

AN ATHLETIC NATION

- WORKING TOGETHER





INTRODUCTION

When it comes to sport, athletics is where it all begins. From conquering our first steps to running in the park, jumping in puddles and throwing a ball; these are the simplest of pleasures. Our ambition is to nurture the enthusiasm we all have as children to be active in the safest of environments and to ensure that this translates into a lifetime of competitive and social participation.

We are operating in unprecedented times for our sport. The number of people taking part in athletics and running is increasing thanks to the huge contribution from a range of organisations and individuals, many of whom devote their time voluntarily and for the good of others; we have role model elite athletes performing and winning on the world stage; and we host arguably the world’s best events showcasing British and international talent.

This headline strategic vision document sets out our ambition to build on this foundation and play our collective part in delivering and supporting the sport to realise sustained success over the next ten years.

Our vision is for the sport of athletics (which we define to include running in all its formats and over all terrains) to be the most inclusive, safe, popular and successful sport across the UK.

We want to welcome everyone who participates, or who just comes to spectate, into the athletics family. The opportunities to enjoy our sport in a safe environment, must be there for everyone regardless of background, gender, ability, disabled or non-disabled, age or location. The welfare and wellbeing of all the athletics family is of our utmost importance and priority.



ATHLETIC NATION – THE THEMES



YOUNG PEOPLE

Maximising athletics opportunities for young people.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The school environment is where most of the UK first experiences organised athletics in some form. This might be as part of a Run Jump Throw programme, a Daily Mile, Sportshall Athletics, PE or funetics.

For those continuing in the sport beyond and outside school, the progression from school athletics to a safe, vibrant, welcoming, inclusive and well-structured club is critical.

Partnerships between schools and clubs are central to easing this transition and clubs must continue to be regulated, safe, proactive, approachable and open to new members of all ages and abilities as well as to fresh ideas.

WE WILL:

- Work with partners to develop and implement resources for children to gain the necessary physical literacy skills for an active and healthy life.
- Work with partners to drive the agenda so that every child, whatever their ability, is introduced to high quality and safe athletics at school and given the chance to embrace it as an activity of choice.
- Work in close partnership with all the various schools’ athletics organisations to support and integrate their programmes into the talent pathway.
- Develop tailored programmes to maximise the engagement and inclusion of young people from all backgrounds.
- Support the development of a regulated and diverse national workforce linked to clubs, who are skilled in coaching children and are able to provide safe athletics delivery in schools, to create stronger links between schools and their local clubs to ensure a fantastic experience.



CLUBS

Strengthening and modernising the foundations of our sport.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Clubs are at the heart of everything we do. Clubs provide different yet vitally important athletics and running experiences and are led by passionate, dedicated volunteers. Like those volunteers, we believe that being part of an organised community makes people more likely to continue in our sport and more likely to return if they have to drop out.

We will support and encourage our clubs to develop and modernise, whilst preserving the vital club ethos, enabling them to safeguard the welfare of all participants and to meet the expectations of tomorrow’s athletes, members, and participants – delivering a vital service to their communities.

WE WILL:

- Support the development and modernisation of clubs through specialist support where appropriate.
- Support schools, clubs and communities to maintain investment in, as well as retain access to, appropriate indoor and outdoor athletics facilities.
- Support and assist clubs to be safe, inclusive and open to all by engaging and attracting disabled and non-disabled members from all backgrounds, abilities and ages which reflect their community.
- Link clubs with each other to create a community and share best practice.
- Support clubs to ensure the adoption and application of leading welfare and safeguarding systems to ensure the safety of all participants whatever their age, background, aspiration or ability.



RUNNING

Ensuring the growth of running is sustained and that the sport is recognised as the UK’s most popular choice for health and fitness at all ages.

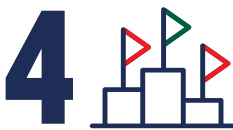
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

We are experiencing a major running boom in the UK; more than seven million people run in the UK each month. Running is the fastest growing and most popular sport in the UK and is the largest component of the growth in club membership. Mass participation running offers a huge variety of ways for people of all abilities, ages and aspirations to engage with our sport in a safe way and potentially become part of our clubs across the UK.

Running offers much to communities across the UK and positively affects physical activity levels and mental health, whilst impacting other important agendas.

WE WILL:

- Influence the market and provide opportunities for everyone in the UK to enjoy the benefits of running events and group led social running programmes.
- Work with partner running organisations to better understand the wider running landscape, identify gaps in provision and work collaboratively to influence participation retention and growth in safe and regulated environments.
- Coordinate digital marketing campaigns to sustain and increase participation levels in running across the UK.
- Initiate activities and programmes to engage, retain and grow the number of runners of all abilities, ages and aspirations to be members of the athletics family.
- Promote running and athletics as a positive, safe and inclusive choice, providing insight on the impact our sport has on physical activity and health.
- Support event organisers and partners to increase participation opportunities through regular licensed events and by making licensed leader-led running groups available in every community across the UK.



COMPETITION

Delivering and supporting great competition which meets the participants’ needs.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Research has shown that a key motivation for athletes to compete is to improve their personal best. Our challenge is to deliver appropriate competition opportunities that are well organised, safe and attractive to all participants and to create an environment that encourages progression and personal bests.

We need to offer the right levels of competition at every stage of the pathway so that club athletes of all ages and abilities can find a well organised competition relevant to them, including para athletics events, and can continue to improve and enjoy their experience in a safe environment.

WE WILL:

- Lead, regulate and provide a modern, safe and inclusive competition structure and pathway that enhances the experience for athletes, coaches, officials and spectators at all levels of the sport.
- Invest through high-quality and innovative competition providers to stimulate growth in participation across the UK.
- Lead the world of athletics in innovation and the use of technology to enhance the athlete, spectator and administrator experience.
- Represent the UK officiating community effectively at international level, specifically by advocating rule changes that reduce the workload on officials while maintaining quality levels.



MAJOR EVENTS

Forming the showpieces of our great sport.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Hosting great events gives world-wide exposure for the UK, provides inspiration for participation, showcases and promotes the UK's leading athletes and presents an opportunity for legacy projects to provide long-term benefits for the sport. During the last decade, the UK has hosted the:

- 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games
- 2014 Commonwealth Games
- 2016 World Half Marathon Championships
- 2017 World and IPC Championships, World and European Indoor Championships
- And in 2022 will host the Commonwealth Games.

Annually, we host Diamond League events in London and Birmingham showcasing world stars and generating funds to invest in the growth of the sport at all levels. This, alongside an annual programme of major off-track events, reinforces our reputation as a country that is brilliant at delivering global standard events.

WE WILL:

- Continue to stage and promote world-class events at the Olympic Stadium whilst working to ensure a lasting competition legacy for the Birmingham 2022 stadium.
- Where appropriate, work together in partnership to bid to host global athletics and off-track events in the UK.
- Work through partnership to ensure that the 2022 games drives a legacy benefit for athletics in Birmingham and across the UK.



WORKFORCE

Growing the sport by recruiting, training and developing a safe, diverse and skilled network of volunteers, coaches, leaders and officials.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

To sustain and grow the sport we must recruit, retain and develop a safe, diverse and skilled network of volunteers, coaches, leaders and officials who will give new and existing athletes of all abilities, ages and aspirations the very best lifelong experience of our sport and safeguard their wellbeing at all times.

Only with support from a suitably safe, skilled and diverse workforce at each stage of the pathway will talented athletes progress towards elite success.

WE WILL:

- Develop and implement an inclusive, comprehensive and world-leading coaching strategy embracing coach recruitment, education and development as well as talent development programmes for coaches.
- Create a safe and inclusive coaching community whose members are properly rewarded and recognised, whether paid or voluntary.
- Provide a programme of safeguarding, education, training and support to ensure the UK has the most highly skilled club leaders in the world.
- Invest in education and development to recruit and retain more officials to work at all levels in the competition pathway.
- Invest in, and support, the development of people which will help clubs to recruit, retain and reward volunteers.
- Ensure a clearly supported programme of welfare, physical and mental-health support for our volunteers, athletes, coaches and officials across the UK.
- Inspire teachers and club coaches to see athletics as one of the most safe and effective activities to improve physical literacy and provide resources to support that work.





TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Ensuring every athlete and coach has a clear pathway to elite performance.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Future medal success at elite level depends on strengthening the talent pathway from school to club athletics by identifying talent, which is nurtured, safeguarded and developed through excellent coaching and competition.

Our talent system must also reflect our sport by offering safe and equal opportunities for all and be completely unaffected by race, gender, disability, ethnic background or social grouping.

We must successfully develop our talent structures embracing partnerships with universities and colleges. We aspire to create athlete and coach opportunities that reflect the excellent education and coaching resources under one roof to offer options for emerging athletes as they prepare for world-class opportunities and competition. This will ensure more athletes are able to choose their sporting path and plan for their future.

WE WILL:

- Establish a clear, safe and transparent system of talent identification and development for all athletes by delivering an accessible and progressive pathway.
- Build strong partnerships with clubs, universities and colleges to support the welfare and development of talented athletes as they progress through tertiary education.
- Support clubs to develop their athlete offer to help recruit, retain and safeguard talented athletes of all ages with a specific focus on 15–20-year olds.
- Create more development opportunities for talented home-country athletes to compete at international level.
- Ensure coach development opportunities reflect and match those for the development of athletes enabling a clear pathway for coaches to grow with athletes and aspire to elite levels of coaching.



MEDAL SUCCESS

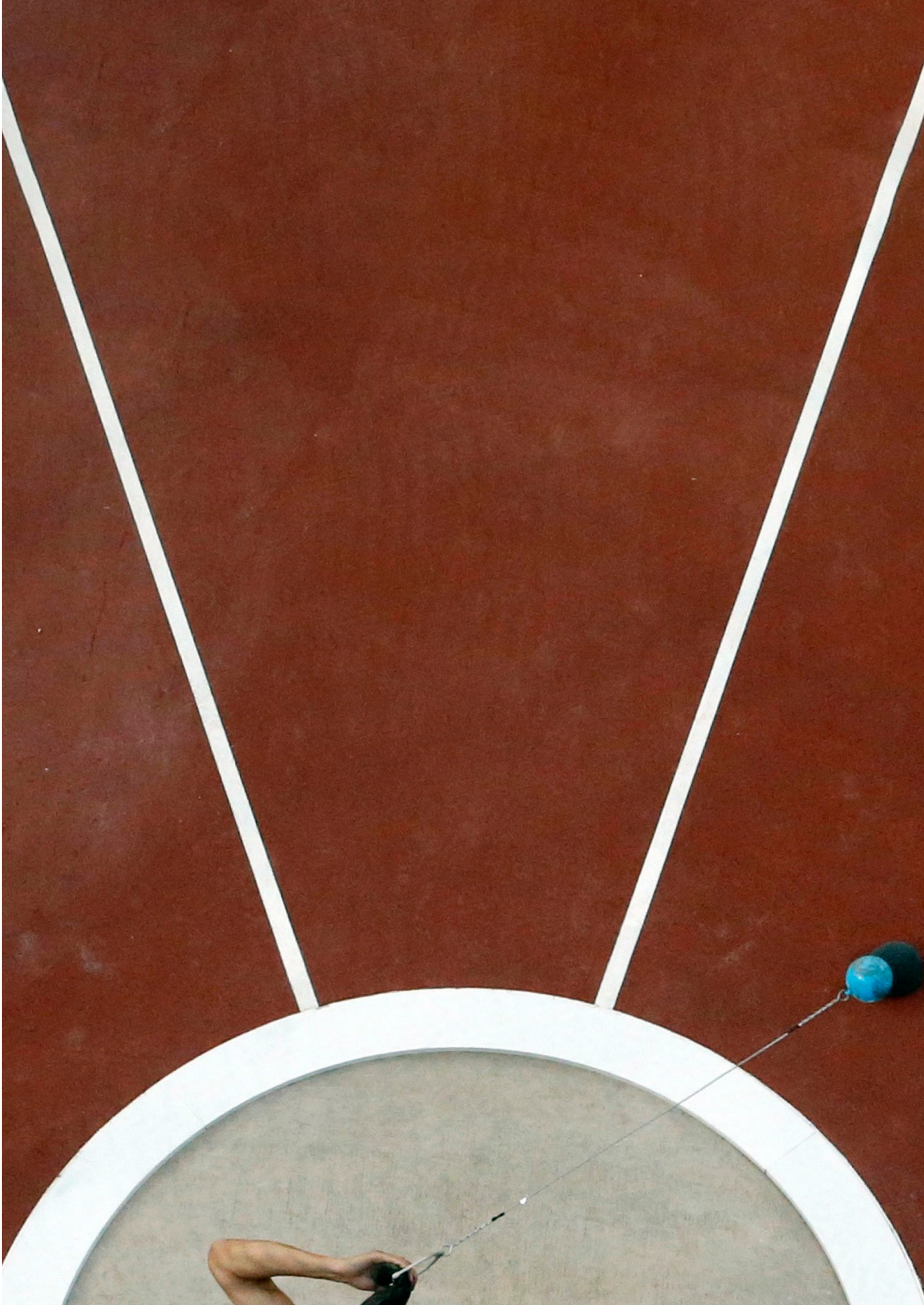
Inspiring a nation and the next generation.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

International athletes, across all disciplines, consistently deliver moments that create a national sense of pride and community and inspire people across the UK in sport and life. Athletics was ranked the most exciting sport to watch in the UK in 2018: we will ensure this continues.

WE WILL:

- Review our approach to talent and performance development to ensure an appropriate balance between supporting the very elite and investing in and prioritising the pipeline of athletes and coaches.
- Prioritise Olympic, Paralympic and World medal success and cement our position across the globe as a leading athletic nation.
- Give our athletes the best chance of medal success by supporting the Commonwealth Games' athletes as our priority and recognising the Commonwealth Games as a key step on the athlete pathway. For the 2022 Commonwealth games (Birmingham) we see this as THE performance priority event for that calendar year.
- Work with the British Athletics Athletes Commission to ensure the voice of our athletes is heard and engaged with for the development of our UK-wide policies and strategies.





COMMERCIAL

Creating and delivering an innovative commercial strategy to maximise investment back into the sport.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

We believe that an ambitious commercial strategy has the potential to create more income for reinvestment into the sport. Athletics in the UK attracts revenue from a wide range of sources including events, sponsorship, broadcasting, digital engagement, membership, fan engagement and merchandising. One joined up commercial approach offers the best opportunities to maximise return to the sport and we will deliver this through a strong partnership across the sport.

WE WILL:

- Market test and implement the opportunity provided by a unified approach, establishing where there may be enhanced commercial propositions by promoting our international teams and grassroots activities in a joined-up form.
- Apply an insight-led approach to better inform our commercial and business partnership activity.
- Work with partners to develop improved digital engagement of the athletics communities across all levels of the sport.
- Invest further in existing and new digital platforms to generate an improved financial return.
- Develop an agreed and transparent process for managing the investment that is generated and delivered back into the sport ensuring opportunities are created to fund new ideas that may deliver innovation into the sport.



LEADERSHIP

Acting with integrity and responsibility.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

As the organisations trusted with coordinating the governance and development of the sport, we recognise the challenges, and opportunities, that face us in the medium to long term. To continue to drive the sport forward we have come together to outline our future priorities and map out a path for working together over the coming years. We know that better outcomes will be delivered through true partnership and collaborative working.

WE WILL:

- As partners, work together within an agreed and inclusive structure and adhere to the highest standards of governance across the UK.
- Continue to position equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of every sporting programme and business decision.
- Lead and demonstrate by example in the important areas of welfare and safeguarding.
- Lead by example in working openly, transparently and in partnership wherever and whenever possible to enhance the sport.
- Be recognised by our stakeholders as the sport that engages, supports, leads and sets a standard for others to aspire to.
- Be committed to drug-free athletics and continue to play a leadership role within the sport in this important area.

