

GOGLEDD CYMRU

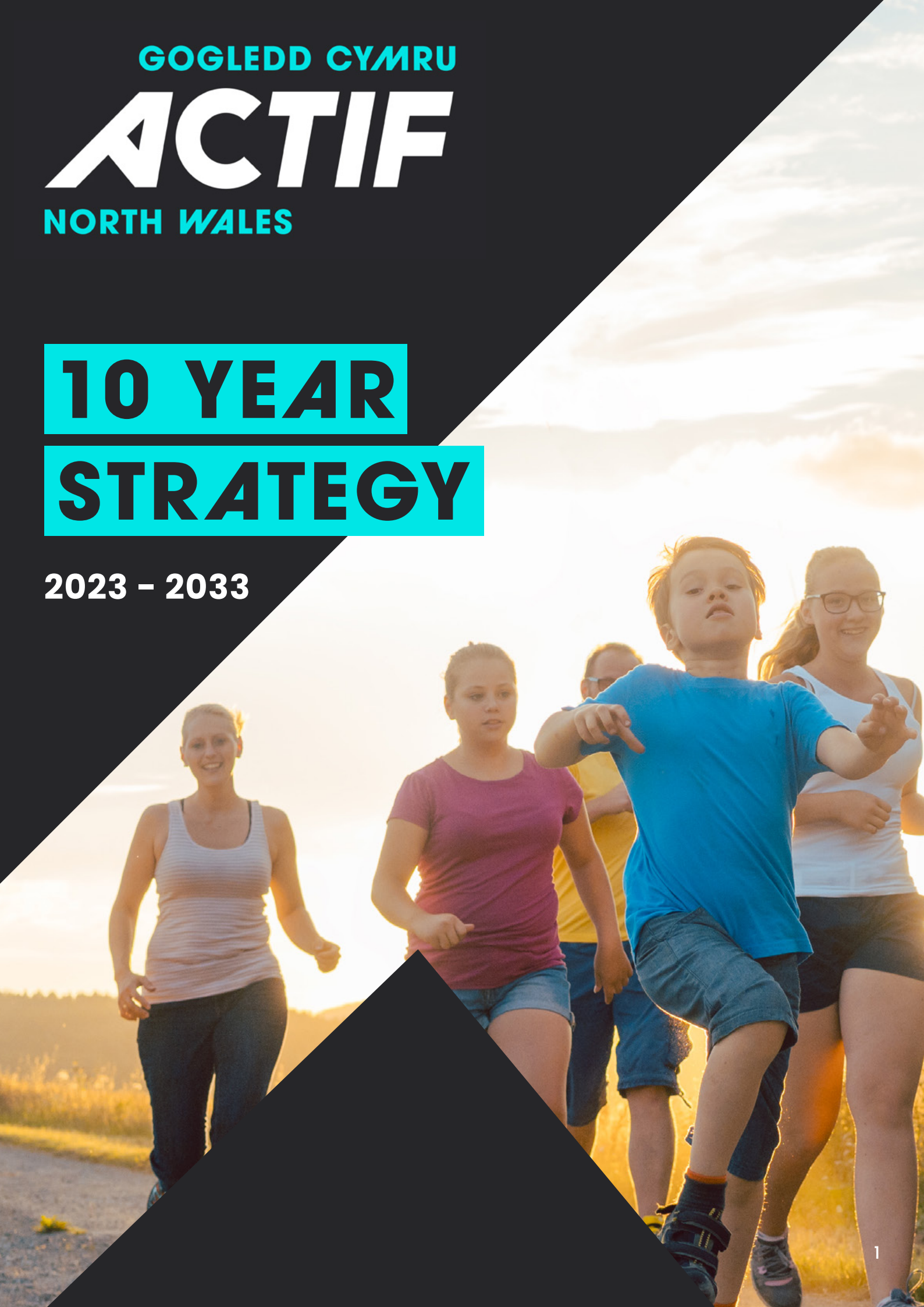
ACTIF

NORTH WALES

10 YEAR

STRATEGY

2023 – 2033



INTRODUCTION

The health and social benefits of being more active are wide reaching. Physical activity and sport has the power to bring people together to have fun, improve health and wellbeing and self-confidence, reduce social isolation and help to build stronger, safer communities. Yet despite these benefits, in North Wales the figures continue to show us that fewer people than ever before, and particularly children and young people, do not take part in regular activity. Alongside this, childhood and adult obesity as well as poverty continues to rise – with more than a third of children living in low-income families in North Wales today.

Our aim at Actif North Wales is to work together with a wide range of partners and with communities to understand the root cause of activity disparities across the region, to encourage everyone to start moving more in a way that works for them and realise the benefits of being active.

We can only tackle this challenge by working in partnership across our organisations and places if we are to achieve the sustainable change our region needs.

Our ten-year joint strategy sets out our vision, mission and priorities for achieving a more active North Wales. Working together, we can change lives, creating active and healthy communities across the region.

Peter Parry

*Independent Chair
Actif North Wales*

Manon Rees-O'Brien

*Regional Director
Actif North Wales*



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GLOSSARY

What we mean by ‘whole systems approach’

This strategy has been developed by working with a wide range of partners from health and social care, local authorities, education, social housing and the voluntary sector to ensure that we are pulling in the same direction as we identify and understand current and emerging issues so that together, we can deliver sustainable change and more active lives for the people of North Wales.

What we mean by ‘being active’

Being active simply means moving more and incorporating more movement into everyday life. It can range from making simple lifestyle changes like swapping some car journeys for walking or cycling, taking the stairs instead of the lift to taking part in regular sport, going to the gym or joining an exercise class.

What we mean by ‘physical activity’

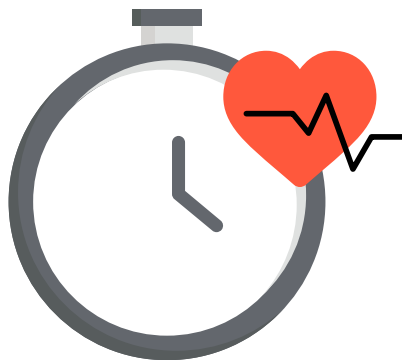
Physical activity is when people achieve the recommended level of regular physical activity. This doesn't mean having to join a gym or do a marathon, but it's more about regularly moving more ⁽¹⁾. The guidelines are set by the UK Chief Medical Officers on the levels of activity necessary for good health for both adults and children:

Children and young people

(5 – 18 years) should aim for

60 minutes

of physical activity
per day across the week



Adults and older adults

should aim for at least

150 minutes

of moderate intensity activity per
week, or at least 75 minutes of
vigorous intensity activity per week



What we mean by ‘deprivation’

Deprivation means the lack of access to opportunities and resources (e.g. food, shelter, and clothing) which we would expect in our society.

What is the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD)

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is the Welsh Government's official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in Wales. It identifies areas with the highest concentrations of different types of deprivation. WIMD ranks all small areas in Wales from 1 (most deprived) to 1,909 (least deprived).

GLOSSARY

What we mean by 'poverty'

The Welsh Government definition of child poverty defines poverty as:

"A long-term state of not having sufficient resources to afford food, reasonable living conditions or amenities or to participate in activities (such as access to attractive neighbourhoods and open spaces) that are taken for granted by others in their society" ⁽²⁾.

What we mean by 'inequalities'

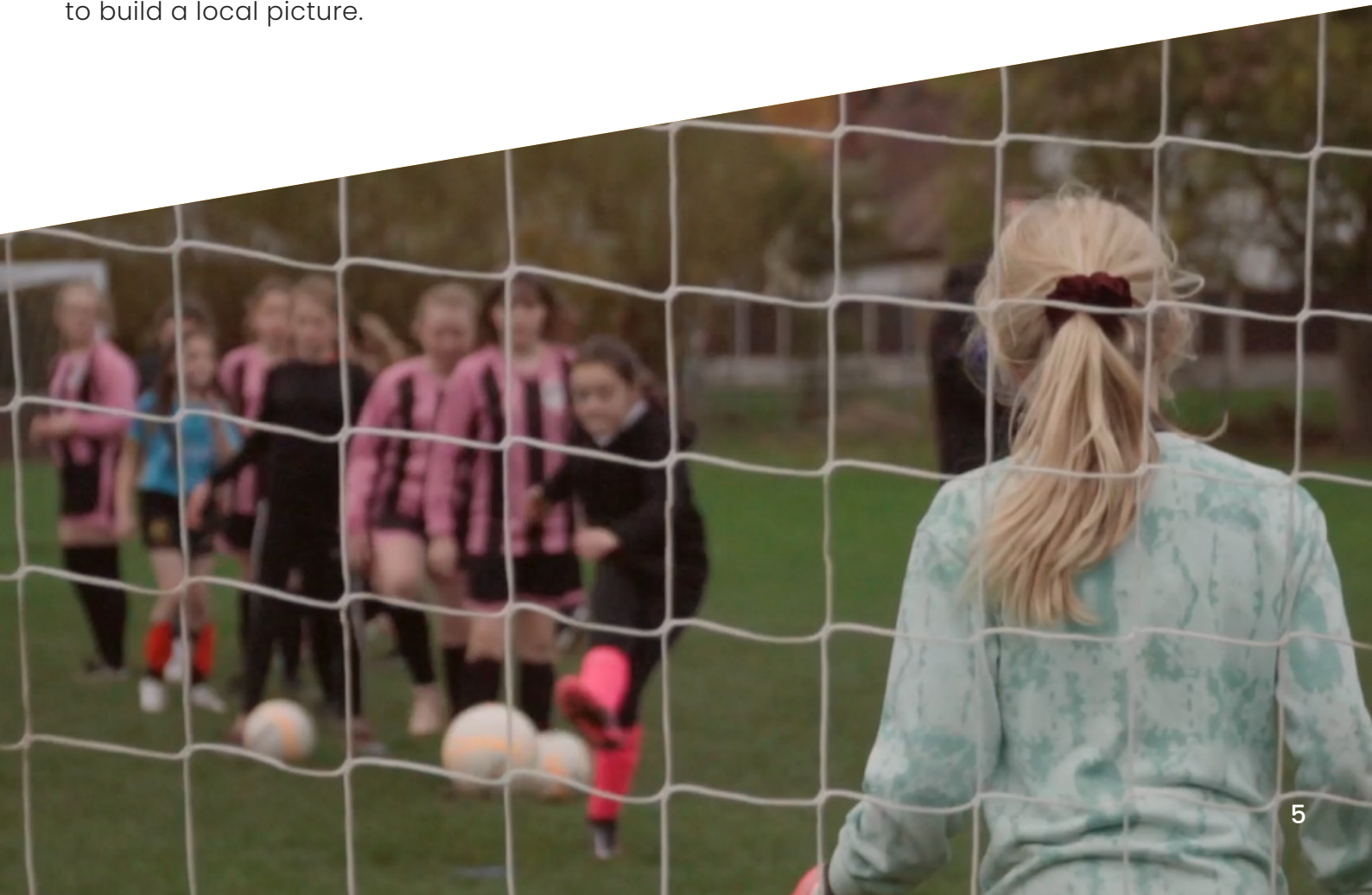
Inequalities are unfair and avoidable differences across the population, and between different groups within society. They are determined by other, wider factors including gender identity, age, ethnicity, disability/impairment, sexual orientation, religion as well as language.

What we mean by 'socio-economic disadvantage'

Socio-economic disadvantage is linked with poorer overall wellbeing outcomes including health, education and employment.

What we mean by 'place-based approach'

Person-centred, bottom-up approach to meet the needs of people in one specific locality, making the best use of available resources and using local knowledge and insight to build a local picture.





THE NORTH WALES PICTURE

The North Wales region spans the six local authority areas of Wrexham, Flintshire, Denbighshire, Conwy, Gwynedd and Anglesey and has a population of 687,000 people, of which 147,500 are aged 0-19 years ⁽³⁾.

Whilst the latest data shows that the Welsh language has decreased slightly across Wales, the North Wales counties of Gwynedd and Anglesey are home to the **highest percentage of Welsh speakers (64.4% in Gwynedd and 55.8% in Anglesey)**, highlighting the importance of the Welsh language and culture in our region and for our strategy and approach going forward.

The region also claims significant natural assets, home to Eryri National Park and three areas of outstanding natural beauty, as well as 90 miles of coastal paths, fantastic beaches, lakes, forests, parks and mountains.

Poverty and deprivation rates in Wales have been increasing and they have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of people who are socio-economically disadvantaged.

One in four people are now living in relative poverty compared to one in five across the UK ⁽⁴⁾. One in three children are living in poverty and are more likely to live in relative income poverty than the population overall ⁽⁵⁾.

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) has highlighted that North Wales has some of the most deprived areas in Wales. Three of these areas are within the ten most deprived communities in Wales – Rhyl West 2 and Rhyl West 1 (first and second most deprived respectively), and Queensway 1 in Wrexham (9th most deprived ward in Wales) ⁽⁶⁾.

We must also consider the ‘pockets’ of deprivation seen in some rural areas across the region with many too small to be recognised in the official statistics (WIMD) due to them often being surrounded by larger less deprived populations.

People living within the most deprived communities in North Wales tend to be less active than those living in more affluent areas. Recent data from the School Sport Survey ⁽⁷⁾ shows there is a clear gap in sports participation levels, with a much higher proportion of children and young people from the most affluent families taking part in sport three times a week outside of curriculum compared to those from least affluent families in North Wales (7% difference).

The same is true for adults, with 41.4% of those living in the most deprived communities meeting the recommended physical activity guidance levels for good health compared to 50.3% of people living in the most affluent areas ^(8,9).

People living in the most deprived communities also experience a stark life expectancy disparity of 7 years ⁽⁸⁾ compared to those living in the least deprived.



DECREASE IN LEVELS OF ACTIVITY

Despite these assets on our doorstep, in North Wales the data shows us that levels of inactivity are on the rise.



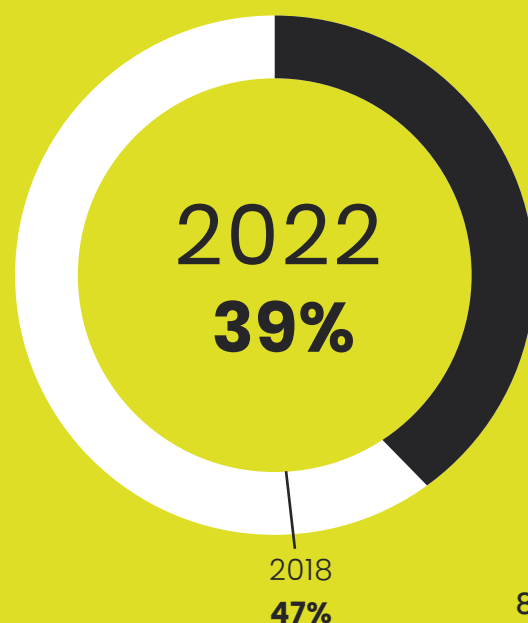
51.5% of adults meet the recommended physical activity guidelines of 150 minutes a week
(falling as low as 38.3% at local authority level)



A third of the adult population in North Wales are active for **less than 30 minutes per week** ⁽⁹⁾.

The number of children and young people taking part in sport three times a week, outside of curriculum, is also falling, with Sport Wales' recent School Sport Survey results showing a **decline from 47% in 2018 to 39% in 2022**.

These statistics fall further for girls, children and young people accessing free school meals, those from an ethnically diverse community or disabled children and young people or those with an impairment.



MOVING FORWARD

There is however more work to be done to develop the data and insight to help us really understand what the picture looks like at a more local level and the impact of inactivity on the lives of our population.

Building stronger data and insight with partners is vital to guide our work and measure our impact and progress. We also need to be better at celebrating success and sharing stories of real people on the journey to being (more) active so others can follow in their footsteps and see that being active is for everyone.

CONTEXT

There is a strong synergy between this long-term strategy and other national, regional and local strategies and legislation and action plans including:

- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ⁽¹⁰⁾
- Vision for Sport in Wales ⁽¹¹⁾
- Healthy Weight Healthy Wales ⁽¹²⁾

They all demonstrate a clear commitment to the importance of an active lifestyle for everyone, focusing on tackling stubborn inequalities that stop so many of our population reaping the wide benefits that being active brings.





WHO WE ARE

Actif North Wales is the first regional physical activity and sports partnership to go live in Wales. We are made up of a wide range of organisations that have joined together to agree to work differently to achieve a shared purpose of more active communities in North Wales.

These organisations came together to co-create the Actif North Wales Partnership.



We strongly support a whole systems approach to achieving a more active North Wales, building on the region's reputation for working collaboratively across sectors to deliver whole systems change.

This means working with communities and stakeholders to understand the challenge and to identify and test solutions working across sector, organisational and place boundaries to achieve long lasting improvements to health and wellbeing.



This Partnership recognises the intent and commitment of working together to address the deep rooted challenges around being active in North Wales' communities, and we will continue to build and develop this approach as a cornerstone of our work.

Actif North Wales will provide leadership to deliver this strategy, and work with partners across different sectors to deliver our joint 10-year vision.

OUR VISION

**EVERYONE IN NORTH WALES
BEING MORE ACTIVE, LEADING
HEALTHIER AND HAPPIER LIVES**



OUR MISSION

**EVERYONE IN NORTH WALES HAS ACCESS
TO SAFE SPACES AND PLACES AND DIVERSE
OPPORTUNITIES TO BE ACTIVE EVERY DAY**

OUR INTENT IS TO:

1

PUT NORTH WALES FIRST

Connect with communities, listen, understand what's needed and stay focused on improving people's health and wellbeing.

2

ACHIEVE MORE TOGETHER

Develop a positive team spirit across the region to collaborate and share knowledge, resulting in a sustainable and significant regional impact.

3

BE BOLD

Be ambitious, deliver positive change and learn from our actions.

OUR WAY

Our ways of working are based around the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 'five ways of working' ⁽¹⁰⁾. These are the principles set out to demonstrate that we're considering the impact we could have on people living their lives here in North Wales in the future as well as those living here today. These will guide our work and how we work with partners and communities:



COLLABORATION

Work together to achieve more, be brave, innovate and try new ways.



LONG-TERM

Target additional resources to maximise regional impact, being socially and environmentally responsible.



PREVENTION

Champion and celebrate the wider health benefits of being active every day.



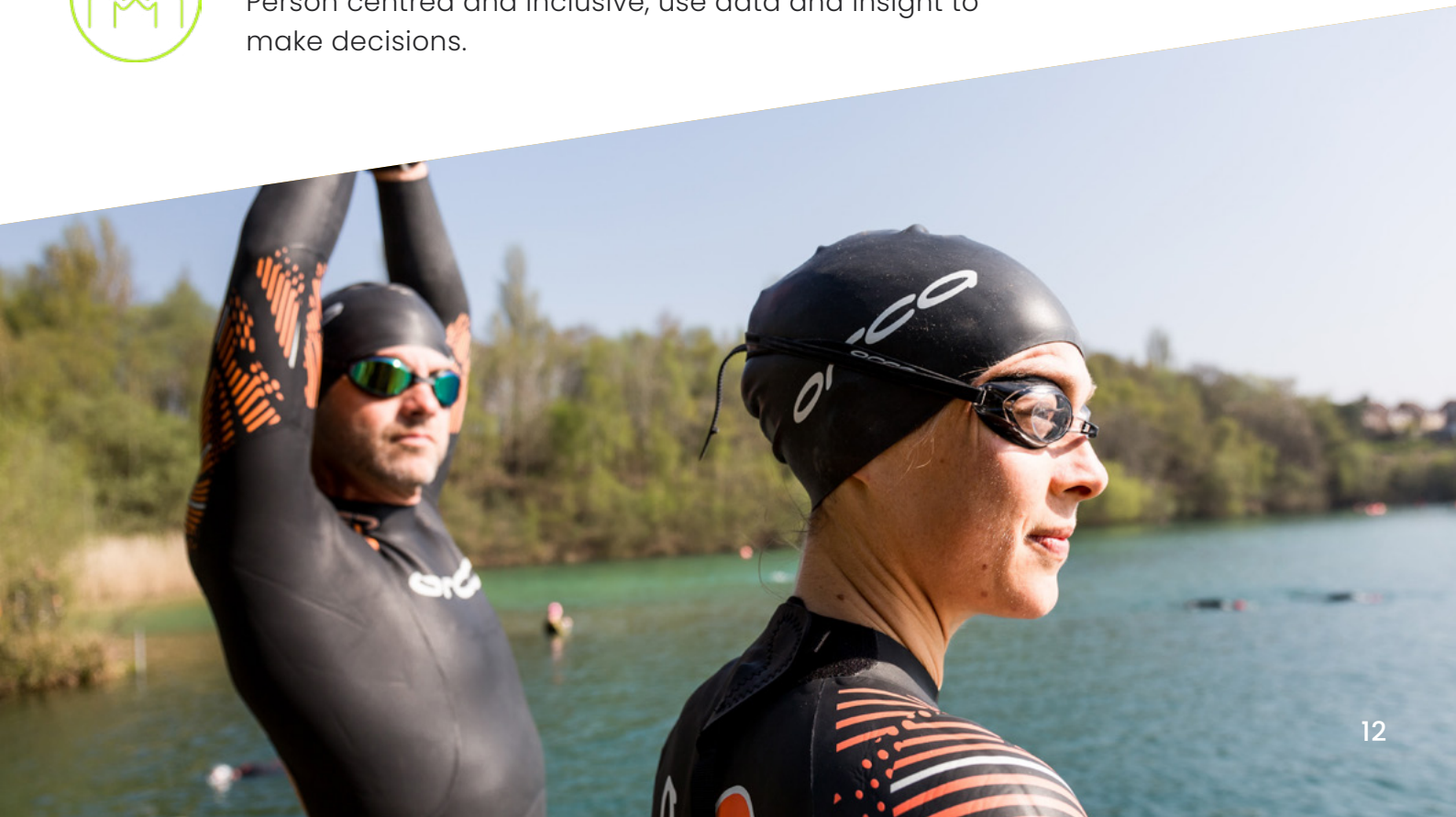
INTEGRATION

Tackle regional health inequalities, promote good health and wellbeing for everyone, build healthier communities.



INVOLVEMENT

Person centred and inclusive, use data and insight to make decisions.



DELIVERING OUR PRIORITIES

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

Our Framework for Action is based on the World Health Organisation Global Action Plan and its four strategic objectives ⁽¹³⁾:

ACTIVE PEOPLE

Create and promote opportunities for everyone to be active.

Aim: To work with partners to grow and promote opportunities across a range of settings to help people of all ages and abilities to be active in their local area, as individuals, families and communities.

What we'll do:

1. Review current local opportunities to support people to be active.
2. Test and grow new opportunities that help people to be active in their local area.



ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Make the best use of local places and spaces to be active.

Aim: To test new ways of working at a local level to provide opportunities for people to be active in their locality by taking a place-based approach'.

What we'll do:

1. Pilot 'place-based approaches' in agreed localities (based on data and insight) across the region to:
 - better understand the barriers and challenges people face to being active
 - co-create and co-develop interventions with the people living in the locality to grow opportunities for them to being active.
2. Support and help existing voluntary grass roots and community activity providers to survive and thrive, and those with capacity to do more to grow opportunities locally.
3. Map local places and facilities that can be used to help achieve our aims and inform future planning and facility development.



DELIVERING OUR PRIORITIES

FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

Our Framework for Action is based on the World Health Organisation Global Action Plan and its four strategic objectives ⁽¹³⁾:

ACTIVE SOCIETIES

Sustain, maintain and grow by listening to, supporting and working with communities to make 'being active' the norm.

Aim: To use our regional platform and work with partners to connect with the population, raising the profile of the wider benefits of being active to different and diverse audiences.

What we'll do:

1. Lead communication campaigns and awareness days by showing real people being active in a way that works for them, so others can see people like them moving more and enjoying the benefits.
2. Review the current workforce across the region and map future needs (workforce and support) to deliver the strategy.



ACTIVE SYSTEMS

Multi sector engagement, coordination and collaboration.

Aim: To raise the profile of the Actif North Wales joint strategy and shine a light on the wider benefits of being active to embed it in policy and practice across the region.

What we'll do:

1. Develop a co-ordinated communications plan with partners to collectively highlight the wide benefits of being active.
2. Test new ways of working across the region, to unite sectors to commit to driving system level change.
3. Review data, evidence, and insight across sectors.
4. Use the strategy to target additional investment opportunities into the region.



A photograph of three young girls running in a park. The girl in the foreground is smiling and wearing a white t-shirt. Two other girls are running behind her, one in a dark blue t-shirt and one in a grey and black t-shirt. The background shows green trees and a wooden fence.

OUR

PRIORITY GROUPS

Physical activity and sport can play a vital role in improving the life opportunities for people experiencing the impact of inequalities, enabling them to realise their own prosperity and wellbeing.

Throughout our work we will provide universal encouragement and information about the wide-reaching benefits of physical activity, sport and moving more, whilst targeting our resources to support those most in need.

A golden thread that runs throughout this is our commitment to ensuring that our work is inclusive and tackles head on the impacts of inequalities across North Wales.

By this we mean prioritising people that we know are facing inequalities and are under-represented within the region.

OUR APPROACH

Joint guidelines have been set by the UK Chief Medical Officers on the levels of activity necessary for good health for both adults and children ⁽¹⁾:

Children and young people

(5 – 18 years) should aim for

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COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

As part of our work and vision we're building relationships and influence with existing partners as well as broadening our engagement and appeal of "being active" to a more diverse audience. We will be focusing on our priority audiences by targeting people facing inequality and under-represented groups, as well as continuing to engage with those that are already active.

Our key aims include to:

- think regionally, act locally
- introduce new, innovative ways of working
- share evidence, insight and learning
- improve local access to physical activity and sport opportunities
- support partners to help them grow opportunities to be active
- work with communities who need our help the most
- grow our resources to maximise regional impact
- celebrate physical activity and sport across North Wales.

MEASURING AND EVALUATING

Measuring and evaluating the impact of the Partnership will be a key focus going forward.

A significant shift is needed right across the system, and it will be challenging to identify the impact of single interventions as we seek change at all levels.

We need to capitalise on the exciting opportunity this new system-wide regional approach offers to challenge our thinking and enable us to test and learn from new ways of working. We will collaborate to develop a fit for the future method to capture data, evidence and insight and stories to measure the impact of this system wide approach and whether it translates to the desired shift in activity levels across our diverse communities.

ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN

Actif North Wales' Annual Operational Plan offers more detail about the priorities for the Partnership each year. This document will be updated annually with key focus areas identified for that period, and with a clear line of sight to the long-term strategy.



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

We can all play a part in creating a more active North Wales, so if you're already doing some work to encourage people to move more or supporting physical activity or sport opportunities, we'd love to hear from you!

Or if you are just interested in finding out more about how you or your organisation can get involved, please do drop us a line!

If you'd like to arrange a chat with us then please get in touch at info@actifnorthwales.cymru.

And please help us by sharing our strategy and film far and wide through your social media channels and contacts. The more people we can reach and the more we can join up and work together, the bigger the impact we can have for the communities of North Wales.



SOURCES

- (1) [Physical activity guidelines: UK Chief Medical Officers' report, 2019](#)
- (2) [Welsh Government Child poverty strategy: 2022 progress report](#)
- (3) [Population and household estimates, Wales: Census 2021](#)
- (4) [Is Wales Fairer? The state of equality and human rights 2018](#)
- (5) [Wellbeing of Wales: 2021](#)
- (6) [Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation: 2019](#)
- (7) [School Sport Survey 2022](#)
- (8) [BCUHB Annual Equality Report 2020-2021](#)
- (9) [National Survey for Wales](#)
- (10) [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#)
- (11) [Vision for Sport in Wales](#)
- (12) [Healthy Weight Healthy Wales](#)
- (13) [World Health Organisation | Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018-2020](#)



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