



## Creating an Active and Healthy Swansea

## Introduction

Lifelong involvement in Sport and Physical Activity is universally accepted as a key component of an active, healthy, resilient and inclusive society. Recognising, valuing and supporting the benefits of participating regularly and making physical activity a priority in peoples lifestyle's has become more important than ever in these challenging times.

According to the World Health Organisation People who are physically active have up to a 50% reduced risk of developing the major chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some cancers and a 20-30% reduced risk of premature death. The Health burden of these diseases in the UK alone are estimated to increase by £1.9-2 billion every year to 2030 pa.

It is also clear that these effects of a lack of physical activity are not equally encountered within communities. In Swansea there are some significant differences in participation rates in Sport and Physical activity across the county with some communities enjoying some of the highest levels of regular physical activity and sports participation recorded in Wales and others approaching the complete opposite end of the spectrum. Recoded levels of ill health from Public Health Wales and the Swansea Bay Health Board indicates issues such as obesity both in children and adults are highest in these areas of lowest participation.

Health partnerships across the region are keen to continue the development of opportunities for individuals to make physical activity part of their everyday lifestyle and Swansea Council's Sport and Health team will play a key role in this. This plan, from our vision to our actions will reflect how critical tackling these inequalities are. We intend to use our resources in a strategic manner to ensure that we can make the biggest difference we possibly can.

We are very much aware that in order to make a real impact we must work together with a diverse range of partners and stakeholders that can offer support, guidance, analysis and insight into creating and sustaining a culture of participation within Swansea where being physically active throughout life is the norm. Our service has a well-established track record of networking with internal and external partners in a variety of fields within the spectrum of sport and physical activity. We intend to build on these partnerships and explore new opportunities to extend our reach to ensure that everyone understands the importance of being active and has the opportunity to participate.

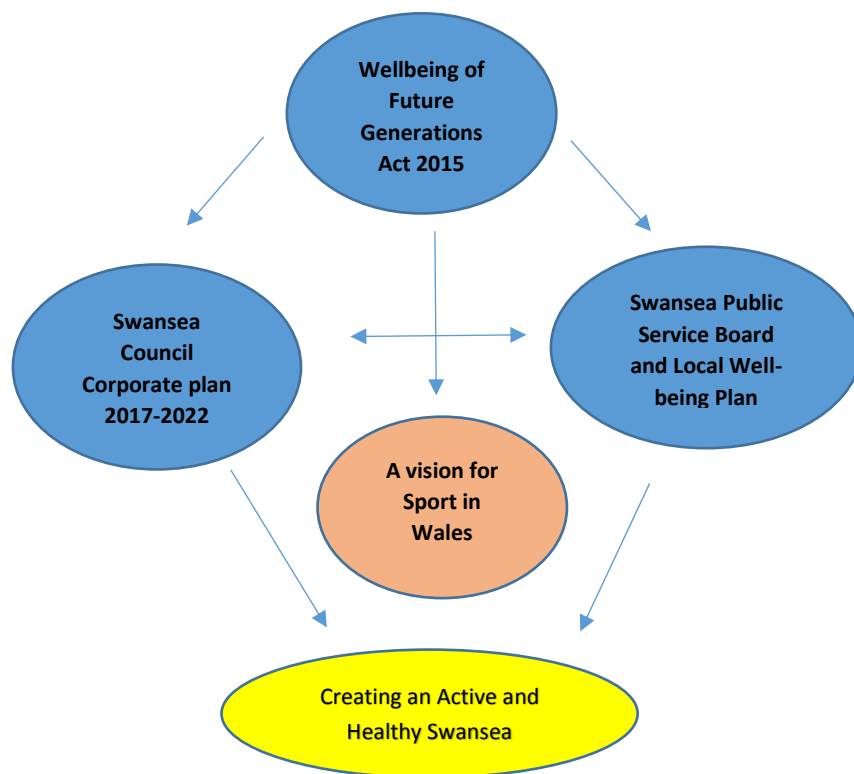
This plan has been developed with partnership, equity and sustainability as fundamental principles. We believe that enabling and encouraging access to services and facilities for sport and physical activity will make a clear and significant difference to individuals and communities across Swansea. This will not be age restricted and consideration as well as resources will be use to encourage lifelong participation though programmes that encourage the development of knowledge skill and habit-forming enjoyment. Consideration has been given to the needs, constantly changing culture and wider world younger generations will encounter as well as

ensuring their legal rights to physical activity and exercise are respected and provided for.

### Method and Strategic Fit

It is hoped that this plan will compliment, influence and lead where necessary in various elements of the Sport and Physical Activity development spectrum. We recognise that in order to make the biggest difference, we must work strategically with key partners and stakeholders within the Council, and externally.

In order to do this most effectively, our plan has been developed in alignment the most significant and influential strategic plans available locally and nationally. Creating and Active Swansea will contribute directly to objectives we have a responsibility to deliver as a public sector service and as a partner to organisations that provide us with additional funding, resources, insight and support fundamental to our operation.



## **A vision for Sport and Physical Activity in Swansea**

**“Swansea will continue to be one of the healthiest cities in the UK where everyone has a lifelong enjoyment of physical activity and sport.”**

### **We want Swansea to be a place where:**

- Sport and physical activity helps build stronger, healthier, happier and safer communities
- Everybody experiences the mental and physical benefits of being physically active
- There is safe and easy access to Swansea’s vibrant and diverse sporting services and facilities both built and natural.
- Sport and physical activity is enhanced by a thriving voluntary and professional workforce.
- Swansea’s talented performers are supported to become the best they can be and are recognised for their achievements.
- Health inequalities are addressed from birth and throughout life.
- Communities are given a voice and involvement in decisions about their health and well-being
- A high value is placed on the health and well-being of citizens
- Physical Literacy will be embedded into every child’s physical, cognitive, social and emotional development.
- People of all ages and abilities will enjoy a lifelong physical literacy journey
- Individuals value and take responsibility for their own health and well-being; and have the knowledge and understanding of how to maintain and enhance it.
- Every child can swim to a safe standard and are taught the vital skills of water survival in a safe and enjoyable environment.
- Sport and physical activity will emerge stronger and more valued following the pandemic.

## **Our Focus**

Our intention is for the whole of Swansea will benefit from the delivery of this plan. However, resource will focus on the sectors of the population where access to healthy lifestyle opportunities will make the biggest difference. These are;

- People living in Areas of poverty
- Women and Girls
- People with Disabilities
- BAME communities
- Older Adults

## **Our Outcomes:**

As a result of the successful delivery of this plan we would hope to see:-

- People exercising more often
- Every child chooses sport and Physical activity as part of their lifestyle.
- More people are at a healthy weight
- Access, equity and fairness
- Improved levels of Physical and mental well-being
- Increased life expectancy and quality of life.

## **Strategic Aims**

Baseline data suggests that there are vastly differing levels of participation in sport, physical activity and other health related activities in our area. There is also a statistical divide between various geographical locations which show inequalities in health closely correlated to lower levels of physical activity. Therefore a strategic approach where resources are aligned and maximised is critical.

With this consideration at the forefront of planning and to deliver the vision, we will focus on the following strategic priorities:

- Building Stronger Communities
- Tackling Health Inequalities
- Developing Sporting infrastructure
- Support Learning and Develop Skills for Life
- Covid Recovery

## **Building Stronger Communities – Use sport and physical activity as a tool within holistic community development to improve individual and community quality of life**

- Sport and Physical Activity can promote and develop positive social interaction and community cohesion within communities and between

different communities through formal and informal participation in sport and physical activity.

- Sport and Physical Activity makes a contribution to many aspects of positive community life over and above the physical and health benefits attributed to participation including economic, educational, social and environmental outcomes.

1. Ensure opportunities are enjoyable and designed in consultation with all sectors of the community in order to meet their needs.
2. Increase awareness of the benefits of participation in sport and physical activity and the opportunities available in Swansea.
3. Develop and promote capacity within communities to introduce new and sustain or expand existing opportunities
4. Work with partners and contribute to holistic approaches to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, social isolation, increase employability, skills and contribute to increased attainment in formal and informal education.
5. Influence and advise the outdoor physical activity, play and Local Development Plan\* processes
6. Community resources, assets and expertise are shared to benefit opportunities to participate
7. Contribute towards employment and volunteering opportunities within the sport and PA sector.
8. Community champions and role models are identified supported and recognised.
9. Promote enjoyment of the outdoor active environment through education and information
10. Create relationships with appropriate non-sporting organisations within communities to maximise impact and create new partnerships

### **Tackling Health inequalities – To ensure that EVERYONE in Swansea has the opportunity to be active in Sport and Physical Activity**

- Physical inactivity negatively impacts on both physical and mental health. There are a range of inequalities in individual physical activity levels from different protected groups and within geographical communities.
1. Work in partnership with a range of stakeholders for greater advances in addressing inequalities and sustainable participation across communities
  2. Engage with local communities to ensure appropriate and up to date knowledge of communities is available
  3. Invest resources in the most deprived communities.
  4. Deliver early interventions to prevent health inequalities (links to best start in life)
  5. Provide local and accessible opportunities with a wide choice of activity
  6. Ensure that programming and delivery is inclusive and reflects individual needs
  7. Commit to tackle the barriers to participation in physical activity faced by some of the most inactive groups in society

8. Provide and support intervention campaigns across Swansea (for example, us girls, Street games) to increase participation in Sport and Physical Activity
9. Share insights and learning of how interventions have engaged communities to address inequalities associated with sport and physical activity.
10. Ensure that the physical activity workforce both professional and voluntary is diverse and reflects communities
11. Diversity training is crucial to understand different communities

**Developing Sporting infrastructure – Develop and sustain a network of natural and built environments which facilitates and encourages formal and informal participation in sport and physical activity supported by a voluntary and professional workforce of leaders, coaches, teachers and administrators.**

- To maintain a clear and constant link between the effective design and management of the natural and built environment and participation in sport and physical activity.
- To support sports clubs and facility providers in ensuring accessibility and consider participants' needs in relation to programming, transport, language, religious requirements and childcare issues.
- Provision of attractive, safe, built environments and facilities for sport and physical activity.

With partners, lead encourage and support, a diverse range of affordable competitive and non-competitive opportunities that cater for all abilities and fitness levels. There should be an emphasis on fun and enjoying the social aspects of participating, especially for activities targeting groups that are difficult to engage.

1. Ensure access to a wide variety of affordable and accessible high quality competitive and recreational opportunities for all.
2. Strengthen the local infrastructure to enable inclusive opportunities for increased and sustained participation throughout life.
3. With partners, select focus sports and key activities which can make the biggest difference to sustainable participation and improved performance.
4. Support clubs and voluntary organisations to attract and retain a wider range of participants.
5. Support and provide access to high quality accredited coach education and leadership opportunities.
6. To work with clubs and national governing bodies to create a stronger sporting pathway from entry level sport through to competitive and performance sport.
7. Ensure that talented performers are identified, nurtured and developed to attain their full potential with access to appropriate facilities and training environments.
8. Maximise the legacy opportunities of major events and elite local successes to increase participation.
9. Ensure that the portfolio of existing facilities are supported, used appropriately, are fit for purpose and promoted.

10. Ensure the development of new facilities are based on strategic evidential need.
11. With key partners, ensure Swansea remains and thrives as a regional and national venue for performance and elite sport.

**Support Learning and Developing Skills for Life** – Provide programmes and learning opportunities that support individuals, families, and communities to develop the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.

- Learning and skills contributes to meaningful lifelong physical literacy journey for all.
- To make a valued contribution to the health and wellbeing of all through physical activity.
- Contribute to the development of key life skills for individuals to be valued, informed citizens.

1. Provide early years programmes that introduce the elements of physical literacy for children to experience quality movement opportunities enhancing their personal development including cognitive, language and social development.
2. To support play opportunities and family engagement sessions to promote physical literacy.
3. Support learning opportunities for the holistic development of individuals in their physical, cognitive, affective, and social domains by providing a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and opportunities for participation in recreational, competitive and community settings.
4. Create a culture where individuals value and take responsibility for their own health and well-being.
5. Provide opportunities to build resilience, leadership, empathy, respect, patience and coping strategies to manage well-being.
6. To support active adolescents to become active adults who participate in regular physical activity, sport and recreation.
7. To support older adults to maintain functional capacity for longer and maintain independence through the older years.
8. Design physical activity programmes that provide individuals with key transferable skills.
9. Provision of sport and recreation opportunities that support a lifelong physical literacy journey for all people of all ages in a range of environments.



10. Offer the best possible swimming and water safety provision for all school pupils, giving them the opportunity to learn life skills and swim more frequently.
11. Provide meaningful and challenging opportunities to enable our workforce and participants to reach their full potential.

## **Covid Recovery**

- As a team providing a public service, it is clear that the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic must be incorporated into any strategic plan for the short and medium term.
  - As a strategic priority the Sport and Health Service will consider the impact of the pandemic on various factors contributing to participation rates in sport and physical activity (socio economic? )
- Evidence suggest the gap in inequalities are being further exacerbated in the midst of a global pandemic and continued rise in obesity. The intersectionality or multiply interplays of protected characteristics and determinants of health mean we must, now more than ever do more to identify and engage with those at greater risk.
  1. Consider the effect the pandemic has had on the physical infrastructure of sport and physical activity in the county including the availability of facilities, effects of the upkeep of buildings and whether they are still safe and fit for purpose.
  2. Consider the short term necessity of any physical changes and restrictions that facilities may have to manage in order to reopen and provide a service.
  3. Consider the human resource impact the pandemic has had on infrastructure including workforce reductions and impact on volunteering, leadership and coaching
  4. Consider the impact the pandemic has had on club capacity including potential reduction in memberships, income and sustainability.
  5. Consider the effect the pandemic had on the way people took part in exercise, build on the raised public awareness of the importance of physical activity and exercise.
  6. Build on the positive effects of social media and other digital platforms in terms of communication, information and even virtual delivery of physical activity and sport
  7. *Review and research with partners ongoing physical activity habits that were a result of the pandemic*

## Measuring Success

We are prioritising the use of outcome based information gathering based on the key priorities of Local Service Board well- being goals and Swansea Councils corporate Plan. We will compile an information base of outcomes delivered by ourselves and partners directly linked to these strategic goals to be made available for purposes including examples of good practice, financial value for money and sustainability. It is felt that this type of information is key in determining the overall impact of this action plan as unlike our previous KPI's ourselves and partners have more accountability to deliver actions.

It is important that we are able to continuously reflect on our performance through detailed analysis of delivery and insight into the effectiveness of our service. We will do so using our own methods of reporting as described below, but will also engage with partners and service users in a much more detailed way. Each of our projects will now have bespoke methods of gaining insight and learning written into them including good practice, individual and group feedback, use of technology and use of focus groups at planning stage where appropriate.

Our outcomes will be collected in "Action Snapshots" and filled in the following specific areas:-

- **Safeguarding people from harm** – so that our citizens are free from harm and exploitation.
- **Improving Education & Skills** – so that every child and young person in Swansea gains the skills and qualifications they need to succeed in life.
- **Transforming our Economy & Infrastructure** – so that Swansea has a thriving mixed use City Centre and a local economy that will support the prosperity of our citizens.
- **Tackling Poverty** – so that every person in Swansea can achieve his or her potential.
- **Transformation & Future Council development** – so that we and the services that we provide are sustainable and fit for the future.

The intention is not only to collect Action Snapshots internally, but also from partners from the wider sport and physical activity network that we have been able to support and influence. Snapshots will be sent to key partners regularly and through internal performance management channels with support from strategic managers and head of service to ensure this plan is a "live" document with regular, tangible activity recorded and demonstrated against agreed objectives.

We will also track wider outcomes based on key indicators established by the industry in Wales and have, where appropriate used newly established targets. This along with our outcome based approach will give a broader reflection of success. Most of these KPI's are "population" based and are measured following national surveys. Although important, these figures show a more cultural view on participation and levels of activity which have significantly wider influences than the partners involved in the delivery of this action plan.

We are comfortable that the industry as a whole has very robust means of collecting qualitative data through comprehensive research carried out by Sport Wales, Public Health Wales and Welsh Government. In this regard we will work closely with these partners to ensure the statistical data they provide is considered and fundamentally influences our annual service plans and targeted work.