

More people
More active
More often

Business Plan
2026/27

Contents

Foreword from our Chair 03

Introduction 04

Who we are 06

Our purpose, mission and vision 07

Vision 2030: what it means in practice 08

Progress in 2025/26 10

What we are focusing on in 2026/27 11

- Build – financial resilience, delivery capacity and member value 12
- Lead – trusted insight, standards and guidance 13
- Change – the environment and partnerships to remove barriers 14

OUR NARRATIVE FOR THE YEAR

Build a strong and sustainable membership organisation. Lead the market with insight, evidence and standards. Change the country by removing barriers to activity.

A tightly prioritised plan for a sector with momentum

It is my pleasure to introduce the ukactive Business Plan for 2026/27, which sets out our priorities for the year ahead and responds directly to what members need most: sharper focus, greater impact and a stronger operating environment.

The sector enters 2026/27 with strong momentum, growing participation and a clearer role in supporting national health and wellbeing.

Innovation, preventative health and stronger partnerships with health systems are creating new opportunities for the sector to grow its reach and impact.

At the same time, economic pressure, policy uncertainty and rising costs continue to challenge members and reinforce the need for clear leadership and practical support.

Against this backdrop, this Business Plan sets out a tightly prioritised programme of work for 2026/27. Our focus is clear: we will **Build** organisational strength and sustainability by improving processes, data capability, governance and the member experience. We will **Lead** through standards, guidance and intelligence that support better decisions and stronger sector credibility. And we will **Change** the operating environment for members through advocacy, partnerships and a stronger role for physical activity in health and wellbeing.

This is an ambitious but essential plan. On behalf of the Board, I want to thank our members, partners, and the ukactive team for their continued commitment. Together, we will continue to champion the organisations driving this sector forward and ensure that physical activity remains a core pillar of a healthier, more active, more resilient nation.



David Stalker

Chair

On behalf of the ukactive Board

Shaped by Vision 2030 – and by what members told us

This Business Plan sets out ukactive's priorities for 2026/27, shaped by our long-term ambition under Vision 2030 and informed directly by what our members have told us they need most.

It builds on progress in evidence, standards, policy influence and member support, and focuses our efforts where we can make the greatest difference.

Members told us they need practical support with operational challenges, stronger representation, better insight and a clearer membership offer. Those priorities are reflected in the goals and outcomes set out here.

Three pillars for 2026/27

Our work will be guided by a clear organisational narrative. These pillars express what ukactive must do to deliver its mission of getting more people, more active, more often.

Build

A strong and sustainable membership organisation – financial resilience, delivery capacity and member value.

Lead

The market with insight, evidence and standards that support growth and credibility.

Change

The country through campaigning and movement-building that removes barriers to physical activity.




More people, More active,
More often

The trade body for the physical activity sector

3,000+

Members and partners across the private, public and third sectors

ukactive is the trade body for the fitness, leisure and physical activity sector, representing more than 3,000 members and partners across the private, public and third sectors – from major organisations to local community groups, that share a common purpose to get more people, more active, more often.

We exist to support our members – operators from the private and public sector, independent operators, suppliers, and wider activity providers in sport and recreation – by providing clear, high-value membership services, facilitating meaningful connections and creating the conditions within which the sector can grow, innovate and deliver impact. As a convenor and collaborator, we bring the sector together to build high-impact partnerships, share insight and expertise, and enable collective action. This helps us **Build** stronger organisational and sector capacity, while also creating the foundations to **Lead** through evidence-led campaigns, research and shared learning.

As the voice of physical activity in the UK, we champion our members and represent their interests to government, policymakers and the media. We lobby for investment, fair legislation and policies that will support our members to grow and reach more people. We also protect our members by managing reputational risk and providing the resources, intelligence and products they need to navigate change, improve standards and strengthen their impact. In doing so, we help **Lead** the sector with credibility and **Change** the national environment for physical activity.

> Above all, we are a member-led community. Our work is shaped by our members, grounded in insight and focused on enabling a more inclusive, professional and sustainable sector – meaning that together we can improve the health of the nation.

OUR VISION

A healthier nation, achieved by getting more people, more active, more often.

We believe that physical activity should be accessible to everyone, and that a strong, connected and influential sector is essential to making this happen.

Our mission

We exist to support, represent and champion organisations across private, public and independent operators, wider activity providers and sport and recreation with a role in getting more people, more active, more often.

- Clear, high-value membership services
- Effective campaigns
- Lobbying government
- High-impact partnerships
- Sector intelligence
- Growing advocacy as the voice of physical activity in the UK

Through collaboration, transparent communication and evidence-led influence, we enable our members and partners to succeed, grow and deliver measurable impact – ultimately improving the health of the nation.

What it means in practice

Vision 2030 is ukactive's long-term strategy to help create a healthier, more active nation by supporting the growth, influence and impact of the physical activity sector. It provides the framework for how we work with members, partners and policymakers to get more people, more active, more often.

At its heart, Vision 2030 is about creating the conditions for the sector to thrive, so that more organisations can grow sustainably, reach more communities and play a greater role in improving the nation's health.

Build

Stronger foundations through organisational resilience, innovation and inclusion.

Lead

Through standards, trusted intelligence and sector-wide guidance.

Change

The wider environment – deepening the sector's role in prevention and wellbeing.

What it means for members

Practical support to navigate change, stronger representation with government and policymakers, better intelligence to inform decisions, and a more connected sector equipped to respond to new opportunities and challenges.

It also means continued focus on the long-term issues that will define success: workforce, standards, infrastructure, consumer engagement, health integration and sustainable growth.



Helping members engage 20% of the population by 2030

Measured by adult membership penetration. Market growth has progressed significantly ahead of expectation.

START OF STRATEGY CYCLE	APRIL 2026	2030 TARGET
14.5%	18%	20%

18% reached – 90% of the way to target

20% by 2030

By April 2026, according to the ukactive UK Health and Fitness Market Report, penetration had reached 18%. We will therefore be reviewing the target in due course, and better defining where we expect market growth to come from over the next five to ten years, to inform and shape our collective strategy to deliver it.

Whilst the forecast will change, the principles of Vision 2030 remain the strategic foundation for this Business Plan, shaping both what we prioritise and how we support, represent and champion our members.



PROGRESS IN 2025/26

A stronger evidence base, higher standards, greater influence

Over the last 12 months we strengthened the sector's evidence base, raised standards, increased influence and provided practical support for members. Key highlights are below.

- Published the sector's third consecutive annual report, delivering longitudinal insight and strengthening evidence of the sector's value and visibility with investors and decision-makers.
- Produced regional snapshot reports and thought leadership on mental health and strength training, giving members more actionable insight.
- Embedded The Active Standard, helping members raise standards, build trust and strengthen customer experience.
- Produced new guidance on key emerging issues, including children and young people, strength training, GLP-1 medication, and safer spaces for women and girls.
- Rolled out EDI tools and consultancy support to help members embed inclusion more effectively.
- Progressed key NHS Blueprint priorities, strengthening the sector's role as a credible health partner.
- Delivered National Fitness Day and the ukactive Awards, increasing awareness and celebrating sector excellence.
- Delivered extensive government and parliamentary engagement to strengthen the sector's influence on key decisions.
- Led lobbying on the £400m facilities investment, strengthening the case for investment in leisure infrastructure.
- Delivered a rolling programme of Member Networks and webinars across England and the Devolved Nations, creating more opportunities for members to connect and share learning.

What we are focusing on in 2026/27

Our priorities for 2026/27 were shaped in consultation with our Governance Councils, Member Council, the Board and the wider ukactive team, and are organised under Build, Lead and Change.

Members asked us to focus on practical support, stronger health relationships, better insight, effective policy influence and a clearer membership offer. The goals that follow show how we will respond.

Build

Three goals. Financial resilience, delivery capacity and member value – a sustainable surplus position, operational excellence, and a membership experience with a clearly defined value proposition.

Lead

Two goals. Trusted insight, standards and guidance that support growth and credibility – protecting and growing reputation, and leading the generation of sector intelligence.

Change

One goal. Shaping the environment and partnerships needed to remove barriers to physical activity – positioning the sector as an essential partner within the health system.



Build

Financial resilience, delivery capacity and member value.

1. Achieve a sustainable surplus financial position

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

ukactive consistently balances income and expenditure, protects reserves, and operates on a financially stable footing that supports long-term sustainability.

OUR FOCUS THIS YEAR

Strengthen retention and acquisition, sharpen our member value proposition, improve commercial discipline and contract processes, and pursue targeted income opportunities including strategic partnerships and external funding.

2. Improve operational excellence and delivery capacity

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

Streamlined internal processes and improved cross-team collaboration increase delivery speed and quality.

OUR FOCUS THIS YEAR

Improve core processes across operations, finance and membership, embed stronger ways of working, and invest in CRM, data quality and people planning so we can deliver more effectively and consistently.

3. Enhance the membership experience, and clearly define and communicate our value proposition

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

Members clearly understand and experience the value of ukactive, leading to higher engagement, improved satisfaction, and stronger retention and growth across all segments.

OUR FOCUS THIS YEAR

Refresh and communicate our value proposition, improve the member journey from onboarding to renewal, continue improving our new website and resource hub, and strengthen engagement through networks, webinars, awards and better use of mobile and social for targeted member communications.

Lead

Trusted insight, standards and guidance that support growth and credibility.

1. Protect and grow the reputation of our members and our organisation

Driving standards, mitigating risk, influencing policy and regulatory change, and generating opportunities for growth.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

ukactive proactively mitigates operational and reputational risks while shaping policy and regulation to create a safer, more supportive and growth-oriented operating landscape for members and the sector.

OUR FOCUS THIS YEAR

Advance standards and risk guidance, provide support on emerging operational issues such as AI, cyber security and single sex access guidance, and continue to influence policy and public debate on the issues that matter most to members – including planning, cost of doing business, employment and growth.

2. Lead the generation of sector intelligence

Providing actionable insights that support the sector and ukactive's strategic priorities.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

High-quality, evidence-led insights, continually improved through advanced data, partnership working and strategic outputs, enabling the sector to make informed, impactful decisions.

OUR FOCUS THIS YEAR

Strengthen our core insight offer through the Market Report, benchmarking, consumer engagement and impact assessments, while improving the quality of our data and developing tools that help members turn intelligence into action.

Change

Shaping the environment and partnerships needed to remove barriers to physical activity.

1. Position the sector as an essential partner within the health system

Through strong advocacy, policy leadership and practical member support.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

ukactive strengthens the sector's role in health by influencing national policy, deepening NHS and system partnerships, and equipping operators with the practical tools and guidance needed to deliver health-integrated services.

OUR FOCUS THIS YEAR

Build stronger pathways with health and social care partners, progress priority work on MSK, GLP-1 and strength, and equip members with practical support to play a bigger role in prevention, rehabilitation and community health.

OUR COMMITMENT

Together, we will champion the organisations driving this sector forward and ensure physical activity remains a core pillar of a healthier, more active, more resilient nation.

More people, More active, **More often**

WEB
ukactive.com

EMAIL
info@ukactive.org.uk

PUBLISHED
Business Plan 2026/27