



ACTIVE LEISURE FOR LIFE

The Sport and Physical Activity Strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf 2022-2027

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

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Keep in touch with Leisure, Sports and Parks in RCT....

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

Socials:

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

Welcome from Councillor Ann Crimmings

Cabinet Member for Environment and Leisure

Rhondda Cynon Taf has some of the most extensive, high quality, community sports and physical activity facilities in Wales. Over the last 5 years the Council have continued to invest in these facilities and been successful in securing additional external funding. This has enabled the delivery of a comprehensive playground refurbishment programme, the development of new 3G sports pitches across the County Borough, investment in athletics facilities, a new family bike park, and the opening of a new indoor fitness service at Llys Cadwyn, Pontypridd.

We are currently living in uncertain and changeable times and the Council is mindful of the impact that the COVID pandemic has had on residents and their exercise habits. However, the Council is also aware of the potential impact that the rising cost of living could have on both residents' lifestyles and the Council's provision of services. Therefore, the Council is pleased to be able to provide a Sport and Physical Activity Strategy that can support residents to pursue an active lifestyle, with the flexibility to address changing needs.

The Sport and Physical Activity Strategy 2022-27 provides a framework for supporting all residents to be physically active on a regular basis as part of a healthy lifestyle. It aims to develop services further to ensure that all residents have the information and support they require to be physically active, in a local environment that suits their needs.

The National Survey for Wales 21/22 indicated that 54% of Rhondda Cynon Taf residents do not participate in any sport or physical activity. This strategy represents a commitment by the Council to enable the Leisure, Sports, and Parks Service, along with key partners, to invest the resources available into services that enable more residents to be more active and make a positive difference to achieving healthy lifestyles for all.



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>Political: 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"> • Local Government budget challenges and cost of living pressures for residents and customers affecting income generation opportunities. • Welsh Government elections are scheduled to take place in 2025.
<p>Economic: Following the impact of the pandemic, it is envisaged that there will be continued pressure on public and personal finances.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued pressure on Leisure Services to reduce the net cost of leisure provision. • More targeted national funding for physical activity, designed to achieve specific target population outcomes. • Increased pressure on personal finances and the affordability of leisure activities.
<p>Social: The measures required during the pandemic have highlighted the importance of social networks and socialising.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased social awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including regular physical activity. • Greater appreciation of the importance of social networks in supporting good mental health.
<p>Technological: 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 digitally literate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use within the population of online services and need for signposting people to support to improve digital skills. • Increased usage of social media for advertising and communication
<p>Legal: The necessity to comply with health and safety and health protection laws and guidance when delivering services. The introduction of the new schools' curriculum in Wales from 2022 and how that affects leisure opportunities for young people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An emphasis on safe and healthy service delivery and the ability to adapt services accordingly, learning from the pandemic and emerging health and safety issues. • The ability to support the integration of the health and physical activity priorities into the delivery of the new curriculum
<p>Environmental: 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"> • An emphasis on non-carbon energy usage • Ensuring services do not adversely impact on the green environment and biodiversity

The resilience of the service

Over the last 10 years the Council’s Leisure, Sports and Parks Services have successfully delivered a comprehensive facility investment programme and increased participation in active leisure. We provide strong support for our community sports organisations and physical activity groups.

RCT Leisure and Sports Facilities 2022

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

Bryn Celynnog Athletics Track
 200 + Grass Sports Pitches
 Bowling Greens and Tennis Courts
 10 Regional and 80+ Local Parks
 199 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
 Outdoor paths and walking trails
 3 Community Recreation Centres

The service has many strengths and is enabled by an experienced and dedicated staff team, who during the COVID pandemic have demonstrated their versatility and ability to manage change. There are opportunities and threats that we will need to manage and mitigate against while also taking action to improve resilience by addressing our areas of weakness in coming years.

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

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: 5 x 30 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 for less than 30 minutes 5 times 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

Achieving the RCT Sport and Physical Activity Strategy Vision will make a significant contribution to the Corporate Plan's People and Place priorities:

PEOPLE

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.

PLACE

We will deliver this by...

- Delivering quality indoor and outdoor sporting facilities and enhancing existing sporting and physical activity places, through the provision of opportunities.
- Providing high quality 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

The Council's Leisure, Sports and Parks Services will deliver the Corporate Vision by focusing on 8 key areas for action, centred on maintaining our venues and facilities and adopting a targeted approach to engaging all groups in our communities in regular physical activity.



Our 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 to undertake 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 maintain quality outdoor play and exercise facilities, support community organisations looking to enhance their outdoor facilities, and ensure all residents have access to local outdoor exercise opportunities.
Leisure centres and swimming pools	To ensure high quality Council fitness facilities, 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 pandemic 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
<p>Personalised support to exercise To increase the number of residents undertaking regular physical activity, as part of a healthy lifestyle.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 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. 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.
<p>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.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To deliver the Council capital investment programme where applicable and support and enable community organisations to access funding to develop local sport and physical activity facilities for residents. 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. 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.
<p>Enabling independent exercise To increase Leisure for Life membership through increasing</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a marketing and information campaign that provides residents with the confidence to return to regular sport and physical activity,

<p>services that support inactive and less active residents to progress towards and achieve independent regular exercise.</p>	<p>following the interruptions caused by the pandemic.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 3. Review the Leisure for Life membership service to ensure it is fit for purpose and encourages independent regular participation.
<p>Developing people To deliver a programme of training, support and development to the paid, volunteer, and student workforce.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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.

<p>PLACE AIMS</p>	<p>WHAT WE WILL DO</p>
<p>Formal and informal outdoor places To maintain quality outdoor play and exercise facilities, support community organisations looking to enhance their outdoor facilities, and ensure all residents have access to local outdoor exercise opportunities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and deliver a programme of physical activity opportunities based around outdoor exercise HUBs located in regional and neighbourhood parks across the County Borough. 2. To ensure a quality service provision in outdoor play and sports facilities. 3. Continue to support schools and community sports organisations in accessing funding to improve and upgrade their facilities and expand their participation opportunities.
<p>Leisure centres and swimming pools To ensure high quality Council fitness facilities, leisure centres, and swimming pools.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To develop and agree a financial model for on-going investment in indoor leisure facilities. 2. To deliver a quality leisure centre programme, that meets the needs of residents and customers. 3. To utilise feedback and consultation to continually review and improve the quality of the service available.
<p>Schools and community venues To support the development of schools and community venues to achieve increased community usage.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To work in partnership with schools to deliver increased community use of facilities for sport and physical activity. 2. To support schools in the delivery of the new curriculum for Wales.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. To work in partnership with Education to deliver sport and physical activity opportunities within school holiday services.
<p>The virtual environment To develop further a mainstream service of online information, support, and online exercise opportunities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To develop and deliver a regular on-line service of exercise opportunities. 2. Develop a Sports Pitches App that enables customers to book and pay for casual outdoor pitch usage online. 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.

DRAFT

How we will know how we are doing

We will monitor progress in achieving the aims of the Strategy using national and local data sets and performance measures. We will listen to the feedback from our customers and service users and use this to deliver a dynamic approach to achieving our priorities over the next 5 years.

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