

GETTING YOU INTO ATHLETICS

Regional Development Plans (Draft 1.2)

By Brian Kokoruwe and Felicity Edge

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1. Deaf UK Athletics (DUKA)

We are a voluntary and independent organisation. In late 2002 DUKA was founded by Brian Kokoruwe (Director).

DUKA is a not-for-profit organisation with everyone, including the director and officials, giving up his/her time with the rewarding experience of being able to improve the opportunities within HI (Hearing Impaired) athletics as well as the recruiting of talented athletes to represent GB in international competitions and seeing the future of HI athletics greatly improved for the HI. As an organisation we also welcome anyone who is keen about working alongside the HI.

As a voluntary organisation we have a limited number of personnel. Everyone is a volunteer who is committed, passionate and enthusiastic about improving the opportunities within HI athletics specifically for the HI and the non-HI who wish to work alongside HI athletes. DUKA personnel include:

- ✉ Brian Kokoruwe (Director)
- ✉ Ken Burgess (Chairman)
- ✉ Sandra Campbell
- ✉ Felicity Edge
- ✉ Rebecca Foster
- ✉ Candy Hawkins
- ✉ Hilary Samuel

2. Contact Details

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3. Budget

Unfortunately, DUKA does not currently receive funding or sponsorship. Also we are not awarded any bursaries, for example coaching and development grants. Without funding and sponsorship it is very difficult for us to commit the necessary time required in order to be able to improve the opportunities within HI athletics. Unless we are able to find some way of obtaining available funding, in-kind donations, financial contributions and/or sponsorship the future of the organisation (including our volunteer activities), all the good work achieved to date and the opportunities for HI athletes of all ages is looking very dismal.

We have a very limited budget due to being a non-funded voluntary organisation. If we do get any in-kind financial donations and/or sponsorship it is only in a small amount.

Current UK government funding strategy focuses on Paralympics and Olympics athletes until 2008 and thus HI athletes are excluded, as there is no category for HI athletes in the Paralympics. Non-government funding has been difficult to obtain, as we are always directed

to our National Governing Body (NGB) – UK Athletics who adhere to the criteria bestowed upon them by UK Sport and we are not a registered charity.

Everybody enjoys giving up their time with the reward of being able to improve the opportunities within HI athletics and to see the future greatly improved for HI athletes of all abilities.

To undertake the activities set out in this RDP, it is calculated that volunteers expenses, administration, stationery, post and packaging, promotion, equipment and extemporized expenses will amount to approximately £5,000.00 (breakdown of this figure is available on request).

4. Research

A key part of our organisational activities is to undertake research work. Current research has focused on what HI coaching courses are available, the pre-requisites for entering the Deaflympics, Paralympics and other International and World Competitions. We have also looked at possible ways of funding and sponsoring the organisation.

Also we have looked into what HI and non-HI sports organisations there are, what sports options and opportunities are available for HI, what support, advice and interest we can get and in which county are the most HI people, schools as well as sports and non-sports related clubs (i.e. key target areas - Berkshire, London, Staffordshire and Yorkshire).

Hence our aims and goals have been based on this research.

5. Aims and Goals

DUKA's main aim is to improve the opportunities within athletics for mainly HI individuals and athletes from grassroots through to the elite levels. Also for those non-HI individuals who are interested in training and working alongside HI populace and athletes.

I. Short-term Goals (next 6 months – 1 year)

It is vital that we establish appropriate means of identifying talented HI athletes to represent GB in international competitions. To achieve this, the key short-term goal is to attempt to set-up four HI Athletics Clubs in the four key target areas we have identified. These areas are:

1. London - has the most HI schools and clubs in the UK.
2. Staffordshire (West Midlands) - has the 2nd most HI clubs in the UK.
3. Yorkshire - has the 3rd most Deaf Clubs in the UK and we know that there are a lot of HI children who will welcome the opportunity of being involved with athletics. Yorkshire also has a very popular annual schools athletics championship.
4. Berkshire - has the largest HI school in the UK.

[As of yet not all the HI units and schools (apart from in London) have been identified so these, for the moment, are not being used as statistics].

With all four regions we are in the process of establishing links or have been doing so. We would like to be able to set up HI athletics clubs or work in association with an already established HI/disabled/non-disabled club to provide further opportunities for HI individuals who are interested in athletics. Also for those non-HI who would welcome the opportunity of

working with the HI and increasing and improving their educational knowledge and understanding of the HI and their everyday lives.

We would like to be able to hold a HI star:track. We would welcome the prospect of offering those HI children who may have never experienced athletics before a chance to have a go at and be involved with athletics. Also those children who are already involved a chance to gain more experience of athletics and hence developing further.

As star:track is a fun way of doing so and as it will be specifically aimed at HI children (coaches will probably be both HI and non-HI who have experience of working with HI or pan disability athletics), we want to provide friendly and familiar surroundings where the young and novice athletes do not feel isolated yet at the same time having that utmost important objective of fun and enjoyment.

II. Long-term Goals (1 – 3+ years)

Our long-term goals are to implement the short-term around the UK. In the long run we are going to provide continuous training for the HI so that the GB team is fully prepared and strong when participating in World, European, Deaflympics and International Competitions. We would like to see more HI people attending coaching, officiating and sports-related courses, for example Sportscoach UK, and we will encourage them to take up this/these option/s. We would particularly encourage ex-GB HI athletes to get involved with athletics through either of the above options.

Our planning and long-term goals are also closely linked to the UK-wide strategic plans of UK Deaf Sport (UKDS) who are providing us with information, advice and guidance to ensure that we are able to maximise our resources and efforts. It is also important to have continual support from UKDS as it will assure our community partners that DUKA has long-term targets that are achievable.

6. How?

We have plans for training camps, domestic regional and national competitions, events and open days. We have been creating databases of HI schools, units and clubs. We are also going to expand this to athlete, coach and official databases as well as Sports Partnerships and Development Officers. As you will be able to tell from this RDP we are already in the process of doing this. We are going to undertake regular and continuous evaluations of our aims, goals, plans and training and coaching sessions.

Initially, we are looking into holding a HI star:track in the London and North/West Yorkshire regions. When we have held one in Yorkshire we would like this to spread around the country. In all areas, we are going to consult with the HI public and listen to their views, ideas and suggestions. Also we would like to work more closely in union with our National Governing Body (UK Athletics) as well as other relevant associations including UK Deaf Sports, HI schools, non-HI schools, athletics clubs, and Deaf Clubs and, most importantly of all, the HI general public. Also we are planning to work with the non-HI population who are keen to work with the HI and who are interested in learning and understanding the HI as well as other disabilities.

We are planning to promote DUKA through leaflets, posters, TV teletext pages, websites (internet), magazines, word of mouth and through our specific athletically related work. We have designed an on-line questionnaire, which is available on our website. As we are a voluntary organisation we have been looking into ways of raising funds and getting sponsorship and/or donations.

As previously mentioned we are looking into setting up clubs or working with an already established club and for all would like to obtain Club Mark. The next section will explain what we are specifically doing or are hoping to do in our defined key target areas.

7. Clubs – Key Target Areas

I. Berkshire (West Berkshire - Newbury)

Berkshire Sports Partnership			
Development Officer	Name	E-mail	Phone
<i>Athletics</i>	Vacant (01/04/05)		
<i>Disability</i>	Helen Cunningham	helen.cunningham@reading.gov.uk	0118 939 9006

Berkshire Local Authority Sports Development Officers			
Borough	Sports Development Officer	E-mail	Phone
<i>Bracknell Forest</i>	Chris Vaal	chris.vaal@bracknell-forest.gov.uk	01344 354 108
<i>Reading</i>	Nicola Hopper	nicola.hopper@reading.gov.uk	0118 939 9098
<i>RBWM</i>	Helen Richards	h.richards@rbwm.gov.uk	01628 796 074
<i>Slough</i>	Louise Riddle	louise.riddle@slough.gov.uk	01753 875 515
<i>West Berkshire</i>	Jim Sweeting	jsweeting@westberks.gov.uk	01635 519 251
<i>Wokingham</i>	Beverley Thompson	beverley.thompson@wokingham.gov.uk	0118 974 6254

Berkshire School Sport Partnerships Partnership Development Managers			
Borough	Partnership Development Manager	E-mail	Phone
<i>Bracknell Forest</i>	Elaine Cane	elaine.cane@bracknell-forest.gov.uk	01344 423 041
<i>Reading</i>	Emma Seymour	emma.seymour@reading.gov.uk	0118 939 0900
<i>RBWM</i>	Chantel Roe-Gammon	roegc001@rbwm.org	01344 624 826
<i>Slough</i>	Dave Evans	de@wexham.slough.sch.uk	07771 655 521
<i>West Berkshire</i>	Kathryn Martin	kmartin2@westberks.org	01635 573 917
<i>Wokingham</i>			

South AAoE Regional Development Officer and UK:A RETA			
Development Officer	Name	E-mail	Phone
<i>AAoE RDO</i>	Christine Benning	cbenning@englandathletics.org	02380 610 550
<i>UK:A RETA</i>	Andy Neal	aneal@ukathletics.org.uk	01403 230 096

In Newbury there is the largest HI school (Mary Hare) in the UK. We are looking at starting mainly a HI athletics club for all ages and abilities. One of the benefits of the club is that it will also welcome friends and family members of the HI athletes and they will be able to train together. The club is planning to be based, in the Newbury area, at one of the localised athletics facilities. The athletics we hope to offer will include track and field. A club strategy has been drawn up by DUKA.

As we do not want anyone to feel segregated we have been working in association and have welcomed the ideas, view and suggestions from local clubs and schools, Berkshire Sports Partnership and Reading and Newbury Borough Councils (i.e. the public).

To follow on from this Berkshire Sports Partnership and DUKA have come up with the idea that a 'Berkshire Club Strategy', based on DUKA's, should be drawn up. A meeting with the organisations, as defined above, will take place in the near future to discuss this. One of the main reasons for doing this is that if it is an inclusive Berkshire plan we are more likely to get support, interest and offers of e.g. help, coaching, sponsorship/donations etc.

Christine Benning (South RDO) and Andy Neal (South RETA) are aware of our plans as we have e-mailed them a copy of these Plans. Christine has shown an interest in our Plans and would be interested in having a meeting with DUKA.

II. London (Hounslow and Islington)

London Active Partnership			
Development Officer	Name	E-mail	Phone
<i>Athletics</i>	Steven Edwards	sedwards@englandathletics.org	
<i>Disability</i>			

London Local Authority Sports Development Officers			
Borough	Sports Development Officers	E-mail	Phone

London School Sport Partnerships Partnership Development Managers			
Borough	Partnership Development Manager	E-mail	Phone

London AAAoE Regional Development Officer and UK:A RETA			
Development Officer	Name	E-mail	Phone
<i>AAAoE RDO</i>	Vacant (01/04/05)		
<i>UK:A RETA</i>	Chris Bowman	cbowman@ukathletics.org.uk	01622 664 835

In Hounslow and Islington there are two schools with HI Units. The club is going to be specifically aimed at those HI young adults from these Units who are interested in athletics. The club strategy has been drawn up and will be implemented by London Active Partnership.

Due to policies, the Partnership is not allowed to hold a HI star:track. Therefore the Partnership has given us the opportunity to hold one on their behalf. Not only are we working with the Partnership for this but also with local schools.

As of yet a date has not been decided but the HI star:track is being discussed between all the organisations and soon a Sports Development plan should be in place on how to put the idea into practice.

For the moment there is no London RDO but when the post is filled we inform the new RDO of our Plans. In the meantime Chris Bowan (London RETA) we are going to notify of these Plans and if needed we will consult with him.

III. Staffordshire (Stoke-on-Trent)

Sport Across Staffordshire			
Development Officer	Name	E-mail	Phone
<i>Athletics</i>	Catherine Pendlebury	cpendlebury@staffordbc.gov.uk	01785 619 606
<i>Disability</i>			

Staffordshire Local Authority Sports Development Officers			
Borough	Sports Development Officer	E-mail	Phone
<i>Cannock Chase</i>	Paul Smith	paulsmith@cannockchasedc.gov.uk	01543 425 958
<i>East Staffordshire</i>	Jon Derry	jon.derry@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk	01283 537 928
<i>Lichfield</i>	Chris Kirkland	chris.kirkland@lichfielddc.gov.uk	01543 308 835
<i>Newcastle-under-Lyme</i>	Jenny Moore	jenny.moore@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk	01782 742 615
<i>South Staffordshire</i>	Katie White	k.white@sstaffs.gov.uk	01902 696 528
<i>Stafford</i>	Camilla Briggs	cbriggs@staffordbc.gov.uk	01785 619 565
<i>Staffordshire Moorlands</i>	Carl Inskip	carl.inskip@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk	01538 483 736
<i>Stoke-on-Trent</i>	Rachel Redmond	rachel.redmond@stoke.gov.uk	01782 234 993
<i>Tamworth</i>	David Rudman	david-rudman@tamworth.gov.uk	01827 709 388

Staffordshire School Sport Partnerships Partnership Development Managers			
Borough	Partnership Development Manager	E-mail	Phone
<i>Cannock Chase</i>			
<i>East Staffordshire</i>			
<i>Lichfield</i>			
<i>Newcastle-under-Lyme</i>			
<i>South Staffordshire</i>			
<i>Stafford</i>			
<i>Staffordshire Moorlands</i>			
<i>Stoke-on-Trent</i>			
<i>Tamworth</i>			

West Midlands AAAoE Regional Development Officer and UK:A RETA			
DO	Name	E-mail	Phone
<i>AAAoE RDO</i>			
<i>UK:A RETA</i>	Pat Cropper	dave.cropper@btopenworld.com	0121 705 4952

The West Midlands, particularly in Staffordshire, have a number of keen HI athletes who would like to be able to pursue their athletics career. There is a percentage of the HI community, in the West Midlands, who have never had the privilege of experiencing athletics and who would very much like to get involved. There are also a number of people who would like the opportunity to get involved with athletics and working with the HI.

We are interested in starting a HI athletics club, which will allow the HI athletes to train alongside their friends and family members. A club strategy is going to be drawn up and is going to be implemented by DUKA. As we do not want anyone to feel segregated we have been working in association and have welcomed the ideas, views and suggestions from the national HI sports organisations including UKDS and the general HI public.

Over the last few weeks we have been able to identify the HI schools and units in the Staffordshire area. These are going to be inputted into a database.

We are going to inform Sport Across Staffordshire, Staffordshire School Sport Partnerships Partnership Development Managers, and the West Midlands RETA of our Plans as well as local athletics clubs, HI clubs and HI schools. For the moment we are unaware that there is the position of RDO in the West Midlands. If such a post becomes available and is filled we will also notify the West Midlands RDO of our Plans.

We will continue to be open to suggestions, ideas and views from all mentioned organisations.

IV. North Yorkshire (Craven, Harrogate, Scarborough, Selby and York)

North Yorkshire Sport			
Development Officer	Name	E-mail	Phone
<i>Athletics</i>	David Watson	david.watson@gw.harrogate.gov.uk	01423 556 781
<i>Disability</i>			

North Yorkshire Local Authority Sports Development Officers			
Borough	Sports Development Officer	E-mail	Phone
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<i>Hambleton</i>	Danny Thompson	danny.thompson@hotmail.com	
<i>Harrogate</i>	Andrew Wilson	andrew.wilson@gw.harrogate.gov.uk	
<i>Richmondshire</i>	Vacant (01/04/05)		
<i>Ryedale</i>	Vacant (01/04/05)		
<i>Scarborough</i>	Matt Hewison	matt.hewison@scarborough.gov.uk	
<i>Selby</i>	Lisa Wright	wrightl@selby.ac.uk	
<i>York</i>	Andy Pope	andy.pope@york.gov.uk	

North Yorkshire School Sport Partnerships Partnership Development Managers			
Borough	Partnership Development Managers	E-mail	Phone
<i>Craven</i>			
<i>Hambleton</i>			
<i>Harrogate</i>			
<i>Richmondshire</i>			
<i>Ryedale</i>			
<i>Scarborough</i>			
<i>Selby</i>			
<i>York</i>			
Yorkshire AAoE Regional Development Officer and UK:A RETA			
Development Officer	Name	E-mail	Phone

AAAoE RDO	Kristine Monaghan	kmonaghan@englandathletics.org	0113 3950 192
UK:A RETA	Bob Schofield	bschofield@ukathletics.org.uk	01482 645 272

In Yorkshire there are many enthusiastic HI athletes who would love the chance to continue being involved with athletics, pursuing their career in athletics or the option of getting involved.

We would like to be able to hold an athletics club for all ages, abilities, HI and non-HI or work in association with an already established club to be able to provide this. Even though North Yorkshire has the most number of Boroughs (eight compared to five) in Yorkshire the settlements are often dispersed and sparsely populated due to the spacious land area coverage. For the moment we are looking at an athletics club, which will cater for the HI and the prospectus of training with the non-HI but there might be a need to extend this club to other disabled athletes and individuals.

For DUKA this would be an advantage as a pre-requisite for entering the HI into the Paralympics is that they have to be both HI and have an additional disability/ies. This is one of DUKA's goals for the future – particularly as many athletes with HI and additional disabilities that are part of the Paralympics have often approached DUKA for advice that they are not able to get from non-HI athletics specialist.

We have learnt through our research that approx two out of ten tracks are in use. There are many reasons for this. We would like to be able to use one of these athletics facilities to be able to offer field and track athletics. Even if these facilities are available or not we are looking at the athletics options of Cross Country, Fell Running, Road Running, Sportshall and holding a HI star:track.

David Watson (ADO, North Yorkshire Sport) has shown an interest and has invited us to attend one of North Yorkshire's regular Sports Forums. We have also had interest and support from the following named Clubs and Local Authorities.

Craven:

Bruce Dinsmore (SDO, Craven) has shown an interest and has been very helpful in offering us ideas and suggestions.

Harrogate:

From our research we have identified that some of the Specialist Schools, in North Yorkshire, are in the Harrogate area. If there is an interest we will look at providing the opportunities for the HI individuals.

Scarborough:

Mike Willis (Secretary, Scarborough AC) has shown an interest in providing opportunities for the HI. Once a month the club holds a session for the disabled and would like to also include the HI within this.

Also a few of their coaches would not object to attending specialist HI training (for example, Deaf Awareness Training) so that the Club can cater for this change.

Selby:

We have been liaising with Mark Swinden (Chairman, Tadcaster Harriers). Through him we have learnt that there are no athletics options and opportunities for the HI anywhere in Yorkshire.

Mark has been very kind in assisting us on a few queries (e.g. contact details). Hopefully we will be able to work with Tadcaster Harriers to provide the opportunities for the HI in the Selby and Tadcaster areas.

York:

From contacting Neil Gulliver (star:track Organiser, York County Council) he has expressed an interest in HI athletics and is considering the possibility of DUKA starting a HI athletics club at the Stadium. There is also the possibility of holding, as a follow on, a HI star:track.

For the areas mentioned above we will work in association with the relevant organisations including AAAoE (Yorkshire), North Yorkshire Sport and UK:A (Yorkshire), local athletics clubs, HI clubs and schools and the general HI public to implement these ideas.

Kristine Monaghan (Yorkshire RDO) and Bob Schofield (Yorkshire RETA) are aware of our plans as we have been liaising with them. We have also e-mailed them a copy of these Plans.

V. West Yorkshire (Leeds)

West Yorkshire Sport			
Development Officer	Name	E-mail	Phone
<i>Athletics</i>	Joe Baker	joe.baker@kirklees.gov.uk	07855 795 510
<i>Disability</i>			

West Yorkshire Local Authority Sports Development Officer			
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<i>Bradford</i>	Zuby Hamard	zuby.hamard@bradford.gov.uk	01274 522 750
<i>Calderdale</i>	David Marshall	david.marshall@calderdale.gov.uk	01422 284 413
<i>Kirklees</i>	Claire Howe	claire.howe@kirklees.gov.uk	01484 234 082
<i>Leeds</i>	Sara Birkenshaw	sara.j.birkinshaw@leeds.gov.uk	0113 3950 162
<i>Wakefield</i>	Joanne Collins	jcollins@wakefield.gov.uk	01924 307 815

West Yorkshire School Sport Partnerships Partnership Development Managers			
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<i>Calderdale</i>			
<i>Kirklees</i>			
<i>Leeds</i>			
<i>Wakefield</i>			

Yorkshire AAAoE Regional Development Officer and UK:A RETA			
Development Officer	Name	E-mail	Phone

AAAoE RDO	Kristine Monaghan	kmonaghan@englandathletics.org	0113 3950 192
UK:A RETA	Bob Schofield	bschofield@ukathletics.org.uk	01482 645 272

On Monday 18th April 2005 there was a meeting between:

- ✍ Lucy Birkenshaw (Equity Development Officer, West Yorkshire Sport)
- ✍ Rebecca Foster (representing DUKA)
- ✍ Colin Macdonald (Yorkshire Regional Resource Officer, English Federation of Disability Sport)
- ✍ Kristine Monaghan (Yorkshire RDO)
- ✍ Ian Spenser (Yorkshire Event Officer, English Federation of Disability Sport).

The outcomes of this meeting included:

- ✍ Pupils would be targeted at a local HI athletics event.
- ✍ These pupils will then be invited to attend a HI star:track with British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters.
- ✍ From a star:track all those interested will be invited to attend a 'HI training taster' day.
- ✍ Following on Deaf Awareness Training courses run for the local Athletics Clubs.

- ✍ A further meeting is planned for Monday 13th June 2005 (2pm) at the English Federation of Disability Sport (Yorkshire), Unit 9, Milner Way, Ossett, West Yorkshire WF5 9JN.

Following on from this Colin Macdonald has invited Brian Kokoruwe and Felicity Edge on behalf of DUKA, as well as DUKA's 16 year old Deaflympics Gold and Silver medallist – Lauren Peffers who has recently won the Scottish under 17 800m and 1,500m titles (as Guest of Honour), to attend the Annual Npower Deaf School Athletic Championships at South Leeds Stadium on Tuesday 21st June 2005.

DUKA is considering the possibility of holding a HI national athletics competition. We are looking to welcome any area that is eager to have such a competition within their region. DUKA will offer full support and advice to this region. Yorkshire already holds annual HI regional schools championships. We feel it will be great if each region holds similar regional schools championships and then, once a year, have a National HI British Schools Championships. This will give the talented regional HI schools champions the opportunities of competing against other regional schools champions. This will help identify high calibre national schools champions that could possibly go on to win Open Age Group National Championships. These winners would make up the pool where athletes would be selected to represent GB in international competitions.

8. Conclusions

DUKA is a voluntary organisation with every official member, including the director, giving up his/her time with the reward of being able to witness improved opportunities within HI athletics and seeing the future of HI athletics being greatly improved for the HI.

From our research we have identified aims, goals, key target areas and ways of implementing this. Four AAAoE and UK:A regions London, South, Midlands and Yorkshire have expressed an interest into what we are planning to do and offered us their support.

Even though for the South region Berkshire has only been mentioned Oxfordshire is being considered as a secondary target area. Catherine Parkinson (Athletics Development Officer, Oxfordshire Active Sports) is very interested in what we are doing and feels this is a very

exciting opportunity. When the club is up and running in Berkshire she would like to come and see how we have done it at the prospectus of setting up something similar in Oxfordshire

We have been liaising with AAAoE RDOs, UK:A RETAs, local athletics clubs, County Sports Partnerships, Sports Development Officers (Council, School Partnership Managers and Sports Partnerships), HI schools and various organisations as well as with other Disability groups.

9. Evaluations

One of the main problems we need to solve is how to obtain available bursaries, funding, grants or sponsorship without the need to fit into the ethos of the Olympics or Paralympics. It is beyond the scope of DUKA to influence international governing sports bodies such as IOC, IPC and Deaflympics. However, this does not mean that HI athletes should be left in the wilderness, forgotten about and neglected. We are looking at the possibility of making public appeals via national and regional press, radio, TV and internet to raise funds for the privilege of establishing a strong team that will proudly wear the GB vest in HI major athletics championships.

Although everybody enjoys giving up their time without funding and sponsorship it is very difficult to retain commitments necessary to continually improve the opportunities within HI athletics. Unless we are able to find a way of integrating our work in alongside our National Governing Body (UK:A) and getting adequate funding or sponsorship for the organisation, excluding ourselves, the benefits to and the future of HI athletics is looking very bleak.

If after reading this document you wish to make some comments, please feel free to contact either Brian Kokoruwe or Felicity Edge at the above email address. This is a draft document at this stage and as such we would welcome any suggestions/comments. We will carefully consider them and will also discuss them. We have left our door open so that we can work alongside any individual, organisations, clubs or schools who are keen to create positive opportunities for HI individuals to enjoy the sport of athletics as well as encouraging them to move on to the world international stage.

It was a very positive start for the six GB team track and field athletes to return from the recent Deaflympics in Melbourne, Australia, January 2005 with 2 Gold, 1 Silver and 2 Bronze medals.

DUKA alone cannot further improve on this achievement. We require support from everyone or organisation who has a little bit of time, resources, capabilities of funding, sponsoring and/or energy to commit towards HI individuals. Currently athletics opportunities in the UK for HI individuals are very limited and together we can ensure that the future is better for UK HI Athletes.

The key here is for full social inclusion and most importantly offering HI equality alongside non HI and other disability athletes. HI athletes deserve to be offered similar opportunities conferred to non-HI athletes and disabled athletes. Otherwise all the hidden HI talents would remain unidentified, be wasted and the state of British Deaf athletics in world stage would be sorrowful!! 