

# **ACTIVE LEISURE FOR LIFE**

## **The Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf. 2022-2026**

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

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## Welcome from Cllr.

Cabinet Member for Environment, Leisure & Heritage Services.

### Keep in touch.....

#### **Telephone:**

General enquiries: 01443 562202  
or contact your local Leisure Centre

#### **Websites:**

<https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/EN/Resident/SportsandLeisure/SportsandLeisure.aspx>

[www.sportrct.co.uk](http://www.sportrct.co.uk)

#### **Socials:**

f [facebook.com/Rhondda Cynon Taf Council Leisure Services](https://www.facebook.com/RhonddaCynonTafCouncilLeisureServices)

t [@sportrct](https://twitter.com/sportrct)

f [facebook.com/RCTCBCsport](https://www.facebook.com/RCTCBCsport)

## Context

The last few years have demonstrated how unpredictable and changeable the external operating environment can be. The key factors that influence the provision of active leisure opportunities are:

<p><b>Political:</b> National and local governance influences the policies and approaches to physical activity and sport and the financial resources available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Government Council elections are scheduled to take place in May 2022.</li> <li>• Welsh Government elections are scheduled to take place in 2025.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Economic:</b> Following the impact of the Covid pandemic, it is envisaged that there will be continued pressure on public and personal finances.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued pressure on Leisure Services to reduce the net cost of leisure provision.</li> <li>• More targeted national funding for physical activity, designed to achieve specific target population outcomes.</li> <li>• Increased pressure on personal finances and the affordability of leisure activities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social:</b> The measures required during the Covid pandemic have highlighted the importance of social networks and socialising.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased social awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including regular physical activity.</li> <li>• Greater appreciation of the importance of social networks in supporting good mental health.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Technological:</b> An increased awareness and usage of digital methods of communication and service delivery, along with the recognition that a proportion of the population are not particularly digitally literate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased use within the population of online services</li> <li>• Increased usage of social media for advertising and communication</li> </ul>
<p><b>Legal:</b> The necessity to comply with Covid laws and guidance when delivering services and the introduction of the new schools' curriculum in Wales from 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An emphasis on Covid secure service delivery and the ability to adapt services accordingly, to maintain the best service possible</li> <li>• The ability to support the integration of the health and physical activity priorities into the deliver of the new curriculum</li> </ul>
<p><b>Environmental:</b> An increased awareness and urgency surrounding the reduction of environmental factors that contribute to climate change and reducing biodiversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An emphasis on non-carbon energy usage</li> <li>• Ensuring services do not adversely impact on the green environment and biodiversity</li> </ul>

## The resilience of the service

Over the last 10 years the Council’s Leisure Services have successfully delivered a comprehensive facility investment programme and increased participation in active leisure. It provides strong support for our community sports organisations and physical activity groups. The service is enabled by an experienced and dedicated staff team, who during the Covid pandemic have demonstrated their versatility and ability to manage change.

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong political support for the service</li> <li>• Experienced, qualified, versatile staff team</li> <li>• A wide range of good quality leisure facilities across the County Borough, with an on-going investment plan</li> <li>• Excellent local knowledge and partnership working platforms</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff succession planning to develop the right skills for the future</li> <li>• To further develop community capacity building skills</li> <li>• To further develop long term retention and impacts for inactive people, that create sustainable lifestyle change for individuals</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness and desire to be active within the population</li> <li>• Increased willingness and ability to use technology to support an active lifestyle</li> <li>• Opportunities to create new organisational and community partnerships, where there is a joint goal</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential future reductions in financial investment in leisure facilities and services</li> <li>• A potential lack of confidence in accessing indoor leisure opportunities, due to health concerns</li> <li>• An increased regional approach to service management, with less focus on localised services based on community needs.</li> <li>• High and potentially increasing levels of socio-economic disadvantage within the population</li> </ul>

**RCT Leisure Facilities**

Abercynon Sports Centre  
 Hawthorn Leisure Centre  
 Llantwit Fardre Leisure Centre  
 Llantrisant Leisure Centre  
 Llys Cadwyn  
 Rhondda Fach Leisure Centre  
 Rhondda Leisure Centre  
 Tonyrefail Leisure Centre  
 Sobell Leisure Centre  
 The National Lido of Wales  
 Browyndd Swimming Pool  
 Hawthorn Swimming Pool  
 Ron Jones Athletics Stadium  
 King George V Athletics Track  
 Bryncelynnog Athletics Track  
 King George V Athletics Track



200 + Grass Sports Pitches, Bowling Greens, and Tennis Courts.  
 10 Regional and 80+ Local Parks  
 217 Outdoor Playgrounds  
 16 Artificial Sports Pitches/3G's  
 97 pavilions and changing rooms  
 11 Multi Activity Games Areas (MUGA's)  
 2 pump tracks  
 5 skateboard parks & 3 half pipes  
 2 Outdoor Exercise HUBs  
 199 Outdoor Playgrounds  
 3 Community Recreation Centres

**The RCT Vision**

**The Sport and Physical**

# Activity Mission

Encouraging all residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles and maintain their mental wellbeing

RCT population projections  
2022: 242,784  
2027: 245,645

2022: Male 49% Female 51%  
Juniors: Male 22,992 (10%)  
Female 21,997 (9%)  
Adults: Male 74,048 (30%)  
Female 76,293 (32%)  
60+ Male and Female 47,454 (19%)

3 areas in RCT are in the top 15 most deprived areas in Wales

17% of RCT is in the top 10% of areas of deprivation in Wales

71% of RCT is below the average levels of wealth in Wales

76% of adults from the most deprived areas in Wales are overweight or obese

To enable more people, to be more active, more often

Moderate activity  
Adults: 150 minutes per week  
Juniors: 60 minutes per day

30.5% (13,722) of RCT juniors are active less than 60 minutes a day

RCT Adults active less than 150 minutes per week  
Age 16-24: 49%  
Age 25-34: 63%  
Age 35-44: 60%  
Age 45-54: 64%  
Age 55-64: 72%  
Age 65-74: 78%

Inactivity is approximately 15% higher in the most deprived areas of Wales

## The Strategy

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

## The Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2024

### PEOPLE

### PLACE

Encouraging all residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles and maintain their mental wellbeing

#### We will deliver this by....

- Ensuring participation in sport and physical activity is accessible and inclusive for all by maintaining low cost, high value provision
- Giving residents access to health and wellbeing information and activities through the GP referral schemes, and other health and wellbeing intervention programmes

#### We will deliver this by....

- Delivering new indoor and outdoor sporting facilities and enhancing existing sporting facilities such as changing rooms and outdoor play areas
- Investing in parks infrastructure, including playgrounds
- Supporting the voluntary, community and faith sectors to help build active communities, creating the capacity for meeting the needs of residents within their communities

## Our Priorities

RCT Leisure Services will deliver the Corporate Vision by focusing on



The Aims

Priority	Aims
Personalised support to exercise	To increase the number of residents undertaking regular sport and physical activity, as part of a healthy lifestyle.
Reducing barriers to exercise	To increase the number of residents who experience socio-economic, physical, practical, and psychological barriers in undertaking regular physical activity, as part of a healthy lifestyle, through physical activity and sport, in indoor, outdoor, school, community, and virtual settings.
Enabling independent exercise	To increase Leisure for Life membership through increasing services that support inactive and less active residents to progress towards and achieve independent regular exercise.
Developing people	To deliver a programme of training, support, and development to the paid, volunteer, and student workforce.
Formal and informal outdoor places	To deliver a programme of investment into outdoor play and exercise facilities, support community organisations looking to enhance their outdoor facilities and ensure all residents live within 5 miles of an outdoor exercise HUB, during the summer months.
Leisure centres and swimming pools	To undertake a programme of investment and refurbishment in Council gyms, leisure centres, and swimming pools.
Schools and community venues	To support the development of schools and community venues to achieve increased community usage.
The virtual environment	To develop further a mainstream service of online information, support, and online exercise opportunities.

## What we will do

The service will continue to review, reflect, learn, and improve the quality of existing services and adapt services to meet evolving customer needs due to post covid lifestyle changes. In addition, we will undertake the following actions to develop and expand the opportunities for **More People** to be **More Active, More Often**.

PEOPLE AIMS	WHAT WE WILL DO
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<p><b>Personalised support to exercise</b> To increase the number of residents undertaking regular physical activity, as part of a healthy lifestyle.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The development, delivery, and integration of personalised support services in swimming and fitness for new customers or those transitioning from specialist health interventions, to increase participation by inactive and less active residents and promote retention, as part of a healthy lifestyle.</li> <li>2. The development of additional personalised support services in sport and physical activity Leisure Centre services for new customers or those transitioning from specialist health interventions, to increase participation by inactive or less active residents and promote retention, as part of a healthy lifestyle.</li> <li>3. Continue to access external funding and work in partnership with Public Health Wales to provide physical activity opportunities for residents with identified health risks.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Reducing barriers to exercise</b> To increase the number of residents who experience socio-economic, physical, practical, and psychological barriers in undertaking regular physical activity, as part of a healthy lifestyle, through physical activity and sport, in indoor, outdoor, school, community, and virtual settings.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To deliver the Council capital investment programme and support and enable community organisations to access funding to develop local sport and physical activity facilities for residents.</li> <li>2. The development of a team of outreach staff from across the services to work with partners and communities to develop additional sport and physical activities opportunities for residents experiencing barriers to regular participation.</li> <li>3. In partnership with leisure centres, swimming pools, community recreation centres, parks and countryside, schools, sports clubs, and community partners develop further supported services for inactive and less active residents that enable regular physical activity as part of a healthy lifestyle.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Enabling independent exercise</b> To increase Leisure for Life membership through increasing services that support inactive and less active residents to progress towards and achieve independent regular exercise.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a marketing and information campaign that provides residents with the confidence to return to regular sport and physical activity, following the interruptions caused by the Covid pandemic.</li> <li>2. Review the swimming programme to enable the provision of increased Junior Learn to Swim opportunities and increase swimming as part of a healthy lifestyle.</li> <li>3. Review the Leisure for Life membership service to ensure it is fit for purpose and encourages independent regular participation.</li> </ol>

**Developing people**

To deliver a programme of training, support, and development to the paid, volunteer, and student workforce.

1. To produce and deliver a workforce development plan that meets the requirements of the current and future service delivery needs, including recruitment, training, continued professional development, and retention of the paid and voluntary workforce.
2. The review and development of links between Educational establishments and community workforce opportunities.
3. The review and development of volunteer recruitment, training, and support to ensure services meet community needs.

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PLACE AIMS	WHAT WE WILL DO
<p><b>Formal and informal outdoor places</b></p> <p>To deliver a programme of investment into outdoor play and exercise facilities, support community organisations looking to enhance their outdoor facilities and ensure all residents live within 5 miles of an outdoor exercise HUB, during the summer months.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and deliver a programme of physical activity opportunities based around an additional 3 outdoor exercise HUBs per year, located in regional and neighbourhood parks across the County Borough.</li> <li>2. Deliver the Council capital investment programme in outdoor play and sports facilities.</li> <li>3. Continue to support schools and community sports organisations in accessing funding to improve and upgrade their facilities and expand their participation opportunities.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Leisure centres and swimming pools</b></p> <p>To undertake a programme of investment and refurbishment in Council gyms, leisure centres, and swimming pools.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To develop and agree a financial model for on-going investment in indoor leisure facilities.</li> <li>2. To deliver a leisure centre investment and refurbishment programme, in consultation with users and residents.</li> <li>3. To utilise feedback and consultation to continually review and improve the quality of the service available.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Schools and community venues</b></p> <p>To support the development of schools and community venues to achieve increased community usage.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To work in partnership with 3 schools per year to deliver increased community use of facilities for sport and physical activity.</li> <li>2. To support schools in the delivery of the new curriculum for Wales.</li> <li>3. To work in partnership with Education to deliver sport and physical activity opportunities within school holiday services.</li> </ol>
<p><b>The virtual environment</b></p> <p>To develop further a mainstream service of online information, support, and online exercise opportunities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To develop and deliver a regular on-line service of exercise opportunities.</li> <li>2. Develop a Sports Pitches App that enables customers to book and pay for casual outdoor pitch usage online.</li> <li>3. To further develop online information resources that promote confident access to opportunities e.g., virtual facility tours, and motivation to participate e.g., health and social benefits of participation.</li> </ol>

## How we will know how we are doing

National Key Performance Indicators	Frequency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people visiting RCT leisure centre facilities</li> <li>• Number of visits from the public and school pupils to local authority sport and leisure facilities per 1,000 population where the visitor is participating in physical activity</li> <li>• Number of people visiting RCT leisure centre facilities participating in physical activity (excluding schools)</li> <li>• Number of leisure for Life members</li> <li>• Number of people who started the NERS exercise programme</li> <li>• Number of people who completed the NERS exercise programme</li> <li>• Usage of the National Lido at Pontypridd</li> <li>• The % of year 6 pupils who can swim</li> </ul>	Quarterly
<b>Participation data</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers attending</li> <li>• Retention</li> <li>• Population statistics: age, gender, disability, ethnic origin, geographical location.</li> <li>• Barriers to participation experienced by inactive or less active residents</li> </ul>	Quarterly or per project as applicable
<b>Impact data: Health and Wellbeing (self-reported)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthier lifestyle</li> <li>• Happier</li> <li>• More active, more often</li> <li>• More confident</li> <li>• Included</li> <li>• Intention to continue taking part in sport and physical activity</li> </ul>	After 12 weeks of new participation or at the end of a project as applicable
<b>Outcome data: The sustainable outcomes for People and Places</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case studies: Changes and benefits to individuals' lifestyles and community opportunities to be <b>More Active, More Often</b></li> </ul>	As applicable