



IRISH
INDOOR
BOWLING
ASSOCIATION

Mr Edwin Poots MLA
Minister of Culture, Arts & Leisure
Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure
Interpoint
20 – 24 York Street
Belfast
BT15 1AQ

3 January 2008

Dear Minister

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep concern regarding any possible reduction in funding to sport in Northern Ireland.

I understand how important it is to the United Kingdom in general that London will host the Olympics in 2012 but this should not be an issue that is detrimental to the development of sport in Northern Ireland. Indeed, we should be trying to increase, not decrease the levels of funding for community sport.

Indoor Short Mat Bowls has done more for community relations over the last forty years than any other sport in Northern Ireland and this is an issue that I will gladly debate with anyone. This Association has 970 odd clubs and approximately twenty five thousand players in every hamlet and townland throughout Northern Ireland and beyond. As a sport it continued to flourish during the darkest moments in our recent history with both sides of the community heavily involved.

Against this background it is regrettable that funding cannot be obtained for events such as the forthcoming World Bowls Championships in Belgium on 29 and 30th March 2008 and I would ask you to consider giving some form of financial support for this event. I would also point out that over this last twenty two years, this Association has been British Isles Team Champions on no fewer than eighteen occasions, a record which all the other bowling associations in Northern Ireland and beyond can only marvel at.

I would end by saying that all in sport are anxious to ensure that a strong case is put forward to ensure sport is a winner in the current consultation process for the Draft Programme for Government draft Budget 2008- 2011.

Yours sincerely,

David A Hunter
Honorary Secretary Tel: 90483536

cc Melanie McGinnis, OFMDFM /