




**IMPLEMENTING
UNITING THE
MOVEMENT**



**YEARS 2-4
2022-25**



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
OUR AMBITIONS FOR 2025	10
WHAT WE'LL DO	21
BUILDING THE MOVEMENT	24
MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY'RE AT	34
BEING THE CHANGE	41
OUR INVESTMENT APPROACH	49
HOW WE'LL KNOW IF WE'RE SUCCESSFUL	52

1

INTRODUCTION

This plan for 2022-25 sets out our collective aims for implementing Uniting the Movement over the next three years, and what that means for Sport England's role as we work with others to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity.

It builds on our 2021-22 plan, which set out the things we'd focus on during a year of transition from our previous strategy.

OUR JOURNEY TO 2025

Our roadmap to 2025 is built on extensive consultation with more than 250 partners and stakeholders in the months since we published our strategy – it's given us the opportunity to determine collaboratively what the most important things are to focus on over the next three years and why they matter.

This has involved looking at what we've learned so far, including from the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and our response to it, with an eye on the trends that will shape the future.

Our three guiding principles – **investing most in those that need it most**, the right blend of **national and local action**, and **simple as standard** – continue to help us decide where we're investing time, energy and money.

THIS PLAN DETAILS:

- Our ambitions for 2025, showing the biggest opportunities for progress that we can collectively work on to increase activity and level the playing field (**see pages 10-20**)
- What we'll do as an organisation to help realise these opportunities, acknowledging we can only do this by working collaboratively (**see pages 21-48**).

Each piece of work we're committing to is a driver of the big issues that we collectively need to address, and the catalysts for change we recognise – the collective capabilities that need to be developed to address those issues more effectively (**see fact box**). Over the following pages, we'll explain which are most related to each commitment.





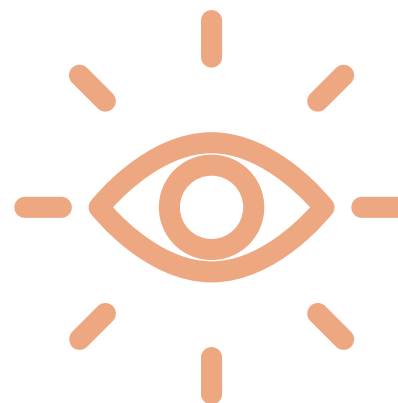
OUR CORE BELIEF

We believe that when we move, we're stronger.

That's true for each of us, and it's true for our communities and society.

OUR VISION

A nation that's alive with physical activity, where people are connected to each other and the places they live through sport and movement. A country where people can thrive and live happier, healthier, and more fulfilled lives.



OUR MISSION

To invest in sport and physical activity to make it a normal part of life for everyone in England, regardless of who you are. Because it's not a level playing field.





A FOCUS ON TACKLING INEQUALITIES

Uniting the Movement is a collective effort with tackling inequalities at its heart, because we believe every person should have an equal chance to benefit from living an active life.

Covid-19 has further highlighted and intensified many of the long-term inequalities in sport and physical activity – the people who faced the most barriers to activity before the pandemic have struggled the most to be active (see fact box).

That's why we'll focus our work on the areas that will make the greatest difference, so that everyone has improved access to opportunities to be active in environments that are inclusive, safe and accessible, as well as enjoyable experiences and the confidence, motivation and capability to take part.

Sport and physical activity doesn't just boost people's

physical health – it can improve people's mental wellbeing, it can help bring people and communities together, and it has a role to play in supporting the economic recovery from the pandemic.



Covid-19 has further highlighted and intensified many of the long-term inequalities in sport and physical activity.

Therefore, sport and physical activity can support the goal of levelling up communities and supporting the most disadvantaged people in society as we collectively recover from the pandemic.

THE BIG ISSUES

RECOVER AND REINVENT

Recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.

POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.



CONNECTING WITH HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.

ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.





THE CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE



EFFECTIVE INVESTMENT MODELS

The right kinds of investment, timed well and delivered skilfully can stimulate demand, provide opportunities to get active, enable innovation, encourage collaboration, reduce inequalities and enable greater sustainability.



REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP

The people who spend their time helping others to be active are our most precious resource and their potential is limitless. They're the key to adopting and achieving the ambitions in our strategy.



APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL

Times are changing, and so are people's expectations. In the face of significant opportunity and change, it's critical innovation, including digital, is applied to the big issues that are holding many more people back from being active.



HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING

Key to collaborative action is a shared understanding of the opportunities and the challenges that we face together.



GOOD GOVERNANCE

Good governance, and a commitment to positive, effective, safe delivery of opportunities at every level is how intentions and ambitions are enshrined into ways of working.

INEQUALITIES

Inequalities won't look the same for everyone. People are not defined by a single demographic factor – we're a mix of these factors and they combine to create our social and cultural identities.

Not everyone has the same experiences of sport and physical activity, or the same life opportunities. Some people feel excluded from activities, and some people and communities simply don't have the opportunities to take part.



Research shows there are some clear inequalities in opportunities, accessibility and experiences of sport and physical activity.

We know from research there are some clear inequalities in opportunities, accessibility and experiences of sport and physical activity, some of which have developed or been made worse since Covid-19, but most of which are long-term inequalities seen for years:

- Men and boys are more likely to be active than women and girls. Men and boys saw larger disruptions to their activity levels during the severe Covid-19 restrictions due to a greater reliance on organised activity, with younger men less likely to return than older males
- People aged 16–34 have seen activity levels drop over the past few years and this has been exacerbated by the pandemic. More recently, those enjoying taking part has also fallen
- People aged 75+ have seen previous growth in activity levels halted and drop back during the pandemic, with no real sign of recovery. Perceived opportunity to be active and activity choice has reduced, with nearly two-thirds of this group currently reliant on walking for leisure. More recently, those enjoying taking part has also fallen
- Adults from the most deprived socio-economic groups are less likely to be active, as are children from less affluent families
- There's variation in levels of engagement in sport and physical activity by ethnic group. The Black ethnic group as a whole saw perceived capability to be active fall, and this remains. The pandemic has made it disproportionately harder for some ethnic minority groups
- Both disabled adults and people with a long-term health condition are less likely to be active than those without, with activity levels decreasing sharply the more impairments an individual has. The return to activity as Covid restrictions have eased is slow
- People that experience prejudice or discrimination, such as (but not limited to) people from LGBTQ+ groups and ethnic minority groups, report that it can be a barrier to taking part in sport and physical activity.

It's tackling these inequalities that are at the core of our strategy and this plan.

Source: Active Lives Adult Survey May 2020–21, and Active Lives Children and Young People Survey academic year 2020/21

2

OUR AMBITIONS FOR 2025

HOW THE MOVEMENT CAN MAKE PROGRESS TOGETHER

In Uniting the Movement, we set out five big issues to join forces around, and five catalysts for change that represent the biggest opportunities to build a more active and equal nation.

We've now worked with partners and stakeholders to look at the **collective action and outcomes that are most needed in the next three years** to make progress in these areas.

These are ambitions we can all work towards and they give us a common picture of the 2025 we want to be part of creating, as a milestone on the 10-year journey of Uniting the Movement.

BY 2025

More investment and resources for communities with the greatest need

Inclusive, safe and accessible experiences as standard

Adapting to people's changing needs and expectations

Supporting, recognising and celebrating success

A diverse network of leaders, volunteers and professionals

Listening to, and involving, people less likely to be active

Positive experiences for children and young people and supporting talented athletes

Collaborating with the health, education and transport sectors

Contribution to net zero embedded in everyday thinking

BY 2025

More investment and resources for communities with the greatest need

The communities that need the most support to be active will be receiving significantly more investment and resource.

Local networks of partners will be supported to develop skills and capacity in order to create high-quality spaces and places for sport and physical activity, and activate them with great experiences that are designed with communities.

This collective effort will see the public, private and third sectors and services working better together at a local level to help people be active through a wide range of lenses such as sport, leisure, health, social care, transport and education.

[← BACK TO OVERVIEW](#)

[NEXT >](#)

BY 2025

Inclusive, safe and accessible experiences as standard

Equipped with a deeper and richer understanding of the inequalities that people face in being active, we'll be working every day to break these down.

Thanks to research and continuous shared learning, all of us – sport and physical activity providers, operators, national governing bodies, coaches and volunteers – will know how to deliver experiences designed around the needs of adults and children and young people. Experiences will be truly inclusive and accessible, people will feel psychologically and physically safe, and their expectations will be met.

[← BACK TO OVERVIEW](#)

[NEXT →](#)

**BY
2025**

Supporting, recognising and celebrating success

The people and organisations providing under-represented groups with great experiences and opportunities to be active will be better recognised and supported, with the positive things they're doing being used to inspire and support others.

[← BACK TO OVERVIEW](#)

[NEXT >](#)

BY 2025

Adapting to people's changing needs and expectations

We'll be taking a human-centred approach to the design of sport and physical activity offerings and meeting people's rapidly-changing demands – innovation and digital will be used to update opportunities to be active, for example, providing more online and hybrid experiences and hyper-local opportunities.

We'll have made it easier for us all to share the data, technology and resources that will enable us to provide people with choice in their community and the ability to easily find opportunities online or via other methods, and we'll be offering them great experiences when they do take part.

[← BACK TO OVERVIEW](#)

[NEXT >](#)

**BY
2025**

Listening to, and involving, people less likely to be active

We'll all be actively seeking out, and listening to, people of all ages who are least likely to be getting active.

They'll be involved in decisions and helping co-create new ways of doing things to increase the opportunities to get active.

[← BACK TO OVERVIEW](#)

[NEXT →](#)

BY 2025

A diverse network of leaders, volunteers and professionals

There'll be a broader diversity of leaders, volunteers and professionals across sport and in key related sectors that 'think physical activity' in all that they do.

Connected through networks, they'll exchange information and learning, work on shared challenges, and develop the skills they need to champion inclusive sport and physical activity in their networks and beyond. Access to networks and professional development will be encouraged in order to bring through new and more diverse leaders.

[← BACK TO OVERVIEW](#)

[NEXT >](#)

**BY
2025**

Positive experiences for children and young people and supporting talented athletes

Those who provide sport and physical activity opportunities for children and young people – both in and out of school – will be increasingly designing them around fun, inclusive and safe experiences and working to offer a greater choice of sport and physical activity opportunities. We'll be listening to and engaging with young people in the design and delivery of activities.

There'll be a recognition of the benefits of movement on children's mental wellbeing, their social connectivity and academic achievement, together with an increased emphasis on physical literacy: giving children the best start in life by helping them to develop the ability to move with competence and confidence in a wide variety of physical activities, as well as enjoyment, knowledge and understanding.

To support talented young people from every background to have a chance to make it to the top, there'll be examples of cutting-edge talent pathways that are more inclusive and connected to the groups and settings in the communities these talented athletes live in. The pathways will be personcentric, safe and supportive of athletes' mental and physical needs.

[← BACK TO OVERVIEW](#)

[NEXT >](#)

**BY
2025**

Collaborating with the health, education and transport sectors

Organisations in the health, education, transport and fitness and leisure sectors will be collaborating at all levels with the sport and physical activity sector to break down the barriers that exist for people in taking part.

Using health as an example, physical activity advice and support will be becoming a more routine part of the health and care system offer.

Collaboration between health, care and sport and physical activity providers will be enabling a more positive and supported journey through to a local opportunity, where the workforce feels confident to support that person's needs.

We'll be better demonstrating the return on investment for sport and physical activity and other sectors, resulting in further collaborations.

[← BACK TO OVERVIEW](#)

[NEXT →](#)

**BY
2025**

Contribution to net zero embedded in everyday thinking

We'll all be acting on our contribution to net zero in our everyday operations, whether that's through the sustainable planning and design of the nation's sport and leisure facilities, or optimising environments for walking and cycling so they're convenient, safe and cost effective.

Active travel policies will be seen as a vital part of contributing to a net zero goal, and the potential for our sector to make a positive impact on climate targets will have been fully assessed, with solutions which reduce carbon emissions and encourage environmental sustainability tested.

[← BACK TO OAOVERVIEW](#)

3

WHAT WE'LL DO

We have an important role to play to turn these aspirations into reality. As one organisation we can't do it all – but we can play a part in creating better conditions for greater collaboration and impact.



This plan is about us doing what's necessary to enable other organisations, locally and nationally, to do their best work and work collectively and collaboratively as a team with a shared purpose.

As we've consulted on this plan and, before that, our strategy, we've heard from hundreds of people and organisations about when we, as an organisation, are at our best, what we're uniquely positioned to do, when we add the most value to others, and what's needed from us over the next few years.

We've heard how important it is that we're clear on what partners and stakeholders can expect from us and the role we intend to play.

So, we've organised the specific work we'll do over the next three years to help realise the biggest opportunities for progress under three pillars that describe the role **we'll play**:



BUILDING THE MOVEMENT

We'll be known for championing the huge benefits that moving our bodies – through community sport, fitness and physical activity – has on our health and for our communities. This means supporting a broad and diverse network of people and organisations making sport and physical activity happen each day to thrive – by providing resources, advocating for change where something needs to be unblocked, supporting leadership and learning, and leveraging action through funding, tools, inspiration and ideas that are easy to use and share.

[READ MORE](#)



MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY'RE AT

To be truly inclusive of traditionally marginalised people and organisations, we need to go to them, rather than expecting them to come to us. We'll focus disproportionately on people who face the most barriers to activity, so they can have improved access to opportunities in inclusive, safe and accessible environments. This means us working with partners to change existing provision, funding the places, communities and networks where we can connect with people who need the most help to be active, partnering with those who are passionate about tackling inequalities with us, listening to people with more knowledge, expertise and experience, and acting on what we learn from them.

[READ MORE](#)



BEING THE CHANGE

We've heard loud and clear that the way we do things has a ripple effect way beyond our organisation – so we'll use this as a force for positive change. We'll show not tell, embracing the change we want to see through our language, communications, skills and approach – living our values every single day (see graphic). We won't stop at gathering learning – we'll work with our partners to share knowledge and understanding as we go, creating the conditions for others to join the existing and growing movement. We'll show what's possible, building the case for investing in sport and physical activity by demonstrating the return on investment.

[READ MORE](#)

OUR VALUES

Our four values are the ways we'll enshrine our mission in our everyday choices:



WE ARE INCLUSIVE



WE ARE COLLABORATIVE



WE ARE AMBITIOUS



WE ARE INNOVATIVE

WHAT WE'LL DO

BUILDING THE MOVEMENT

WHAT WE'LL DO NOW

- BIG ISSUE ADVOCACY
- COVID-19 RECOVERY AND REINVENTION SUPPORT
- TARGETED INVESTMENT INTO COMMUNITY FOOTBALL, TENNIS AND MULTI-SPORT FACILITIES
- SIMPLIFIED ACCESS TO OUR OPEN FUNDING

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

- UNITING THE MOVEMENT RESOURCES
- CREATING A LEADERSHIP COMMUNITY

WHAT WE'LL DO LATER

- CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR INNOVATION





BUILDING THE MOVEMENT

WHAT WE'LL DO NOW

BIG ISSUE ADVOCACY

Understanding and unlocking the barriers around the five big issues is a vital element of our strategy that will truly help make change happen.

It'll mean taking an evidence-based approach and listening to what people tell us are their barriers to getting active, and then using our advocacy and influence to help make the changes needed to remove them.

These won't all be barriers that can be broken down solely by the sport and physical activity sector – some will relate to other areas, like the leisure, travel or health sectors.

There may also be opportunities to use a particular moment where we can see energy

building to help bring about systemic policy or cultural changes that could enable activity, or tackle a blockage that needs collective unlocking.

We'll create connections between key parts of the movement across various sectors and organisations where there's an alignment with our vision, enabling collaboration and diverse perspectives and connections to be maintained.

Demonstrating the value of sport and physical activity – the return on investment – and how it can help organisations achieve their own aims and outcomes, will be a key part of our advocacy work.

For example, it could focus on the value of investing in and improving local spaces. Or it could mean getting behind the goal of reaching net zero emissions by advocating for active travel and sustainable and environmentally sound practices within the sector.



BUILDING THE MOVEMENT CONTINUED

All the choices we make within this work will be guided by where we know the biggest impacts could be made on reducing the inequalities in sport and physical activity.

By starting with people's own experiences and day-to-day realities, we'll be able to connect the dots and build bridges between organisations and sectors to help build the movement and give everyone an equal chance to be active in environments that are inclusive, safe and accessible.

The strong relationships we build and influence we channel won't just be at

national or local government-level, but among a mix of stakeholders, so that we're speaking with a shared voice and vision.

This will take many different forms, depending on the situation. We might seek to align, lead, or convene a network or collation to influence national or local policy – like championing the future of local leisure.

Sometimes we'll be convened by others to integrate sport and physical activity into their agendas, like active travel. At other times we'll broker relationships and collaborations around

particular opportunities, underpinned by relevant resources and support, like integrating sport and physical activity into health and care systems.

The research and insight we gather with our network of partners – alongside piloting, testing and trialling ideas – will build an evidence base that increases confidence and support for the movement.

This will all build on what we've done to date, ramping up its pace and impact.



SPOTLIGHT COLLABORATING WITH THE HEALTH SYSTEM TO RECOGNISE THE VALUE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The health system has significant reach, connections and trust, but physical activity promotion can easily fall down the list amongst many other competing priorities.

That's why over the past few years, we've been working to make the 'health' case for movement and collaborating with the health system to recognise the value physical activity can bring to addressing health challenges.



BUILDING THE MOVEMENT CONTINUED

We've also been exploring opportunities to create a high-quality sport and physical activity experience for anyone who moves between any health system – be that advice, signposting or referral – into sport or physical activity, especially people living with health conditions.

We want each person's journey to be easy, personalised and supported, to help increase their likelihood of being active and improving their health or wellbeing.

We've worked with partners in and around the health system to influence change in areas including:

- Developing strategic alliances
- Shaping and informing national guidance and policy to support our aims
- Playing a role as a convenor
- Responding to the evidence, resource or insight gaps

- Pilots/proof of concept
- Identifying and acting on 'big' blockers and enablers.

Looking forward, we'll develop shared plans with the new Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, with support from NHS Horizons; we'll build alliances with other stakeholders; and we'll consider gaps in knowledge or resources and commission accordingly to build evidence, insight and tools which support the case for change.



We've been working to make the 'health' case for movement and collaborating with the health system to recognise the value of physical activity.



BUILDING THE MOVEMENT CONTINUED



SPOTLIGHT SUPPORTING AND DEVELOPING PUBLICLY OWNED LEISURE FACILITIES

Public sector-owned leisure facilities – from leisure centres and gyms to playing fields and tennis courts – are a crucial part of England’s sport and leisure estate.

With local authorities the largest investors in community sport and leisure provision, between them, these publicly owned leisure facilities had 184 million visits in 2019–20, creating a significant social return, with positive impacts on people’s mental wellbeing, social and community development, social capital and improved physical wellbeing.

The pandemic put many public facilities at risk – local councils and their service delivery partners, together with the £100m National Leisure Recovery Fund, helped to avert

the collapse of the sector – but significant pressures remain. It’s more important than ever that we continue to support local authorities through our resources and guidance to help the development of provision that’s more strategic, linking effectively across health and the new integrated care systems.

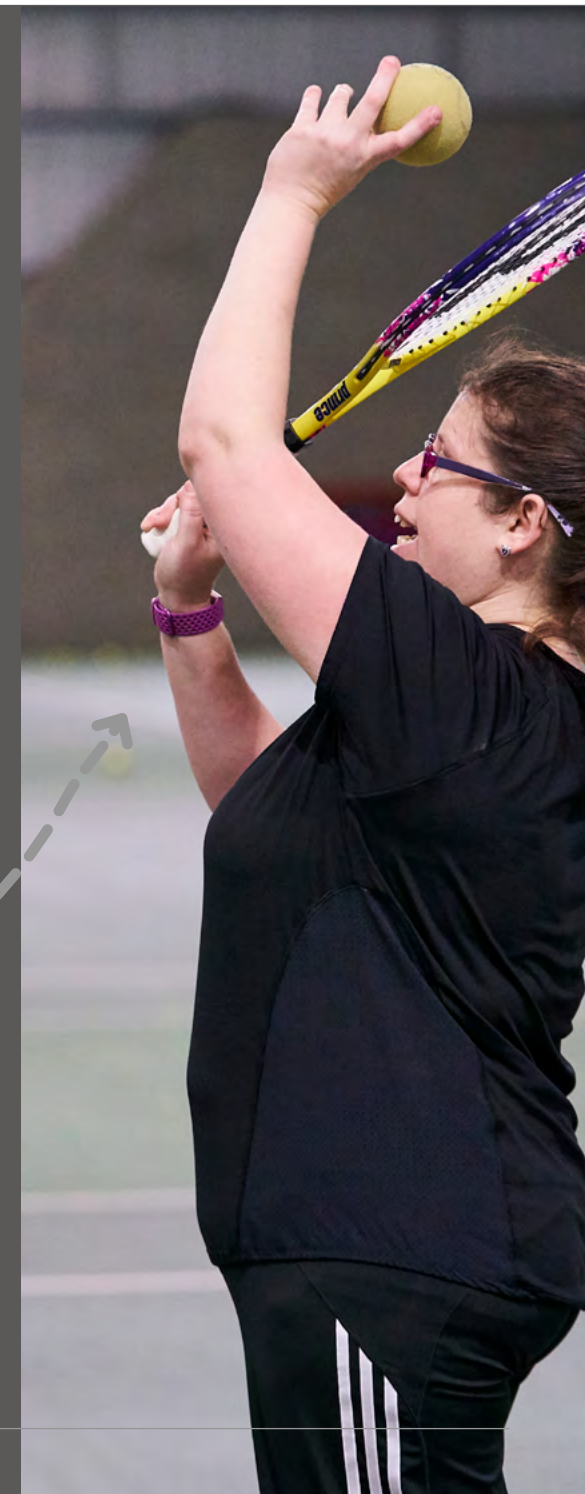
Our **Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance and our Leisure Services Delivery Guidance** is already used across the sector, and our capital investment helps stimulate local investment into sustainable leisure facilities designed to co-locate services as wellbeing hubs.

Alongside all of this is **Moving Communities**, our platform which gives real-time data on how leisure services are performing, improving and making an impact in their communities.

This is all underpinned by collaborative leadership, and we’ll continue to encourage and support the development of leadership within the sector by building and expanding on things like our local leadership programmes.

184M

The number of visits to publicly owned leisure facilities in 2019–20



BUILDING THE MOVEMENT CONTINUED

COVID-19 RECOVERY AND REINVENTION SUPPORT

With Covid-19 and its impacts clearly far from over, we'll continue to deliver on the commitments we've already made – in particular, managing and administering the government's Sport Survival Package, which supports professional leagues, clubs and other sports bodies under severe financial pressure from the pandemic – and re-focus our emphasis on to recovery and reinvention.

It's hard to predict the course of Covid-19 over the next few years, but we're committed to continuing to support the sector through this uncertainty while embracing the opportunities the pandemic has surfaced.

In the immediate term, it's likely there'll be an unequal recovery and increasing regional inequalities as difficult economic choices are made – for example, partners providing opportunities in lower income areas may be hardest hit.

But changing employment circumstances could lead to people with more diverse experiences, skills and backgrounds entering the sport and physical activity workforce.

So, we'll initially focus on 'rebuilding' the community of people who make sport and physical activity happen in communities – often volunteers, freelancers, sole traders and micro businesses – and continue to work closely with local authorities to protect community sport and physical activity provision where it's needed most.

People should also have the option to get active from their home where it makes sense for the activity and for those who could or do take part, so we'll continue to support a shift towards digital and hybrid offers.



EFFECTIVE INVESTMENT MODELS 

REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP 

BIG ISSUES RECOVER AND REINVENT 

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL 

HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING 

BUILDING THE MOVEMENT CONTINUED

TARGETED INVESTMENT INTO COMMUNITY FOOTBALL, TENNIS AND MULTI-SPORT FACILITIES

We'll work with national and local place partners, such as local authorities, to target the government's multi-million-pound investment into community football, tennis and multi-sport facilities so it reaches the places where it'll have the biggest impact.

By building on what we've learned about community engagement and co-designing facilities, we'll seek even greater input from communities on these facilities and the improvements that can be made to them.

SIMPLIFIED ACCESS TO OUR OPEN FUNDING

We'll create a single point of entry for our open funding, replacing the separate application processes we have currently for programmes such as the Community Asset Fund, Small Grants and options for crowdfunding.

This new process will be built on what we've learned from our Covid-19 response funds, and include our open invitation for people and organisations to share with us their own ideas for helping to get people active.

We want it to be simple and easy to apply for funding, but also to access help and support to further develop and improve ideas and initiatives, make links with organisations, access expert advice or develop new skills – such as learning about crowdfunding.

So, we'll ensure we build a process that's flexible, simple to use and responsive that can adapt and evolve so we and our partners can respond to new issues, challenges and opportunities as they arise.



BIG ISSUES

 **ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS**

 **CONNECTING COMMUNITIES**

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

 **APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL**

BIG ISSUES

 **RECOVER AND REINVENT**

 **CONNECTING COMMUNITIES**

 **POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

 **CONNECTING WITH HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

 **ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS**

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

 **EFFECTIVE INVESTMENT MODELS**

 **APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL**

 **HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING**



WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT



UNITING THE MOVEMENT RESOURCES

We'll create a free set of resources for anyone who is or wants to be part of the movement, with the aim of helping people and organisations solve challenges and access support.

Some of these resources already exist – but we'll make them easier to find and access – while some new resources are needed to help with new challenges.

The kinds of resources that we'll share could include:

DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING

e.g. advice on data standards

TOOLS

e.g. community engagement tools

TEMPLATES

e.g. club governance templates

GUIDANCE

e.g. on safeguarding and developing your people

TRAINING

e.g. digital marketing training

CASE STUDIES

e.g. sharing the experiences of others

GRANT FINDER

to help identify potential funding opportunities

IMAGE LIBRARY

with diverse images of grassroots sport and physical activity.

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

EFFECTIVE INVESTMENT MODELS

REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP

APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL

HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING

GOOD GOVERNANCE

BUILDING THE MOVEMENT CONTINUED



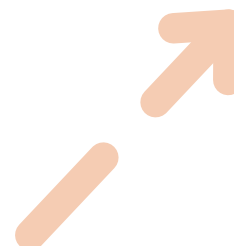
CREATING A LEADERSHIP COMMUNITY

We'll find and support new and existing champions for sport and physical activity from every walk of life and background who can influence their organisations, networks and sectors.

Each person will be recognised, supported and empowered to develop the skills needed to lead a movement for everyone.

They may work in any number of sectors and be at any level, paid or voluntary, but there'll be a strong connection with our big issues and tackling inequalities.

We can support this network through events, exchanges (i.e. brokering secondments) and opportunities (i.e. mentoring and internships).



BIG ISSUES

RECOVER AND REINVENT 

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES 

POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE 

CONNECTING WITH HEALTH AND WELLBEING 

ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS 

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE
EFFECTIVE INVESTMENT MODELS 

REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP 

APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL 

HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING 

GOOD GOVERNANCE 

BUILDING THE MOVEMENT CONTINUED

WHAT WE'LL DO LATER

CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR INNOVATION

We'll convene partners, people and stakeholders to come together to work through shared challenges or opportunities that need multiple perspectives to crack.

This will be supported by experts in innovation and design, using processes designed to unearth new solutions such as rapid prototyping, testing new ways of working, and using learning sprints to refine thinking based on what does and doesn't work.

The focus of this collaborative innovation work will be overcoming consumer challenges – for example, reimagining the experience of volunteering in sport so that it attracts more people and greater diversity, or developing new products or services which support children and young people to use physical activity to look after their own mental wellbeing.



BIG ISSUES

RECOVER AND REINVENT 

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES 

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ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS 

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE
REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP 

APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL 

HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING 

WHAT WE'LL DO NOW

- EXPANDING OUR PLACE PARTNERSHIPS
- DATA AND RESEARCH ON INEQUALITIES

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

- NEW LONG-TERM STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
- BUILDING ON OUR CAMPAIGNING
- STORYTELLING AND FRAMING THE NARRATIVE ON INEQUALITIES

WHAT WE'LL DO LATER

- CONNECTING AND SUPPORTING GRASSROOTS ORGANISERS

WHAT WE'LL DO

MEETING PEOPLE

WHERE THEY'RE AT



MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY'RE AT

WHAT WE'LL DO NOW

EXPANDING OUR PLACE PARTNERSHIPS

In order to focus our investment and resources on the communities that need it most, we'll significantly increase the number of places across England that we partner with and invest in, building the movement from the ground up by working with organisations and communities to understand the issues and barriers facing people to get active, and working together to develop local solutions.

We'll draw on everything we've learnt, and will continue to learn, from our existing **local delivery pilots**, work done or led by Active Partnerships, our **Together Fund** and other place-

based work – like our Strategic Facilities Fund and We Are Undefeatable activation areas – as we expand our network of place-based partnerships.

All of this will help us find places where we have a shared vision or purpose, with data and insight helping us to form partnerships with places that have the strongest connections to our big issues and support our fundamental aim of tackling inequalities and using sport and physical activity to level up communities and create a fairer society.

This will be a collaborative and transparent process, with an understanding that each place is different, and will therefore have different needs.

We'll work with a consortium of partners in each place, supporting the development and practical application of skills, capabilities and collaborations within these networks of people – for example in leadership

approaches or innovation and digital skills – and facilitate connections within places, for example connecting talent pathways.

We'll also channel capital investment into local facilities, community assets and places and spaces to help more people get and be active.

As we take actions together, we'll find new and better ways of sharing data and insight that'll help identify opportunities, unearth what does and doesn't work and why, and build a continuously developing culture of learning and sharing.

These learnings will inform our other work packages, such as our campaigning and our focus on advocacy.

By empowering places and people and arming them with the resources they need, alongside diverse leadership networks that are at the centre of their communities, we can, together, make sustainable change happen.



BIG ISSUES

RECOVER AND REINVENT

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

CONNECTING WITH HEALTH AND WELLBEING

ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

EFFECTIVE INVESTMENT MODELS

REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP

APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL

HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING

GOOD GOVERNANCE

MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY'RE AT CONTINUED



SPOTLIGHT
BIRMINGHAM 2022
COMMONWEALTH GAMES

We've built on what we've learned from our local delivery pilots and other place-based work to make the most of the opportunities the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham present.

We're focusing this work on tackling inequalities through the lens of equality, diversity and inclusion.

This work, supported by more than **£30m** of investment, includes:

- A £3m Creating Active Communities programme, which runs across four areas of the West Midlands with the greatest levels of inactivity and health inequalities, working in collaboration with place leaders and communities to use different types of interventions to support people into activity

- A £3.5m Places and Spaces programme, which will support community clubs and organisations to strengthen their fundraising capability through crowdfunding, and invest into small-scale capital projects across the West Midlands
- Working closely with Commonwealth Games sports to focus on how they can work together to make the most of the Games to tackle inequality in participation in their sports
- Working with these sports to identify opportunities to develop innovation in how they reach, support and connect people into regularly being active – for example via digital marketing
- A further £4m investment into the School Games – including £2m for the 2022 National Finals – using Birmingham 2022 to connect to more young people
- Investing in and supporting the Team England Futures programme, designed to inspire, engage and prepare around 800 high-potential athletes and their support teams for a career in high performance sport via education, mentoring and development, plus a 'behind the scenes' taste of the Games
- Investing into both the aquatics and mountain bike sites, alongside investment into a range of supporting infrastructure that will provide community access post-Games.



MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY'RE AT CONTINUED

DATA AND RESEARCH ON INEQUALITIES

We'll collaborate with a more diverse set of partners to further identify, quantify and illuminate the inequalities that exist in sport and physical activity, and people's own experiences.

This will help us build a shared understanding of where and why these inequalities exist – for example, developing a stronger picture of how representative the sport and physical activity workforce is and the barriers that exist – and support others to put the learning into action to help tackle them.

It'll add to key work already done, including the **2020 'Sport for all' report** and the publication in June 2021 of two reports as part of the **Tackling Racism and Racial Inequality in Sport Review**, which identified gaps and common themes alongside recommendations. We'll then share everything we learn in the new resource hub we'll develop (**see page 31**), so it's easy to access and use.

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

 **HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING**

MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY'RE AT CONTINUED

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

NEW LONG-TERM STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

We'll reach out to organisations and networks that can help us to meet people where they're at, forming new long-term strategic partnerships.

Our approach to forming these partnerships will be to identify organisations who have trust, credibility and connections with the people we're trying to reach.

These organisations may not yet be fully utilising physical activity, but they could be supported, through collaboration, to use, invest in, advocate for and promote sport and physical activity or work with sport and physical activity providers.

This could particularly help us connect with people and communities who may not all live in a single place or may not identify with a place, but come together through online communities and networks – for example, some disabled people now connect more online than in person because of Covid-19.



BIG ISSUES
RECOVER AND REINVENT 

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES 

POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE 

CONNECTING WITH HEALTH AND WELLBEING 

ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS 

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE
EFFECTIVE INVESTMENT MODELS 

REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP 

APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL 

HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING 

GOOD GOVERNANCE 

MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY'RE AT CONTINUED

BUILDING ON OUR CAMPAIGNING

We'll build on the resources available from our This Girl Can campaign and We Are Undefeatable, developed in partnership with 16 health and social care charities, while building on what we've achieved and learned through our Join the Movement campaign – so partners can use them to meet their needs and those of their audiences, with relevant refreshed assets and more flexibility in how they can be used.

As well as new waves of these campaigns, we'll also look at the potential for a new campaign that tackles attitudinal or emotional barriers for a specific audience or issue, if the insight tells us it's needed.



BIG ISSUES

CONNECTING WITH HEALTH AND WELLBEING

POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP

APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL

HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING

STORYTELLING AND FRAMING THE NARRATIVE ON INEQUALITIES

As the inequalities in people's opportunities to be active widen, we need to lead and frame the narrative about why change is vital, who that change will help and the impact it'll have.

We want to increase awareness of the inequalities in sport and physical activity, and increase the urgency, understanding and empathy of the realities of these inequalities among our partners and beyond.

We'll do this by using our communications to set the tone and language – using plain English and terminology that's true to how people talk about themselves.

And we'll share stories – and help our partners share stories – that humanise data and evidence on inequalities and inspire change. We'll work with partners and people with lived experience to bring to life people's everyday realities in a way that shifts perspectives, and in a way that doesn't reinforce harmful stereotypes.



We want to increase awareness of the inequalities in sport and physical activity.



BIG ISSUES

RECOVER AND REINVENT

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

CONNECTING WITH HEALTH AND WELLBEING

ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP

HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING



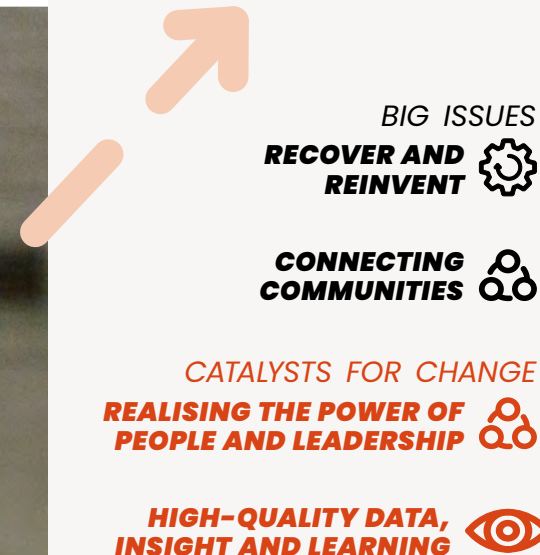
MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY'RE AT CONTINUED

WHAT WE'LL DO LATER

CONNECTING AND SUPPORTING GRASSROOTS ORGANISERS

We know many local clubs, groups and organisations want to make a difference in their communities through sport and physical activity and would benefit from connecting with others in their area to share equipment, skills, knowledge, time, facilities and resources – we want to make this kind of collaboration a reality.

To do this, we'll work with local and national partners to prototype different approaches that can be scaled up if they work and are of real value, so organisations and organisers can develop local skills, assets and capacity, helping them build valuable relationships and grow.



WHAT WE'LL DO NOW

- REVOLUTIONISING OUR LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIP APPROACH
- STEPPING UP ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
- BUILDING A MORE DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ORGANISATION
- REDESIGNING OUR STRUCTURE AND DEVELOPING OUR PEOPLE
- GOVERNANCE, SAFEGUARDING AND INTEGRITY
- CO-DESIGNING A MEASUREMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY APPROACH
- EVALUATION AND LEARNING PLAN
- BEING MORE EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE AND AGILE
- REALIGNING OUR PLANNING FUNCTION
- MANAGING COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS WITH MULTIPLE PARTNERS

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

- A REVISED COMMUNICATION APPROACH

WHAT WE'LL DO

BEING THE CHANGE



BEING THE CHANGE

WHAT WE'LL DO NOW

REVOLUTIONISING OUR LONG-TERM PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

We'll fundamentally change the way we work with our long-term partners, collaborating more closely than ever before, and with a laser focus on tackling inequalities.

These partners all have a major role to play in implementing Uniting the Movement's vision, including national governing bodies of sport and the network of Active Partnerships who work in every part of the country, but also organisations with specialist knowledge, such as working with specific audiences, the workforce, or safeguarding.

These relationships are vital to the success of our strategy over the next decade, so we know how important it is that they're

built on firm foundations and with collaboration and co-creation at their heart as we work towards achieving our shared strategic ambition.

We'll also look to build new long-term strategic partnerships with other organisations and networks that can help us to meet people where they're at ([see page 38](#)).

// We'll collaborate more closely than ever before with our long-term partners, with a laser focus on tackling inequalities.



BIG ISSUES
RECOVER AND REINVENT

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

CONNECTING WITH HEALTH AND WELLBEING

ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE
EFFECTIVE INVESTMENT MODELS

REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP

APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL

HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING

GOOD GOVERNANCE

BEING THE CHANGE CONTINUED

Over the next three years, we'll work with these partners to maximise their collective resources and capabilities, supporting them to adapt and realise their true potential in tackling inequalities.

This will involve identifying common goals, collective capacity and expertise across our partners, creating an environment for shared working, learning and problem solving.

We want to design the support we give each partner based on their needs and aspirations while helping to encourage new thinking – this isn't a one size fits all approach, and we know we'll need to adapt our own approach based on what is and isn't working.

This means evolving our organisational structure and transforming the way we work so that we can truly meet the aspirations of this new approach with our partners, reflecting our values and the guiding principles of our strategy.



SPOTLIGHT LEADING FOR RENEWAL

We've developed a package of support and learning opportunities for leaders and decision-makers working for our long-term partners.

Leading for Renewal's aims are to:

- Provide support to members of the professional workforce in our long-term partner organisations
- Identify and address any mental health and personal wellbeing challenges for these individuals, or for other people in their organisations

- Shape strategic thinking and enhance leadership skills, both our own and those of our partners, with a particular focus on inclusion and diversity
- Take a test and learn approach to professional workforce support and development to inform our future working practice and policy decisions.

The package of support and learning has been co-designed with those taking part, with a mix of delivery methods and approaches.

It's included a facilitated social learning space for senior decision-makers, bespoke organisational support around inclusion, and an interactive series of online learning sessions for more than 300 people.

BEING THE CHANGE CONTINUED



SPOTLIGHT REFRESHING OUR INVESTMENT APPROACH

We've developed an approach to investment decisions involving our long-term partners that's built on a more conversational and iterative process.

Over the past few months, we've been building on information we already hold with our partners, focusing on exploring our shared purpose and alignment to Uniting the Movement – alongside an honest, mutual assessment of organisational health and financial need.

We've completed this stage of work with over 100 partners, and we'll continue these conversations to understand more each organisation's specific ambitions and priorities for the coming years, and the best use of any available funding to support this.

This will result in recommendations to our Board for investment of up to five years.

We're working with our partners to develop ideas for how we'll maximise the value of our relationships with, and investment into, them, as well as how we'll embed learning and understand progress and impact, with a real opportunity to work on collective challenges and share learning that helps further build the movement.

We'll take stock of what we're learned from the process so far and iterate and adapt it for new and different partners.

STEPPING UP ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Sport and physical activity has a significant climate footprint, whether that's the transport involved, facilities, energy consumption or the goods and services brought up and down the supply chain – mitigating this impact and showcasing best practice in sport, given its prominence in society, has an important role to play in our collective net zero ambitions.

The continuing effects of climate change are well documented, with extreme weather increasingly likely to impact when and where activity takes place. People's ability to be active outdoors, through activities such as football, running, walking and cycling, is at greater risk due to extreme rain or heat.

We know there's a greater role to play, but more work is needed to establish the specific actions we'll collectively need to take to have the greatest positive impact.

We'll develop our own organisational approach to environmental sustainability by evaluating and updating our policies and procedures.

Meanwhile externally, we'll work with UK Sport, the Sport and Recreation Alliance, the British Association for Sustainable Sport and others to create a cross-sector climate commitment to guide the joined-up efforts across the sector that will make a positive impact on climate targets, as well as promoting and developing good practice.

BIG ISSUES



RECOVER AND REINVENT



ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE



GOOD GOVERNANCE

BEING THE CHANGE CONTINUED

BUILDING A MORE DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE ORGANISATION

We'll live up to the commitments in our 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan to ensure our leadership and workforce is as diverse as the nation we serve.

This will mean ensuring we have the right resources to achieve our aims, and defining the role of our internal employee-led equality and diversity networks, to support growth and promotion from within our organisation.

We'll also continue to build positive recruitment practices, such as setting targets and goals and reviewing them annually, encouraging under-represented applicants through positive action, and exploring how we can diversify our candidate pool through apprenticeships, mentoring, paid internships and other training opportunities.

REDESIGNING OUR STRUCTURE AND DEVELOPING OUR PEOPLE

We'll adapt our organisation's internal structure and ways of working so we can best deliver on the aims of Uniting the Movement.

Our organisation's people and leadership will continue to be developed by focusing on the skills, competencies and behaviours that bring our values to life.

We'll do this by working with our colleagues to identify their critical development needs, which will complement our work with partners to develop leadership and integrity, and help us identify opportunities to learn together.

This will help ensure we can be agile as we face opportunities and challenges in the decade ahead.

GOVERNANCE, SAFEGUARDING AND INTEGRITY

It's fundamental to our vision for sport and physical activity that everyone involved can do so in a safe, secure and effectively led way, so we'll continue to work with our partners to ensure good governance, safeguarding, integrity and inclusion is embedded in what we all do.

Too often we've seen issues of safety, poor governance or corruption destroy people's relationship with sport, removing trust and acting as a barrier to participation.

CONTINUES OVERLEAF

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

 **EFFECTIVE INVESTMENT MODELS**

 **REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP**

 **APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL**

 **HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING**

 **GOOD GOVERNANCE**

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP 

GOOD GOVERNANCE 

BEING THE CHANGE CONTINUED

Through our revised Code for Sports Governance – which we've developed with UK Sport – along with the partnerships we have with organisations, the support we give them and our leadership network, we'll work to ensure sport and physical activity is well run and safely delivered.

We'll put safeguarding at the heart of our investment in sporting organisations, further enhancing the support we provide the sector and continuing to build stronger requirements of those we invest in. We'll also enhance our own internal team to support this work and our understanding of how it continues to evolve and the external structures that are in place to support it.

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE
EFFECTIVE INVESTMENT MODELS

REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP

HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING

GOOD GOVERNANCE

CO-DESIGNING A MEASUREMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY APPROACH

Working with our partners and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, we'll agree the detail of the approach to understanding our success (**see pages 52-55**), in a way that reflects the values of Uniting the Movement, helps us all hold ourselves and each other accountable, directly supports the wider agenda of the government and builds a compelling evidence base about the value of investing in sport and physical activity.

As part of this, we'll ensure the data we're collecting and the measures we're using are relevant, meaningful and proportionate.

EVALUATION AND LEARNING PLAN

We'll establish an updated evaluation approach that's aligned to the ambitions of our strategy, and which fosters a culture of learning.

By engaging with our colleagues and partners, we've identified three shared ambitions for evaluation and learning: improving how we embed evaluation and learning, improving how we evaluate, and improving how we use what we learn from evaluation.

We'll work alongside partners to develop and implement actions that'll bring about these improvements, with an approach to evaluation and learning that'll never be fixed – we'll keep working to review and improve it as we go.

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE
 HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING

GOOD GOVERNANCE

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE
 REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP

APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL

HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING

GOOD GOVERNANCE

BEING THE CHANGE CONTINUED

BEING MORE EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE AND AGILE

We'll create a culture of continuous improvement, where we're always questioning if something can be done more efficiently or effectively.

Our processes will be improved so we can be more efficient, effective and agile as an organisation, focusing first on where we can make it easier for colleagues to do their jobs and deliver the commitments in this plan.

We'll ultimately create new business planning, resourcing and delivery models, ensuring everything is aligned so we can harness the skills we have in our organisation to effectively deliver our strategy's aims.

This will be done in collaboration with our colleagues, and built on partner feedback and the needs of our organisation.

REALIGNING OUR PLANNING FUNCTION

We'll review the way our planning function can be realigned with Uniting the Movement and particularly the big issues.

We already play a major role in leveraging change locally – where the way places and spaces are designed has a huge influence on how easy it is for people to move more – and this review will help us refocus that influence and maximise our impact.

MANAGING COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS WITH MULTIPLE PARTNERS

We'll develop a way to manage complex and evolving collaborations and consortiums of partners.

This will be through co-designing the preferred approach with these partners and our colleagues.

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE
EFFECTIVE INVESTMENT MODELS

APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL

HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING

GOOD GOVERNANCE

BIG ISSUES

ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE
 REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE
 REALISING THE POWER OF PEOPLE AND LEADERSHIP

APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL

HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING

BEING THE CHANGE CONTINUED

WHAT WE'LL DO NEXT

A REVISED COMMUNICATION APPROACH

Our communications will help bring to life the biggest opportunities for change to support Uniting the Movement.

We'll share useful assets with the wider movement – images, messaging and the latest research – to enable us to act as a collective. We'll also highlight examples of great work, celebrating success and highlighting the changes being made.

CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE
APPLYING INNOVATION AND DIGITAL 

HIGH-QUALITY DATA, INSIGHT AND LEARNING 



4

OUR INVESTMENT APPROACH





Alongside ensuring we both secure and maintain our financial resources over this period, the way we'll distribute both government exchequer and National Lottery money to achieve what's in this plan will be firmly rooted in our strategy's three guiding principles:

INVESTING MOST IN THOSE THAT NEED IT MOST

We'll weight our investment decisions towards demographic groups, or geographic areas, that need the greatest levels of support and experience the greatest levels of inequality.

This will apply across our entire investment portfolio, and within individual programmes and individual investments, to ensure more of what we invest goes to the people and places with the greatest need.

FINDING THE RIGHT BLEND OF NATIONAL AND LOCAL ACTION

We'll find this blend through the investment we make into our long-term partners, through the work we do with national organisations to understand their role in places, by supporting the network of Active Partnerships so they take an even more fundamental role in our investment portfolio, by expanding our direct investment into places, by building on the success of our local delivery pilots, and by further enhancing the role of our capital investment and statutory planning work.



The way we'll distribute government and National Lottery money will be firmly rooted in our strategy's guiding principles.

OUR INVESTMENT APPROACH CONTINUED

WORKING IN A WAY THAT'S SIMPLE AS STANDARD

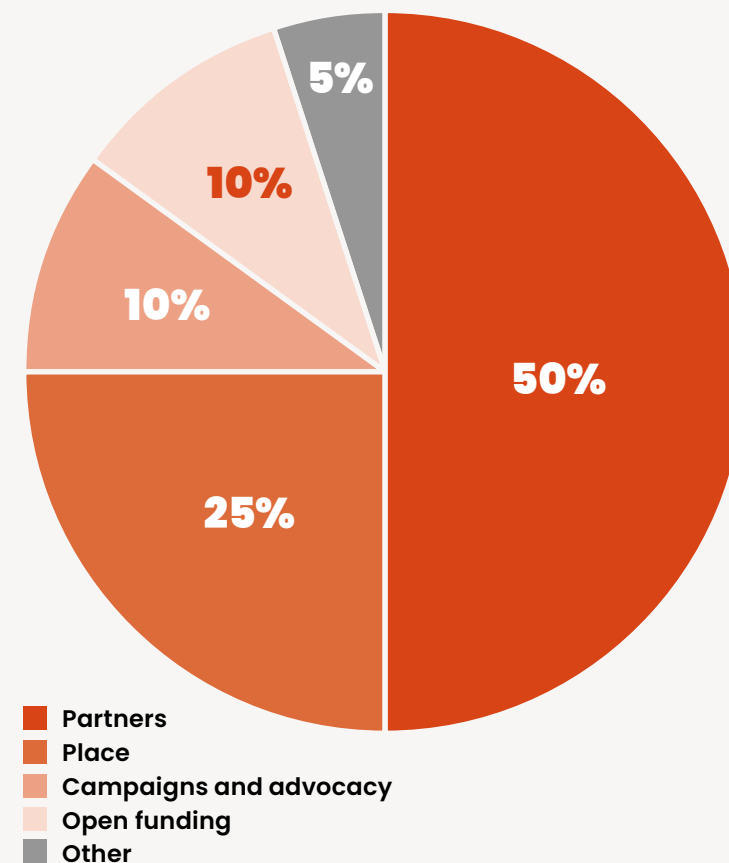
To deliver on the commitments we've outlined in this plan (see pages 21-51), we've categorised our investment into four categories to show in a simple and easy to understand way how we're allocating investment.



These four categories are:

- **Partners:** investment into the organisations with a crucial role to play in building our movement and delivering change. This investment recognises the unique role these organisations play in sport and physical activity, supporting them to do so effectively, to build capability and capacity to work locally, and to tackle inequalities.
- **Place:** investment into places across the country, large and small. This investment will take what we've learned from our local delivery pilots to more places with greater need, combining that with our long-standing expertise in capital investment to support communities to engage in sport and physical activity.
- **Campaigns and advocacy:** using our voice, our insight, our partnerships and our investments to make the case for sport and physical activity, to encourage people to be more active and to break down some of the barriers to activity.
- **Open funding:** simplified access to our open funding, with a single point of entry so it's easy to apply for anyone who wants to be part of the movement.

While exact figures are not yet agreed for each individual element, this is what we expect the balance across these areas to be:



Note: not every commitment we've made in this plan involves us investing money – but where it does, this is how we'll channel it. 'Other' includes a mix of investments that we manage on behalf of others, like School Games Organisers.

5

HOW WE'LL KNOW IF WE'RE SUCCESSFUL





The commitments and aims in this plan will only have value if more people are active, and if the inequalities in sport and physical activity narrow.

We want to see this happen year on year, but we expect to see the effect of the actions in this plan over its full three-year period.

We'll see our success as whether the following three things are happening:

- 1.** Overall levels of activity across the population are going up, not down
- 2.** Overall levels of inactivity across the population are going down, not up
- 3.** Levels of inequality across both measures are narrowing, not widening.

Our success is more than these numbers though – we need to demonstrate not only the broad, population-level change in engagement in sport and physical activity, but also the conditions we know will lead us there. To understand the success of this plan, we need an approach that encompasses both.

Therefore, we'll use a five-part approach to understanding our own success, and the success of everyone else that plays a part in this movement. Each element is crucial to build a picture of what's happening, why it's happening, what works and what doesn't and the impact it has.

Progress against our ambitions for 2025: as set out on **pages 10-20**, we have a clear sense of what 2025 will look and feel like if we're successful, so a key part of understanding our collective success will be a detailed understanding of our

progress towards those things. We'll develop both quantitative and qualitative measures to demonstrate this progress, building these into all our work.

A culture of learning: bringing together what works and doesn't work, how to build the conditions for success and what will hold us collectively back. We'll share this rapidly, both amongst our colleagues and with partners, to further knowledge and understanding, building momentum where we see success, building quickly on innovations, prototypes and testing and swiftly revising approaches when things don't work.

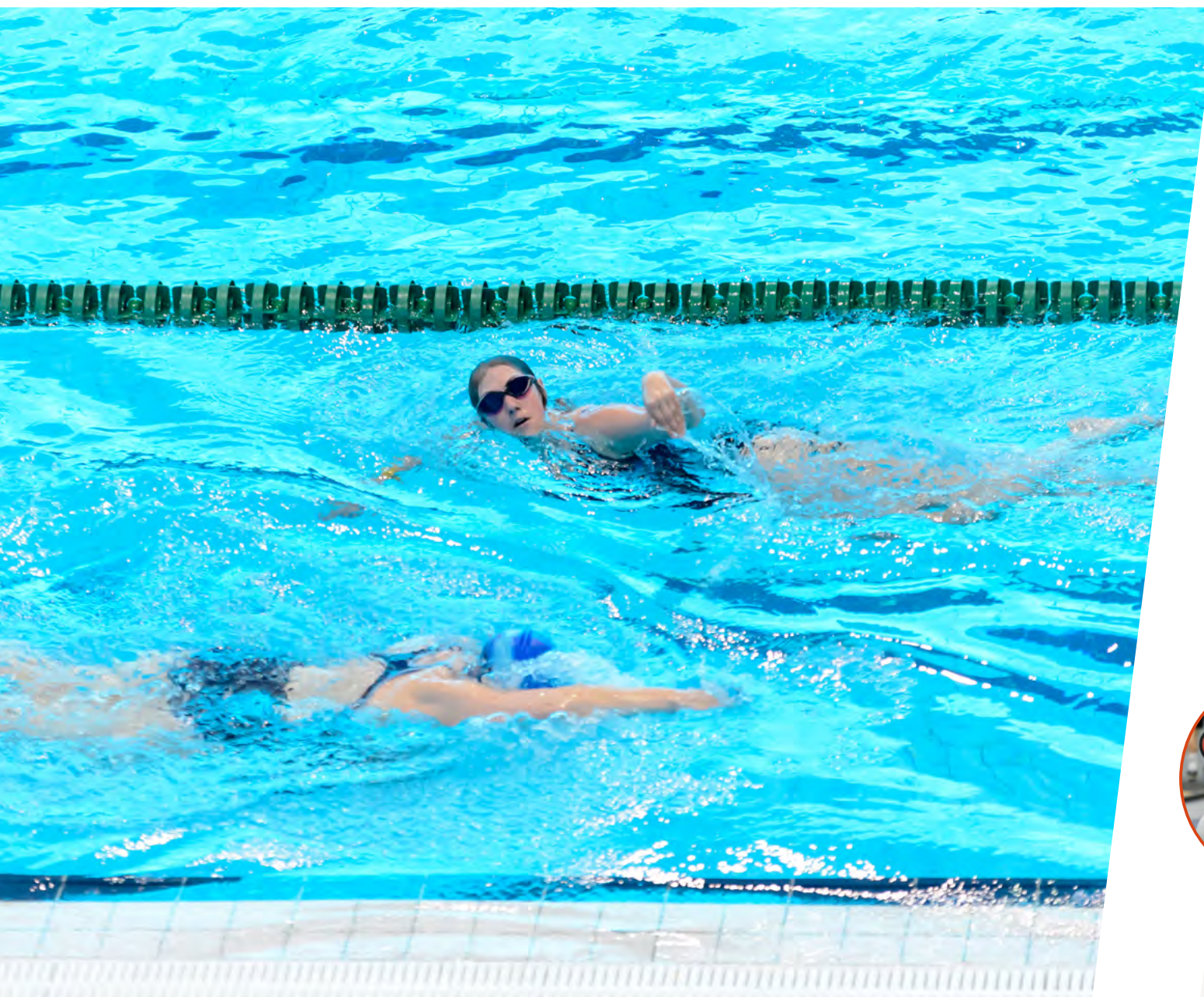
Monitoring outputs: our key management information, encompassing where we're working, who we're working with, what we're delivering and whether our actions and investments match up to our

commitments on tackling inequalities. This will see simple, tangible measures and demonstrable progress – whether that's increased investment in the most deprived areas, or a change in the types of organisation we work with.

Population-level change: the ultimate goal of the work of everyone that's part of the movement – to increase activity levels, to decrease levels of inactivity and to close the gaps where inequalities exist in either. As a whole sector we should work to ensure these measures improve year-on-year and see that as our collective measure of success. For our organisation, some of the actions in this plan will take longer to have an impact, so we'll only understand our impact on those numbers across the full three years of this plan.

Demonstrating outcomes: what our actions and our investments lead to: improved physical and mental health, stronger communities or enhanced education and skills. We know there's a strong correlation between these outcomes and levels of physical activity – we'll further this understanding across the entirety of our work, learning more about what enhances these outcomes than ever before.





Individually, none of these elements alone will give us all a clear view of whether we're making progress towards our vision. But together, these should provide a rich picture of the movement, what's working and what isn't, whether the right conditions for change are in place and, crucially, whether all of that, and all the work being done across the movement, is resulting in population-level growth in activity levels and a reduction in inequalities in those activity levels.

Only if that's the case will we be able to collectively claim success.



MORE INFO

Read our Uniting the Movement strategy in full: visit unitingthemovement.org



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