Tired, worn out, old facilities make it harder for people to start or keep doing sport. They can also be more expensive to run and difficult to maintain.

The Inspired Facilities fund could help you refurbish or upgrade your sports facility; or convert an existing building into a venue suitable for sport and accessible to the whole community.

Sport England will invest in most types of improvement or refurbishment work that will help you develop sport in your local area. To qualify for a grant you will need to:

- Show how your project will keep and, ideally, attract more people to sport
- Demonstrate that it is needed and wanted by the local community
- Explain how it will cover its running costs and remain open for sporting use for years to come

In particular, Sport England is looking for projects or organisations across the country that:

- Have not previously received an individual sports Lottery grant worth £10,000 or more
- Offer local opportunities to people who do not currently play sport, or
- Are the only public sports facility in the local community

Sport England have tried to make applying for an Inspired Facilities grant as straightforward as possible, by pulling together a catalogue of typical facility developments and improvements. Improvements have been grouped into five areas:

- Building modernization
- Outdoor sports lighting
- Outdoor sports surfaces and Adizones
- Modular buildings
- Sports equipment.

This catalogue can be found on the Sport England Inspired Facilities website.

Of course, you do NOT have to use the catalogue. Applications for items not listed will be accepted but you will need to work out the costs and other relevant information yourself. If you choose this route, it is suggested that you use an appropriately qualified person, such as a quantity or building surveyor, to produce a report with all necessary details and costs requested on your application form.
When can I apply?

The dates for the first three funding rounds are:

Round 1: 1 August to 28 September 2011
Round 2: 1 February 2012 to 2 April 2012

Rounds four and five will take place in 2013/14 and the dates will be announced after the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Please don’t rush your application form or send it in half complete because a round is about to close. Take your time, gather all the information you need and make the best possible case for your project and the local community you want to help.

Applications should be made via the Sport England Inspired Facilities website.