# **Summary: England Athletics Strategy for Athletics and Running 2021-2032**

**Athletes and runners at the heart.**

Creating opportunities, enhancing experiences and powering potential.

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Strategic plan 2021-2032**

This new England Athletics Strategic Plan 2021-2032 has been developed and delivered following extensive consultation with a multitude of stakeholders from across athletics and running at every level of the sport.

What follows is a robust and clearly defined future direction which places athletes and runners at the heart of everything we will do over the next 12 years as the sport’s membership and development body in England.

#### **Our overarching purpose and vision are:**

* **Purpose:** “To inspire more athletes and runners of all abilities and backgrounds to fulfil their potential and to have a lifelong love for the sport.”
* **Vision:** “For athletics to become an inclusive sport where everyone belongs and can flourish.”

Building on our purpose and vision, this strategic plan provides a detailed framework as we enter an exciting period for the sport, including a ‘home’ Commonwealth Games in 2022.

#### **Guiding principles**

We want every participant involved in the sport, whether they are an athlete, runner, coach, official, leader, volunteer, competition provider, facility operator, parent or guardian to see and experience first-hand the guiding principles which continue to drive our work. These are to:

* put the athlete and runner first
* encourage high standards and ethical success across all aspects of our work, including high sustainability standards to ensure we are making a positive impact
* enhance experiences
* work together in partnership not in isolation.

#### **UK-wide alignment**

England Athletics is committed to the successful delivery of the UK-wide strategy for the sport as developed with UK Athletics and all Home Country Athletics Federations.

This strategic plan focuses on the areas we will lead or influence in ensuring the development of a flourishing infrastructure to allow athletes to thrive through supporting sustainable development of key aspects of the sport. Through the development of UK-wide working groups, England Athletics will lead on club support, participation, schools and facilities, the delivery of coach and officials’ education and development, the delivery of domestic competition through partners and the development of the talent pathway for young athletes.

We will also have a strategic influence on performance, coaching, officiating and competition strategy and safeguarding.

### **Key Focus Areas**

At the heart of this plan, and the focal point for everything we do, are the people and communities involved in our sport across the following five key areas:

* 1: Clubs, Club Leaders and facilities
* 2: Competition
* 3: Coaches and Officials
* 4: Participation: young people and running
* 5: Talented athletes

Each has its own unique challenges and opportunities, yet also the opportunity to positively influence the success and growth of the other areas.

**Clubs, Club Leaders and facilities**

* Sustainable clubs with every club growing membership levels year-on-year

**Competition**

* More competing athletes at all levels and all event disciplines each year

**Coaches and officials**

* More active coaches, leaders and officials at every level and every discipline

**Participation - young people and running**

* Recruitment and retention of athletes to maintain participation levels in athletics and running each year

**Talented athletes**

* More high-performing athletes achieving performance benchmarks in all event groups and disciplines at all levels

### **Key supporting activities**

There are four key supporting activities that will be essential in enabling us to deliver the strategic priorities and ultimately achieve our goals:

* provide strong leadership that builds trust and respect by creating an open and positive culture
* embrace technology and reduce our environmental impact by putting digital first and encouraging innovation and creativity
* ensure greater engagement through sharing of high-quality insight, information and content
* develop commercial minds to maximise funding opportunities and diversify income.

#### **Values**

The work we do across these key focus areas will be underpinned by the values we stand for as an organisation and as defined by our purpose.

Values of **fun**, **inspiration**, **integrity** and **inclusivity** will be evident in our everyday actions and behaviours as England Athletics staff, Councils and Board.

We acknowledge that no sports organisation can truly deliver a successful long-term strategy without a clear **delivery structure** and first-class collaboration with its **key partners**. Indeed, we are proud of our internal and external connectivity and will continue to nurture these relationships as we seek new and exciting opportunities to secure the future success of the sport.

#### **Finances**

As a not-for-profit organisation, we will continue to invest all monies generated back into our athletics and running community. To ensure we continue to add value for all our members, we will build on existing revenue streams whilst also exploring new commercial and non-commercial opportunities during this strategy period.

Our focus is clear – to deliver a funding model which ensures we are well-placed to respond accordingly to changes to the UK’s economic climate so that we can meet the future demands of the sport:

* increase annual reinvestment level to £9 million
* self-sustainable with public investment at less than 25%
* more resilient membership income through strategy of engagement and member retention
* increase commercial and other diverse sources of income to 20% of total income
* grow income from high-quality services to the sport.

## **How it all works together**

Our **Purpose** and **Vision** underpin everything we do.

Under which are our **Guiding Principles**:

* Athlete centred-environments
* High standards and ethical success
* Collaborative working
* Enhanced experiences.

These guiding principles lead into our **five areas of focus, goals and activities**:

* 1. Participation: recruitment and retention of athletes – incorporating:
	+ Funetics
	+ RunTogether
	+ athlete registration and membership
	+ and the Personal Best Foundation.
* 2. Clubs, Club Leaders and facilities: sustainable clubs – incorporating:
	+ club resources, webinars and networking
	+ club standards, welfare and inclusion
	+ regional and local support
	+ facility advice and support service
	+ celebrate volunteers.
	+ Clubs, club leaders, and facilities sustainability
* 3. Coach and Officials: more active coaches, leaders and officials – incorporating:
	+ Coach, leader and teacher education
	+ Coach, leader and teacher development
	+ Officials’ education
	+ Officials’ development.
* 4. Competition: more competing athletes – incorporating:
	+ England championships
	+ Road running competition
	+ Competition licensing
	+ Support leagues and competition providers
	+ Competition innovation.
	+ Competition sustainability
* 5. Talent: more high-performing athletes – incorporating:
	+ Talent pathway
	+ England teams
	+ Commonwealth Games and Commonwealth Youth Games.

Inputting into these key focus areas and activities are our **key supporting activities**:

* Leadership
* Digital-first
* Engagement
* Commercial minds.

## **Closing statement**

**Athletics is where it all begins. Learning to run, jump and throw is the foundation for a lifetime of activity.**

From playground to podium our sport offers everybody, irrespective of size, shape, cultural background or disability, the opportunity to achieve great things and to live a healthier and happier life.

We want to help athletes of all backgrounds and abilities to flourish and reach their full potential. To develop a successful and inclusive talent pathway we need to create a world-class support system of clubs, coaches, officials and competition.

To make sure this system thrives with a continuous supply of athletes, we need to create opportunities for more people to find the sport and, from there, sustain their participation in the sport.

The key to sustaining participation will be improving experiences for everyone involved and putting the needs of athletes and runners at the heart of everything we do.

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