

Phil Batty
Chief Executive
Commonwealth Games Glasgow 2026

30 June 2025

Dear Phil Batty,

Thank you for the meeting earlier this month.

I am writing now on behalf of [Obesity Action Scotland](#) and the [Scottish Obesity Alliance](#) that we host. We are organisations advocating for transformation of the systems that perpetuate obesity and its devastating consequences on health and wellbeing. As an Alliance, our vision is a Scotland where everyone can flourish in a healthy and sustainable food environment.

We are delighted that the 2026 Commonwealth Games is coming to Glasgow and see a significant opportunity for the event to make a positive impact on the health of our communities and promote sustainable food environments. The Games is uniquely positioned to lead by example when it comes to health and wellbeing, and we are therefore writing to ask you, as Chief Executive of the Commonwealth Games Organising Company, to ensure that this Games' legacy is health-promoting and family-friendly.

Our specific asks, below, have received the support of over 170 signatories, including key opinion makers (appended). In the context of the Commonwealth Games 2026, we collectively ask that you offer the following:

1. **Ensure the event is free from sponsorship** by high fat, sugar and salt (HFSS) food and drink companies, building on good practices such as from [FIFA's Event Policy on Tobacco](#) which bans sponsorship and advertising by all tobacco products or e-cigarettes, and the [Évin's Law](#) from France which bans all alcohol sponsorship in sports and cultural events.
2. **Adopt a child-rights approach to restrict HFSS food and drink advertising and marketing** within and around sports venues, as per the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) guidelines](#) on policies to protect children from the harmful impact of food marketing.
3. **Promote affordable, sustainable and healthy food** options and prohibit HFSS food outlets at and near sporting venues, mirroring the smoking regulations established during the Glasgow [Commonwealth Games](#) in 2014. Such an

initiative will promote a junk food-free environment that families can visit with children.

4. **Free any media promotions of sporting events from HFSS food and drink advertising.** Australia that was to initially host the 2026 Games has a comprehensive legislative approach that removed tobacco advertising at sporting events from television and most media platforms, and advocacy for [similar initiatives](#) across health harming products at the event was gathering momentum.
5. **Ensure sports persons do not endorse any HFSS food brand elements.** In research from the [UK](#), 78% of parents indicate that children prefer food brands associated with their favourite sports players and teams. Positive action in Scotland should build on football teams like Glasgow City FC signing in support of [SHAAP's calling time campaign](#) to end alcohol sponsorship and marketing in sports.

These asks come from wide-ranging sectors, including leaders of Royal Colleges, health boards across the country such as of NHS Ayrshire and Arran, professional bodies such as of dentists and dieticians, large civil society alliances such as Children in Scotland, Children's Health Scotland, Multicultural Family Base and Voluntary Health Scotland, food networks such as the Glasgow City Food Partnership, the Scottish Pantry Network, Community Gardens, several leading hospitals, NHS trusts, universities, research agencies as well as representatives of countless other organisations including Cancer Research UK, and Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland, doctors, nurses, and dieticians. Public opinion is shifting on unhealthy food companies, and our asks have also drawn support from people out with the health sector — people who wish to protect themselves, their families and their communities from the impacts of unhealthy foods while at sporting events.

Significantly, our asks are rooted in evidence, and we know that they will have a powerful impact on the health of our communities, especially young people. [There is overwhelming evidence that advertising and marketing techniques powerfully influence food preference, choice, and consumption in children, thus harming their health.](#) We also know that the wider food environment heavily influences what people consume. When food marketing and the wider food environment lead us towards increased consumption of [soft drinks](#) and [junk food](#), we see corresponding increases in obesity rates. Therefore, we need healthy food and drink to be available and affordable, and for it to be front and centre at every opportunity.

Your previous involvement at the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games sets a commendable precedent in this regard, keeping unhealthy food companies out of the sponsors list. The natural next step would be for the games in Glasgow to require its

venues to remove any unhealthy food and drink companies from its suppliers list and disallow any marketing. Third party contracts with the venues and vendors need to reflect these terms. As an independently funded event, you have a unique opportunity to implement and showcase these measures as initiatives by the Commonwealth Games, setting an exemplar and legacy for future Games to uphold.

You would have our support in implementing these measures. We are already encouraging Scottish Water to sponsor and promote drinking water at and around the venues. This should avert any dependence on beverage companies to meet the events hydration needs, reduce its carbon footprint and improve sustainability. Further, we align with similar calls from organisations working across health-harming products, with partners from NCD Alliance Scotland, for a coherent and coordinated approach to restricting tobacco, vapes, alcohol, and unhealthy food at the Glasgow Games.

As a bridge to future Games, you and the Glasgow Games have the unique opportunity to present an inclusive, forward-thinking and health-promoting Games, with added social value.

We look forward to your response and will be delighted to explore further how we can work together to deliver a truly health promoting Games, with lasting impact.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Dr Shoba John

Head, Obesity Action Scotland

Convenor, Scottish Obesity Alliance

