

Her majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire Robert Voss CBE

# Sport has such a vital part to play in both our schools and community

I am extremely proud that we have many great sportsmen and women who call Hertfordshire home as well as their place of birth: World boxing champion Anthony Joshua, 5 times world formula one champion Lewis Hamilton, world cycling champions and gold medallists Laura and Jason Kenny; 5 times Olympic medallist gymnast Matt Whitlock, rising golf star Matt Wallace as well as medal winning swimmers, hockey stars and many others and of course Hertfordshire is home to a great many Premiership soccer stars and managers.

The county is home to a premieriership soccer club in Watford and other top clubs have their training grounds in the county as well as that of leading premieriership rugby club-Saracens.

Hertfordshire is home to 79 golf courses including such great courses as Moor Park, The Grove and Ashridge.

What is it that gives Hertfordshire such great sports stars and encourages them to settle here in the county? Perhaps it is the Hertfordshire air or maybe the beauty of the county. Or maybe it is the excellent facilities for training and practice available throughout the area-for example the Sports Village at the University of Hertfordshire-open to all.

Do our schools promote sport in a better way than those in other parts of the country? An interesting conference was recently held at the University of



Hertfordshire entitled "Sport for Social Change" which demonstrated that there is plenty more work to be done to encourage sport for all as a way of tackling a number of the current social issues in this and other counties...issues such as obesity, mental health, anti-social behaviour as well as encompassing social mobility.

It is important to encourage sport in schools and the community not only to find and nurture those with special talent who may go on to be world champions or medallists-but to engage the whole population to partake in some form of sporting activity.

Let us hope that Hertfordshire remains very much in the Premier League of sport.

