships with travel companies and off-island sports clubs and training facilities</li> <li>• Support for sport organisations to host competitions and training camps on-island</li> <li>• Easier grant application system</li> </ul>

The programme will continue to develop in conjunction with feedback from athletes and pathway partners. Future aspirations, depending on Government Plan funding, include an equipment fund, medical insurance scheme and a safeguarding and integrity officer.



# What this looks like for me

FOR ATHLETES	FOR COACHES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I know what support is available to me and how to access it</li><li>• My coach and I work together with the Performance Manager in my best interests</li><li>• I have an Individual Performance Plan which sets out my targets</li><li>• I know how I can appeal decisions if I need to</li><li>• It is easier for me to access off-island competitions and training camps</li><li>• There are more opportunities to train and compete in Jersey</li><li>• I can get support from my peers and mentors if I need it</li><li>• I can access tools and training to compete clean</li><li>• My network (parents/carers, school, college or university) knows how they can support me to reach my targets</li><li>• I know where to go if I am worried about anything</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I know what professional development and resources are available to me and how to access them</li><li>• I work together with my athlete and the Performance Manager in my athlete's best interests</li><li>• I know my anti-doping responsibilities and what my athlete needs to compete clean</li><li>• I have confidence that other stakeholders understand my athlete's needs and how to support them</li><li>• I know where to go if I am worried about anything</li></ul>