

C13. Outstanding Individual Leadership Award Nominees

David Bibby – Managing Director, Everyone Active

David Bibby has demonstrated exceptional leadership throughout a career spanning more than three decades in the leisure sector, including nearly 20 years as Managing Director of Everyone Active. Having first joined the organisation as Finance Director, David progressed into the Managing Director role in 2006 and has since played a transformative role in shaping the business into one of the UK's leading leisure operators. Responsible for overseeing strategic growth, operational performance and partnerships with more than 65 local authorities nationwide, David has led the organisation through a period of unprecedented expansion and diversification.

Under David's leadership, Everyone Active has grown from a portfolio of just 39 sites in 2007 to managing more than 250 leisure and cultural facilities today, welcoming millions of visitors annually. He has championed investment in community wellbeing initiatives and strengthened the organisation's role in supporting physical and mental health across the UK. In recent years, he has also overseen diversification into theatres, spas and golf courses, broadening community engagement and creating long-term sustainability for the business.

David's leadership journey has been through periods of industry and global challenges, including significant economic uncertainty, changing public sector priorities and major national challenges like the Covid-29 pandemic. In these situations, he has consistently demonstrated resilience, pragmatism and strong decision-making. His ability to balance commercial success with social responsibility has been central to Everyone Active's continued growth and trusted reputation. Colleagues at all levels consistently describe him as supportive, values-driven and deeply people-focused, while maintaining a relentless commitment to excellence and results.

A key strength of David's leadership has been his ability to empower others. He has created a culture where people are encouraged to innovate, take ownership and make a meaningful difference within their communities. His strategic thinking, integrity and ability to see the bigger picture have inspired colleagues at every level of the organisation. Many senior leaders across the business credit David with helping shape both their careers and the organisation's positive culture.

Jon Senior, Everyone Active's Regional Director: "It is easy to succeed in easy times, but Dave has steered the company through many local, national and international challenges. The company stands today as a testament to his ability — and probably, in truth, most of us do too."

David Bibby's leadership has delivered measurable commercial growth, strengthened community impact and inspired generations of colleagues. As he announces his retirement from May, we feel he should be honoured as an exceptional leader and is a deserving recipient of the Outstanding Individual Leadership Award.

Deaglan O'Hagan – Head of Leisure Operations, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

Deaglan O'Hagan is an exceptional public sector leader whose career reflects sustained progression, strategic vision and measurable impact. As Head of Leisure, he provides leadership for a complex, multi-site leisure service, with responsibility for operational delivery, financial performance, workforce development and strategic planning. Since the 2015 local government reorganisation, he has led the transformation of a fragmented, ageing leisure estate into one of the highest-performing services in the UK.

His leadership journey is defined by a clear focus on outcomes: increasing participation, improving public health, modernising facilities and achieving long-term financial sustainability. These goals have been translated into tangible results. Membership has grown from 5,180 to over 14,500, annual visits have more than doubled to in excess of 2.5 million, customer satisfaction exceeds 91%, and Net Promoter Score has reached 69 well above industry benchmarks. Critically, he has reduced subsidy from £3.74 per visit to less than £0.50, with three centres now operating at a surplus, positioning the service at the forefront of zero-subsidy delivery in local government.

These achievements have been delivered in a highly challenging environment. Deaglan inherited outdated infrastructure, inconsistent service standards, unionised structures and significant financial pressures, all compounded by strong private-sector competition. He responded with resilient and inclusive leadership engaging staff, trade unions and stakeholders in a shared vision for change, while maintaining clear accountability for performance. His introduction of the “More Active, More Often” model simplified access, improved affordability and strengthened the service’s community impact.

To deliver this transformation, Deaglan has developed and applied a broad range of leadership competencies, including strategic financial management, stakeholder engagement, change leadership and performance management. He has overseen more than £20 million of capital investment, embedded data-driven decision making and aligned leisure provision with wider health outcomes, including cancer rehabilitation, mental health initiatives and GP referral programmes.

Under his leadership, the service has achieved significant external recognition, including APSE Best Service Team and multiple UKActive award successes and finalist positions. However, his most important achievement is cultural building empowered, high-performing teams that consistently deliver for residents.

Deaglan stands out as an award winner because his leadership is evidence-based, outcomes-focused and sustainable. He has not only improved performance but fundamentally reshaped how leisure services contribute to public health, financial resilience and community wellbeing. His impact is measurable, his leadership is proven, and his approach provides a clear benchmark for excellence across the public sector.

Oliver Deen – Operations Director, Jubilee Hall Trust

Oliver Deen is Operations Director at Jubilee Hall Trust and has progressed through the organisation from Club Manager through to Group Sales and Business Development. In his current role, he works closely with me (CEO) and ensures that decisions are communicated, understood and delivered across the teams.

What Ollie does well is make things happen. In recent years, we've had to deal with Covid-19, the energy crisis, cost-of-living pressures, and the restructuring of the charity alongside the proposed sale of Jubilee Hall. For much of this period, the charity operated with cash reserves covering only three to six months, bringing pressure and uncertainty. This meant making difficult decisions quickly. Ollie made sure teams understood what was happening and stayed focused. I needed someone confident in the direction, loyal, and robust in how they operated — Ollie provided that.

This included managing job cuts, recruiting at lower salary levels, and stepping away from the London Living Wage. These decisions could have damaged morale. Ollie was clear, consistent and visible, ensuring people understood the reasons behind decisions and stayed committed.

During the restructuring and proposed sale of Jubilee Hall, there was backlash, including poor behaviour towards staff. Some people understandably chose to leave. Ollie didn't. He remained firm, loyal and visible, helping keep the charity steady.

Alongside this, Ollie has led operational improvements. He supported the purchase and rollout of the Gladstone system, playing a central role in the six-month build and implementation. He now oversees direct debit management and Trend reporting, giving the organisation better control and visibility. Following his IOSH qualification, he has taken on responsibility for health and safety audits. He delivers group sales training and has helped secure contract renewals, including the Houses of Parliament gym and the Colombo Centre.

He has built and supported an all-female management team, coaching them to improve confidence, accountability and performance. He has also mentored two team members through their NVQ qualifications, supporting their progression. Most recently, Ollie lost his father. Even through that, he continued to support the team and maintain standards, showing resilience.

Ollie is reliable, straightforward and gets on with things. He deals with problems early and has never undermined decisions. Our charity has only remained viable because of people like him and because of him we now have a leadership team that operates in the same way.

For all these reasons, he is an outstanding leader.

Lindsey Perry – Head of Fitness, The Thames Club

Lindsey Perry has built a reputation for outstanding leadership through innovation, strategic thinking and a genuine ability to inspire both teams and members.

Lindsey's career journey demonstrates sustained progression through increasingly senior roles. Having built her foundations in operational management with Fusion Lifestyle and later senior programme leadership at Mytime Active, she joined The Thames Club as Head of Fitness, where she now leads all strategic fitness operations.

Over the past year, Lindsey has led one of the most significant evolutions of our fitness offering. She personally designed and project managed both the Power Studio and the Flow Studio, transforming them into signature spaces that have reshaped the member experience. Her work went beyond refurbishment; she created the concepts from the ground up, ensuring each space reflected both emerging market trends and our members' needs.

Alongside these launches, Lindsey developed a portfolio of bespoke signature class concepts that now define our studio programme. These include Power Strength, Functional Fitness, HIIT, Hyrox-inspired sessions, 60+ training and most recently Power Barre. Each programme was created to appeal to distinct member groups, widening accessibility and ensuring our offer supports all demographics. This strategic approach has strengthened inclusivity, broadened participation and created a unique identity for our club.

Her leadership is highly visible because she leads from the front. Lindsey continues to teach classes herself, ensuring she remains connected to members and to the day-to-day delivery of the programme she has created. This hands-on approach gives her unique insight into member needs and team development, and it earns enormous respect from colleagues because she actively models the standards she expects. She is equally committed to investing in others, regularly bringing in external master trainers and educators to upskill her fitness and group exercise teams, ensuring they remain at the forefront of best practice and industry innovation.

The impact has been exceptional. Studio penetration has increased from 29% to 41%, monthly footfall has grown from 13,300 to 15,500, membership yield has increased by 28%, and overall membership has grown by 14% year-on-year. Lindsey's introduction of dedicated strength programming has also driven increased male participation, with male instructor representation increasing by 27%, reflecting her success in diversifying both participation and workforce representation.

Lindsey's leadership is rooted in evidence-based development. She uses insight from ukactive, EMD UK, 4GLOBAL, industry experts and community feedback to guide decision-making. She has overcome the challenge of delivering major transformation while maintaining operational excellence by building trust, developing her team, regularly liaising with members to ensure their needs shaped delivery, and creating a culture of ownership and ambition.



AWARDS

What makes Lindsey exceptional is her ability to lead transformational change while bringing people with her. She is strategic, commercially astute and deeply committed to developing both her team and the wider member experience. Her work has delivered measurable business growth, strengthened inclusion and created a future-focused fitness proposition.