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**sport**scotland **Business Plan**

2025/26





# Introduction

Our business plan describes how we will deliver our corporate strategy, Sport for Life. It focuses on how we will use the four enablers of partners, programmes, people and places to help people participate, progress and achieve in the environments of schools and education, clubs and communities and performance sport.

This plan shows key actions we are taking to deliver our corporate strategy through these enablers, alongside indicators that help us track our progress. Our Annual Reports will demonstrate the impact of this at a corporate strategy level, showing how far we are delivering our outcomes.

## Key changes

We want to:

* Maximise the funding that goes to the sector, with less spent internally
* Use our strategic workforce review to inform the size, shape and skillset of sportscotland to ensure we meet the needs of the sporting system.
* Prioritise our support to the clubs and communities environment, as this is where we believe we can make the greatest long-term sustainable impact
* Broaden our emphasis in performance sport to help people progress to achievement, alongside delivering success on the world stage
* Work with partners to reduce the impact sport has on climate change, and build resilience to the impacts climate change has on sport.
* Work geographically across the country to maximise our impact and better meet the needs of local and national partners.
* Streamline our processes while ensuring good governance
* Encourage data-driven decision making

# Strategic context

Sport for Life is our main strategic driver. This shows how we contribute to the [Physical Activity for Health Framework](https://www.gov.scot/publications/physical-activity-health-framework/)[[1]](#footnote-2) (PAHF). This Framework ultimately contributes to Scotland’s [National Performance Framework](https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/)[[2]](#footnote-3). Our [Minister’s strategic guidance](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwj_66fZspCJAxWOU0EAHQdKLoAQFnoECBQQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fsportscotland.org.uk%2Fmedia%2F3ygjrjoq%2Fstrategic-guidance-letter-from-scottish-government-to-sportscotland-2023-to-2026.pdf&usg=AOvVaw28ND1TSWl_rGUYykp-45ri&opi=89978449)[[3]](#footnote-4) informs our delivery.

## The Sporting System

The sporting system diagram shows how all the components work together to help people take part in sport and physical activity in three environments:



## Environments

* **Schools and education:** helping build competence and confidence in sport and physical activity by providing positive sporting experiences at schools, colleges and universities.
* **Clubs and communities**: offering local opportunities for people to take part in sport and physical activity and develop to the level they choose.
* **Performance sport**: Helping sports create the conditions that enable people to progress and achieve, by creating the right partnerships and performance development environments.

# Organising our work

We organise our business plan under five enablers: The four enablers from our corporate strategy, and our corporate services. We have detailed action plans beneath this. We integrate the work of our National Centres into our business plan.

* Partners
* Programmes
* People
* Places
* Our corporate services, which support our work

# Partners

## Context

The sport sector relies on partners sharing their time, expertise and investment. By working together, we can all plan better, be more efficient and speak with a common voice. We need strong connections and integration across environments. We will focus our time on adding value to partners. Our support is based on partner needs, and a shared commitment to inclusion and environmental sustainability.

* **Local partners** (e.g. local authorities, leisure trusts, schools, colleges and universities)
* **Scottish Governing Bodies** (SGBs)
* **National partners** (e.g. Scottish Disability Sport (SDS), Scottish Action for Mental Health (SAMH), UK Sport)

## Our intentions

* **Local Partners**: We want to help our local partners prioritise sport and physical activity. We want to help them drive sport using the Physical Activity for Health Framework and/or a systems-based approach. We want sport and physical activity plans to connect well with wider local and national strategies.
* **SGBs:** We want to streamline our processes while maintaining good governance. This frees up capacity for them to focus on meeting their members’ needs, with safe and inclusive opportunities to participate, progress and achieve.
* **National Partners**: We want to work with national partners to combine our collective expertise and optimise resources to meet the needs of the sector.
* **Connections:** We will work with partners to better understand each other’s needs, share data, and plan together

# Programmes

## Context

We want people to have safe, inclusive and quality opportunities to participate, progress and achieve in sport and physical activity. We support and invest in the environments to deliver this.

## Our intentions

* **School Sport:** We want more, and more diverse, children and young people taking part in Active Schools. We will commission an external evaluation of Active Schools. We want School sport awards to help schools to have a coordinated Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport (PEPAS) offer.
* **Colleges:** We want more, and more diverse, college students taking part in sport through Active Colleges.
* **Clubs:** We want strong, sustainable, safe and inclusive clubs that meet the needs of their members, through our investment and support in SGBs and community sport hubs. We will deliver the actions from our club and community review.
* **Performance:** We want thriving, inclusive and sustainable performance development environments that enable progression and support achievement. We will deliver this by investing in SGB Performance programmes, expert advice and support, and services to athletes.
* **National Centres:** We want more, and more diverse, people taking part at our National Centres. We want to maintain and develop the unique roles of the National Centres, while managing increasing costs by generating more income and reducing costs.

**People**

**Context**

Sport depends on great people in paid and voluntary roles. We want this workforce to grow and become more diverse, from coaches and employees to leaders and administrators.   We want skilled and confident coaches and officials to meet the needs of a diverse range of participants.    We want to see leadership at all levels of sport and more women and girls in decision making positions.

Young people make such a valuable contribution within society, and we want to play our role in ensuring young people have a voice in decisions, are encouraged to be leaders and are inspired to join the sporting workforce.

We know that sport is dependent on a large volunteer workforce.  We want to reduce the barriers to volunteering and grow the number of volunteers involved in sport in Scotland.

**Our intentions**

* **Coaches and Officials:** Wewill strengthen the coach development system, focusing on qualifications, workforce governance and coach development.   We will help partners increase their focus on coaches, officials and volunteers within strategies or plans.  We will develop a new cohort of coach developers to expand our support to performance coaches and take a refreshed approach to mentoring across the system.
* **Volunteers:** We will develop a plan to reduce the barriers to volunteering and grow volunteering within our programmes. We will raise the profile of volunteers in sport and focus on ensuring volunteering is easy, affordable and accessible.  We will work with tertiary education to provide high quality work-based placements in sport.
* **Learning and development:** We will progress a more integrated approach to learning, development and networking across all three environments for professional staff. We will work with experts to create and deliver needs-based learning materials for those leading and delivering in the sporting system.  We will maximise use of digital technology to enhance learner experience, improve accessibility and increase engagement in learning.
* **Leadership:**  We will support our partners to develop leadership skills at all levels, including a focus on more women and girls in decision making positions.  Through our programmes such as Young Ambassadors, Young Peoples Sports Panel and Fit for Girls, we will support young people as leaders in decision making roles and to influence and shape decision making.

# Places

## Context

Scotland has great places and spaces for people to participate in sport and physical activity at the level they choose.

Our focus in this plan is Scotland’s local, regional, and national sports facilities. This estate is ageing and needs significant investment to ensure it meets the needs of people and enables them to participate, progress and achieve in sport and physical activity.

Owners and operators face significant resource challenges. Costs to maintain, upgrade, and develop infrastructure are increasing. Net zero carbon targets and efforts to tackle climate change add to this pressure.

## Our intentions

* **Understanding:** We will use our national review of the sports facilities estate to help us understand the key issues and make the case for long-term additional investment in the estate.
* **Planning for places:** We want the estate to be protected, maintained and the best use to be made of it. We will work with local and national partners to encourage and support a more strategic and integrated approach to be taken to planning for places for sport. We will work with local and national partners to ensure spatial policy protects and promotes places for sport.
* **Support and invest:** We want a more accessible, inclusive and sustainable sports facilities estate that meets the needs of people and enables them to participate, progress and achieve in sport and physical activity. We will provide advice, guidance and support to owners, operators, and designers of sport facilities and will invest strategically in sports facilities to support the move towards a more accessible, inclusive and sustainable estate.

# Corporate Services

## Context

Our corporate services enable the planning and delivery of our Business Plan. We deliver this through our core functions including Human Resources, Strategic Planning, Finance and Governance, Communications, Information Technology, Corporate Real Estate and Health and Safety.

## Our intentions

* to use the strategic workforce review to inform the size, shape and skillset of **sport**scotland to ensure we meet the needs of the sporting system
* to streamline our business processes whilst ensuring good governance
* to enable data-driven decision making
* to make the case for investing and prioritising sport
* to continue our digital transformation from on-premise to cloud
* to optimise our estate to reduce carbon emissions whilst maintaining health and safety standards

# How we manage and report on this plan

This diagram shows how our work plans connect to our business plan, corporate strategy, and strategic context, and how we report our progress.

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| --- |
| NATIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK |
| PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR HEALTH FRAMEWORKMore people. More Active, More Often |
| Active Systems | Active Places of Learning | Active Travel | Active Places and Space |
| Active Health & Social Care | Active Sport and Recreation | Active Communication | Active Workplaces |
| CORPORATE STRATEGY Our vision for an active Scotland where everyone benefits from sport | **MISSION:** Help the people of Scotland get the most from the sporting system**PRINCIPLES:** Inclusive, Accountable, Responsive, Person-centred, Collaborative, World Class**OUTCOMES:** Participate, Progress and Achieve**INCLUSION:** Our commitment to inclusion underpins everything we do | **Annual** **Report** |
| BUSINESS & OPERATIONAL PLANSThe programmes, key activities and actions we will deliver | How we work with partners to channel our money, time, expertise and information in sport**ENVIRONMENTS:** Schools and Education, Clubs and Communities, Performance Sport, supported by Corporate Services | **Quarterly Reports** |
| ANNUAL WORK PLANSWhat individuals do and the difference they will make | * Key work objectives
* Functional and behavioural competencies
* Personal Learning objectives
* Evidence of consistent standards and a **sport**scotland culture
 | **Performance Development Reviews** |

# Key actions

These are the key actions we will take this year. This adds to our business as usual activities in our detailed operational plans. It highlights the changes we are making, and how we will know if we are successful.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Key actions 2025/26 | Indicator | Frequency |
| Help local partners adopt PAHF and/or a systems-based approach in their local strategies, to drive sport.  | No. local partners with system-based plans aligned to PAFH and linked to wider plans. | Quarterly |
| Streamline our processes while maintaining good governance | No. SGBs reporting less governance burden/ time of our investment processes | Annual |
| Commission an external evaluation of Active Schools and use this to inform how we best support opportunities for children and young people | Active Schools Evaluation completed | One off |
| Increase our support to clubs and community sport. | % of spend by environment (are we prioritising clubs and communities) | Quarterly |
| Maintain and develop the unique roles of the National Centres, while managing increasing costs by generating more income and reducing costs. | National centres balance of income and expenditure | Quarterly |
| Develop a plan to help partners reduce the barriers to volunteering. | Volunteering plan developed | One off |
| Develop and implement a climate change action plan, integrating sustainability in our planning and delivery. | Climate plan developed | One off |
| Use our women in leadership approach to drive an inclusive system | Gender balance of leadership roles in the sector | Annual/Quarterly |
| Develop a new cohort of performance coach developers to expand our ability to help more pathway and performance coaches enable progression and support achievement  | No. Performance Coach Developers | TBC |
| Use our national review of the sports facilities estate to help us understand the key issues and make the case for long-term additional investment in the estate. | Facilities Estate Review completed | One off |
| Use our strategic workforce review to inform the size, shape and skillset of sportscotland to ensure we meet the needs of the sporting system. | Strategic Workforce Review competed | One off |
| How we’re running the organisation | Internal/external balance of investment | Quarterly |
| Financial projection accuracy | Quarterly |
| Staff wellbeing pulse checks | Quarterly |

1. [Physical activity for health: framework - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/publications/physical-activity-health-framework/) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. [National Performance Framework - gov.scot](https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [Minister for Social Care, Mental Wellbeing and Sport Strategic Guidance -sportscotland.org.uk](https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/3ygjrjoq/strategic-guidance-letter-from-scottish-government-to-sportscotland-2023-to-2026.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)