

# ATHLETICS UNIFIED

POWERING POTENTIAL  
ENHANCING EXPERIENCES  
DELIVERING SUCCESS

2020-2032



# 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.



# INTRODUCTION

**This is the long-term strategy for the sport, owned equally by the five governing bodies of athletics and running in the UK.**

This is a strategy that represents a new era of collaboration. Building on the commitment of An Athletic Nation, as a collective Athletics Northern Ireland, England Athletics, Scottish Athletics, UK Athletics and Welsh Athletics will work in partnership to help lead a step change in culture and the wider quality and sustainability of the sport.

## **This starts from the top.**

This is a strategy that will promote unity and bring a renewed sense of togetherness across all organisations in the athletics and running family.

With a greater sense of purpose, we will aim to enrich people's lives by enhancing experiences and improving performance by promoting high standards of delivery and engagement across the sport.

**By focusing on putting athletes and runners of all abilities at the heart of everything we do, we hope to sustain and improve opportunities for participants to thrive.**

The sport of athletics has a strong heritage of inclusivity that we should celebrate. However, there is more we can do at every level to achieve equality.

Athletics will be a sport where everyone can see themselves and we see everyone.

To ensure we sustain participation at all levels across the sport, nurture talent and develop world-class athletes and para athletes, we will prioritise our efforts on developing progressive clubs, innovative competitions and major events and an engaged community of high quality and supported coaches, officials and volunteers.



Improving performance and developing talented athletes to succeed on a world stage across all event disciplines is important but without supporting and investing in clubs, coaches, competition, officials and volunteers the strategy will fail.

The ecosystem of the sport is complex and diverse. As five bodies we will only be able to deliver and influence so much.

**We will not be able to do this alone. Therefore, to enable the successful delivery of the strategy we believe in working together with partners.**

Following the impact of Covid-19 there will be a greater emphasis on using digital in a world that will require alternative formats and greater efficiency with less resource, therefore we will embrace technology.



We will also commit to use an evidence-based approach to create change, communicate effectively with everyone involved in the sport, consult regularly and be more commercially minded.

Only by maximising investment into the sport, will we give ourselves every chance of success.



# WHY ARE WE HERE?

Our purpose is: “to inspire more athletes and runners of all abilities and backgrounds to fulfil their potential and to have a lifelong love for the sport.”



# OUR SPORT IN NUMBERS

Finalists in  
**55%**  
of Olympic Events

GB & NI finalist in 26 of 47  
athletics events, Rio 2016

**89%**  
of the para athletics  
team reached their  
finals in Rio 2016

**1,800**  
Licensed Track  
& Field events  
per year

**1,200**  
Talent Athletes  
in UK talent pathways

**89,500**  
Coaches, Leaders,  
Officials & Volunteers  
**16,500** Licensed Coaches  
**18,000** Licensed Run Leaders  
**5,000** Licensed Officials  
**50,000** Club Volunteers

**200,000**  
Group Runners:  
(RunTogether, JogScotland,  
RunWales, Run NI)

**7million**  
Social Runners  
(twice a month)

**4,000**  
Licensed Road Races  
per year

**2,500**  
Clubs & members bodies

**225,000**  
Registered Athletes  
(80% Off-track, 20% Track & Field)

**800,000**  
Fans (major events ticket database)

# OVERCOMING CHALLENGES AND TAKING OPPORTUNITIES

Through listening to feedback from over 5,000 athletes, club leaders, volunteers, coaches and officials across the sport, we know that significant improvement and change is required. Through the delivery of this strategy we will address the main challenges and capitalise on the opportunities facing the sport in 2020.

## WE WILL RESOLVE:

- An unclear and complicated structure to the sport that creates confusion, inefficiency and disjointed communication.
- A negatively pervasive culture caused by a lack of collaboration that has caused distrust and disengagement across the sport.
- Decreasing track and field participation levels, large numbers of young people dropping out of the sport and a decline in performance levels across some event groups and age groups.
- The lack of high-quality coaches at all levels and across many event groups.
- An overly bureaucratic approach to recruiting, developing and retaining officials.
- Competition formats and schedules that do not currently meet the needs of athletes.
- Major events that don't all attract the best athletes, build an engaged fanbase or deliver a sufficiently commercial return.

## WE WILL CAPITALISE ON THE OPPORTUNITIES TO:

- Be even more inclusive and promote the diversity of our sport.
- Present the sport more effectively to children and young people.
- Ensure we learn from recent reviews and create a world class welfare and safeguarding system.
- Maintain the growth in running/pushing, promote the benefits and engage more athletes to be part of the Athletics and Running Family.



# WHAT WILL WE HAVE ACHIEVED BY 2032?

We have three bold and ambitious goals that will move us away from a focus on winning medals at all costs, demonstrate our commitment to supporting the core of the sport and prove that putting the needs of athletes and runners first can retain participation levels in our sport:

## GOAL 1:

In 2032, GB & NI will have a representative in every discipline at all senior international events.

In 2032, 95% of the Paralympic team will reach their final.



## GOAL 2:

A world-renowned infrastructure of athletics and running clubs, competitions, coaches and officials that retains over 250,000 registered athletes across the UK by 2032.



## GOAL 3:

Athletics, running and pushing\* is the nations' choice to stay active: 9 million regular participants by 2032.



\* 'Pushing' relates to wheelchair users participating or racing.



# HOW WILL WE ENSURE CONSISTENCY?

We will have four guiding principles that we believe as essential reference points to deliver our Goals:

Everything we do will aim to:



**PUT THE ATHLETE FIRST**



**ENCOURAGE HIGH STANDARDS AND ETHICAL SUCCESS ACROSS ALL ASPECTS OF THE SPORT**



**ENHANCE EXPERIENCES**



**WORK TOGETHER IN PARTNERSHIP NOT IN ISOLATION**

# WHAT WE WILL PRIORITISE?

We will focus on:



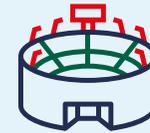
## YOUNG PEOPLE

Maximise athletics opportunities for young people in schools and community settings and enhance their first experiences of running, jumping and throwing.



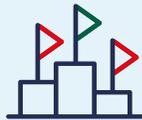
## CLUBS, FACILITIES & CLUB LEADERS

Support and develop safe, sustainable and welcoming clubs to be the best they can and create vibrant environments for their athletes.



## MAJOR EVENTS

Delivering the showpieces of our great sport that athletes aspire to compete in and that build an engaged fanbase across the UK.



## COMPETITION

Lead, regulate and provide a modern competition structure and pathway across all disciplines that enhances the experience for athletes, coaches, officials and spectators at all levels of the sport.



## OFFICIALS

Build and support an engaging, expert and athlete-centred officiating workforce to support the successful delivery of competitions.



## RUNNING

Ensuring the growth of running/pushing in the UK is sustained and results in the continued growth of the Athletics and Running Family.



## PERFORMANCE

Create an athlete centred, integrated, aligned, clear, transparent, connected performance system.



## COACHES

Build and support a respected, expert and athlete-centred coaching workforce to create an inclusive, positive athlete experience.



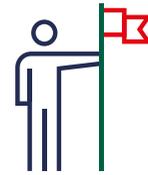
## TALENT

Create an athlete centred, integrated, aligned, clear, transparent, connected talent pathway.

# WHAT WILL HELP US ACHIEVE SUCCESS?

Key supporting activities will be essential in enabling us to deliver the strategic priorities and ultimately achieve our goals.

This will include:



## LEADERSHIP

Provide strong leadership and transparent governance representative of the Athletics and Running Family.



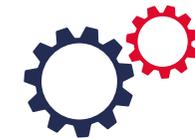
## COMMERCIAL MINDS

Develop our assets to maximise funding and diversify income to re-invest back into the sport.



## DIGITAL FIRST

Embrace technology and enhance digital systems to help people in the sport.



## ENGAGEMENT

Develop, manage and share high quality insight, information and engaging content to help delivery and effective communication.



# HOW IT ALL FITS TOGETHER

## GOAL 1:

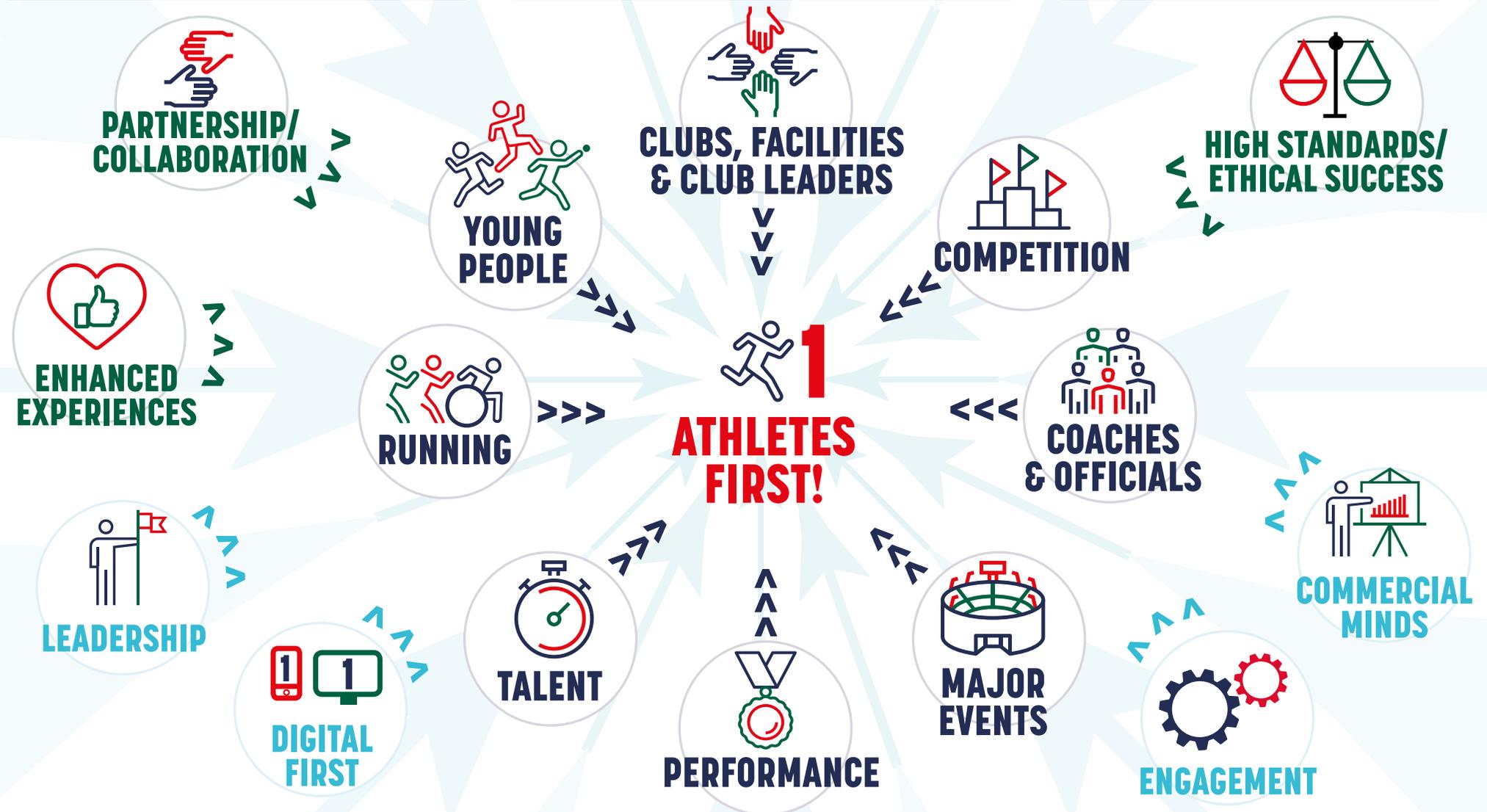
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## GOAL 2:

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## GOAL 3:

Athletics, running and pushing is the nations' choice to stay active: 9 million regular participants by 2032.





# WHAT DO WE STAND FOR?

In delivering the strategy the following values will be adopted:

## **FUN**

We want people to get excited about our sport, in a safe environment and enjoy it.

## **INSPIRATION**

We want people in our sport to be inspired and have the ambition to succeed at whatever level.

## **INTEGRITY**

We want people to be respected and treated fairly in our sport that prides itself on transparency.

## **INCLUSIVITY**

We want people to feel welcome and valued in our sport.

# HOW WILL THE STRATEGY BE DELIVERED?

## Framework agreement

A high-level framework agreement has been agreed to direct how the respective bodies work together and this work will clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of each party in delivering this strategy effectively.

## Working groups

A number of cross organisational UK wide working groups will be tasked with developing detailed thematic strategies and measures of success in important areas of work such as development, coaching, competition, officiating and performance.

## Measuring success

Success will be measured and reviewed on regular basis by the CEO forum and a report will be produced each year so everyone across the sport can see how we are doing. This work will then directly inform the work of British Athletics and each HCAF as they formulate their organisational plans.

## 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.”

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FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

UKA & HCAF BOARDS

PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD (CEO Forum)

WORKING GROUPS COVERING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



**DEVELOPMENT**

Running, Young People, Clubs



**COMPETITION**



**COACHING**



**OFFICIALS**



**COMMERCIAL**

Major events



**PERFORMANCE**

Talent, Performance

ALL UNDERPINNED BY **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION**

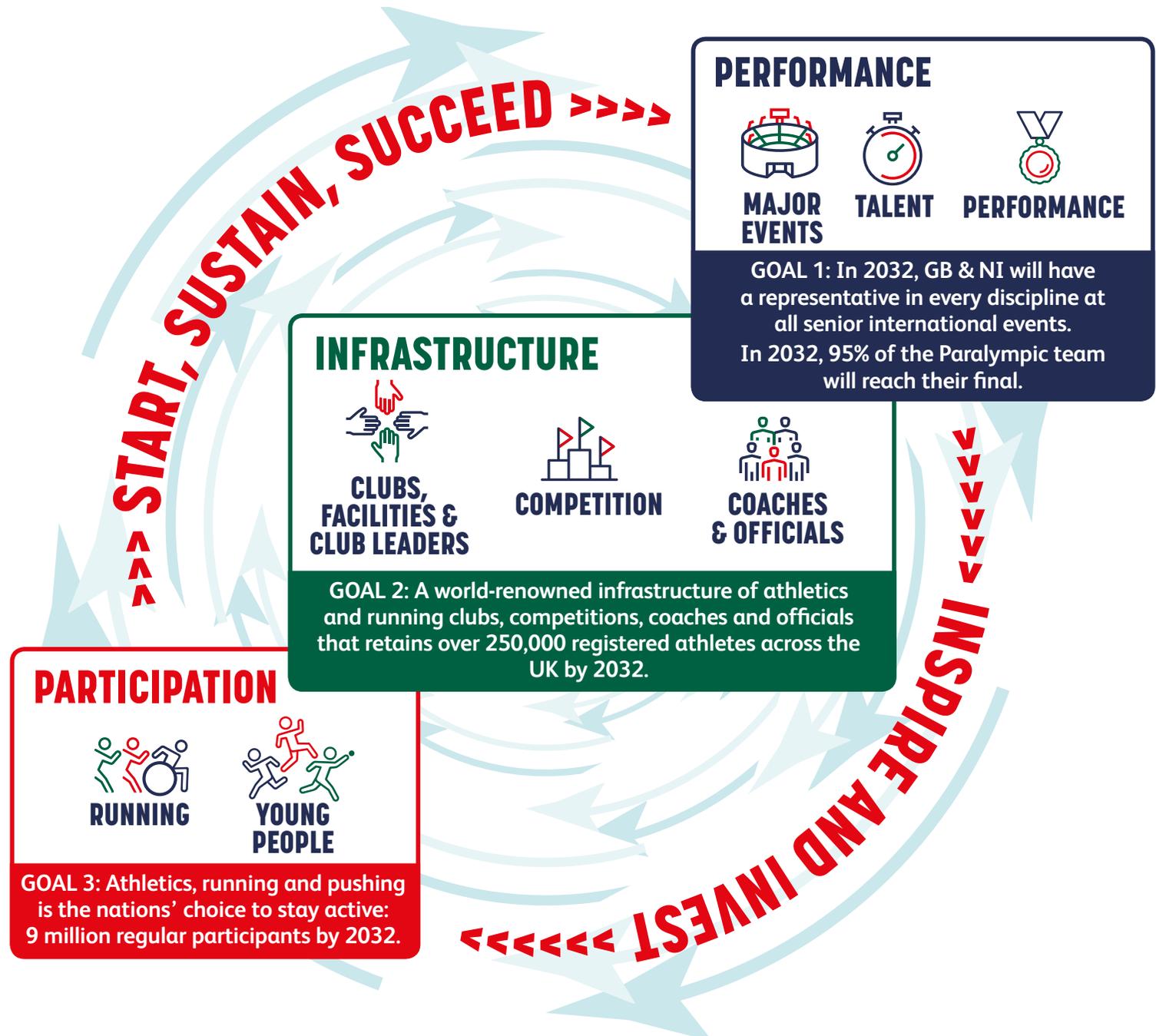
KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

# A UNIFIED SPORT: WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

**Participation and performance:  
You can't have one without the other.**

To improve performance of athletes (Goal 1) we need to create a world class support system of clubs, coaches, officials and competition (Goal 2) and to make sure this system flourishes with a continuous supply of athletes we need to sustain participation in the sport (Goal 3).

If elite success is achieved, talented athletes are developed and major events are delivered this will inspire more young people to participate, existing athletes to stay in the sport and attract more commercial income to re-invest back into the sport to further support the strategy and delivery of our ambitions.



# A NEW START

This is a strategy that represents new leadership, a new culture and new call to action for the sport to pull together to support the delivery of an exciting new era for athletics.

During the summer of 2020 we tested the emerging strategy and priorities with over 300 clubs. Over 85 % of respondents agreed with the guiding principles of being athlete centred, encouraging high standards, enhancing experiences and working in partnership. Our strategic priorities of Clubs, Facilities and Club Leaders (92 %), Coaches/ Officials (92 %), Competition (91 %), Young People (91 %) and Talent (82 %), Running (74 %), Major Events (72 %) and Performance (72 %) were met with an equally strong level of support.

We will change opinion. 46 % of respondents said they were optimistic about the future collaborative approach with 24 % indifferent and 30 % not convinced.

**This is the start of a journey – there is a lot to do and we are up for the challenges.**



# OUR COMMITMENT

**WE WILL...** work collectively and collaboratively to proactively support the delivery of athletics in the UK

**WE HAVE...** agreed athlete focused strategic goals to drive performance and participation, with clubs, competition and people at the centre of our work.

**WE WILL...** support and create modernised structures to support clubs, coaching, competition and officials' development.

**WE WILL...** establish as many shared services as possible and be more commercially minded ensuring the maximum amount of investment goes back into the delivery of athletics.

**WE WILL...** create a safe environment where everyone can enjoy athletics.

**WE WILL...** provide effective and transparent leadership which drives great culture and exhibits the right kind of behaviours.

**WE WILL...** provide opportunities and pathways that welcome *everyone* to our sport.

