

# England Netball Press Release



## Back to Netball scoops prestigious national award

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### England Netball initiative wins Sports category at National Lottery Awards 2012

The National Lottery and the BBC have announced that England Netball's Active Women Back to Netball campaign has won the National Lottery Sports Project of the Year 2012. A group of Back to Netballers had a surprise visitor during training yesterday as multiple Olympic gold medallist, Sir Chris Hoy dropped in to announce the incredible news.

Over 9,000 women living in deprived areas and/or caring for U16s have taken up the sport thanks to the Back to Netball initiative and it has helped to change lives across the country. England Netball is proud to have spearheaded an initiative that has had such a positive impact on thousands of women across the country.

Katy Ritchie, National Development Manager who leads the scheme, said 'Winning National Lottery Sports Project of the Year 2012 is a dream come true. So many people have been involved in the success of Back to Netball and the award represents four years of hard work. Back to Netball coaches have inspired women across the country to return to the sport and it proves that there is a real thirst for traditional female sport out there.'

With the spotlight firmly focusing on a lasting legacy for sport after the London Olympics, there has been particular attention paid to women's sport and the need for increased coverage and media space. Netball has once again been leading the way; appearing on BBC News, Sky Sports News, BBC Radio 4, BBC Radio 5 and a well-received presence on ITV2's *The Only Way is Essex*.

By remaining a frequent focus in the public eye and by targeting otherwise untapped markets, the sport is opening itself up to a larger proportion of potential participants than ever before and as the success continues on and off the court for England, the future looks bright for the sport in our country.

The achievements and progression made over the past year owe a lot to the fabulous work and support provided by the many sponsors, partners and friends that England Netball relies on. We would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank some of the key supporters of the Back to Netball programme.

We would like to firstly acknowledge the workforce who delivers sessions every week, without our incredible team of supportive and approachable coaches, this achievement would not have been possible. We have also received remarkable support from local authorities, facilities, County Sports Partnership's and the Women's Sports & Fitness Foundation with their invaluable customer insight.

An award such as this is not only won by the organisation, but by those that made it possible and we look forward to cementing these relationships over the coming twelve months.

We would also like to thank each and every member of the public who took the time to vote for Back to Netball to win this accolade. The response and reception received has been immense and it truly validates the tremendous effort put in by all involved to make this fantastic campaign such a success.

#### Alex Sexton

Media Officer  
England Netball  
07872400740  
[alex.sexton@englandnetball.co.uk](mailto:alex.sexton@englandnetball.co.uk)

#### England Netball

1-12 Old Park Road  
Hitchin  
Herts  
SG5 2JR