

Sport and physical activity sector local skills plan

Doncaster: 2025–2028

CREATED BY

Sport and Physical Activity Sector
Local Skills Accountability Board –
Doncaster



Contents

Photo credits:

CIMSPA would like to thank Active Fusion/Gavin Joynt and Get Doncaster Moving for their support in sourcing photographs for this skills plan.

Introduction

The Sport and Physical Activity Sector Local Skills Accountability Board – Doncaster

About the board

Chair: Chris Wright, Head of Health and Leisure, Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust

The Yorkshire Sport Foundation was fundamental in the creation of the Doncaster Local Skills Accountability Board (LSAB). The foundation facilitated connections with key stakeholders and provided valuable insight into sport and physical activity skills provision in Doncaster, laying the groundwork for the creation of this local skills plan. [Read more about their involvement and work here.](#)

Board member organisations

- Active Fusion
- Active IQ
- Be More Learning and Development
- Club Doncaster Foundation
- City of Doncaster Council
- Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust (DCLT)
- Doncaster College
- Get Doncaster Moving
- Legacy Sport Foundation
- Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Foundation Trust
- Speak Up Self Advocacy
- University Campus Doncaster
- Yorkshire Sport Foundation

Funding and support

Our local skills work to engage with employability-focused organisations and build a representative sport and physical activity sector workforce is funded and supported by Sport England and the National Lottery.



Get involved

To learn more about this local skills plan or the work of your local skills accountability board please contact CIMSPA who will link you with their workforce development manager for Doncaster.

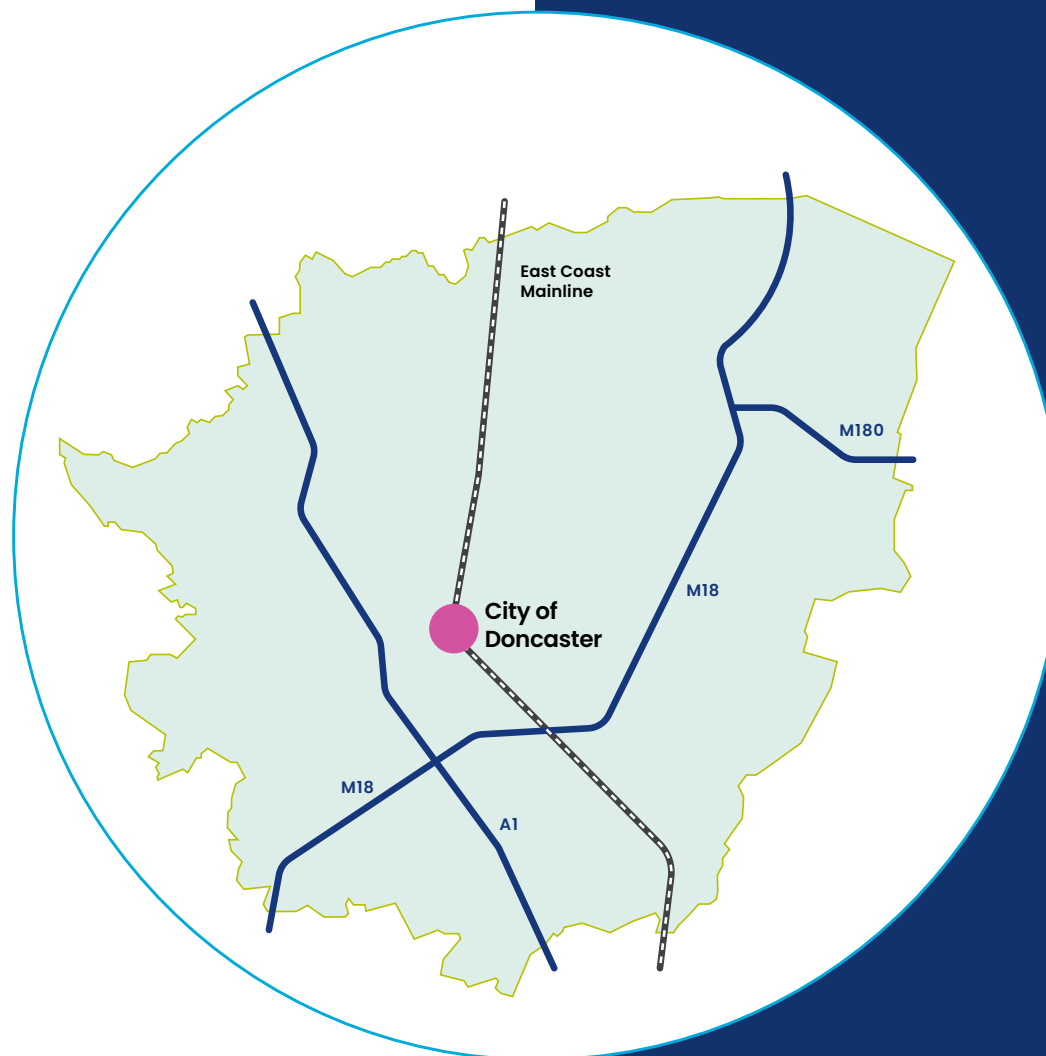
partners@cimspa.co.uk

LOCAL SKILLS ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD
WEBSITE PAGE [↗](#)

Doncaster – geographical area

The Doncaster Local Skills Accountability Board works within the boundaries of the City of Doncaster Council, a metropolitan borough with city status in South Yorkshire.

It includes the city of Doncaster, as well as the surrounding suburbs and many towns and villages, with a total population of 308,000. It is the largest metropolitan borough in England by area.



Foreword

In the face of evolving societal challenges such as poor healthy life expectancy, widespread economic inactivity and the burden of long-term health conditions, the need for people in Doncaster to be more physically active has never been more important.

Given the volume, diversity and complexity of participation in sports and physical activities, our workforce will be instrumental in co-designing, promoting and delivering programmes that encourage active living across all demographics.

By investing in the skills and capabilities of our workforce, we can foster a sustainable movement towards improved health, enriched lifestyle experiences and more comprehensive education. This approach will align with Doncaster's broader city goals and create excellent career pathways, equipping individuals with diverse skillsets that empower them to confidently deliver sports and physical activity.

To help maximise the opportunities afforded by sport and physical activity, key sector stakeholders have collaborated to produce a comprehensive sport and physical activity sector skills plan for Doncaster. It outlines

our collective aims and addresses how we can support our workforce to acquire the knowledge, skills and behaviours to address the region's challenges.

The actions detailed in this plan are backed by a data-driven approach, utilising comprehensive workforce diagnostic data gathered by CIMSPA along with input from board members and sector experts.

In the short term, our priority is to enhance the proficiency of our workforce, ensuring that professionals are well-equipped to promote and facilitate physical activity interventions. This responds to the growing appetite for collaboration across health and care, education, leisure, business and employment services to meet shared and sector-specific objectives.

Building on the significant progress already made in Doncaster, our long-term goal is to embed a sustainable culture of health and activity across the community. By leveraging local successes, addressing remaining challenges and developing a skilled and motivated workforce, this plan aims to further reduce inactivity rates and enhance overall community wellbeing.

Additionally, it will provide employers with the skilled workforce required to offer inclusive sport and physical activity opportunities that cater to diverse local communities and contribute to business success.

To ensure the plan's success, we will engage and collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders, including local government, employers in sport and physical activity, education and healthcare providers, and community organisations. By sharing this plan openly and encouraging transparent communication, we can leverage their influence and interest to promote informed decision-making and collective action.

This plan is a proactive step towards a healthier, more active and vibrant Doncaster.

Chris Wright

Head of Health and Leisure, Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust, Chair of Doncaster Local Skills Accountability Board

CIMSPA and local skills



The right training, delivered in the right place, at the right time.

Our collaborative local skills project is bringing together employers, education providers and employability-focused organisations to effectively and efficiently match supply and demand.

CIMSPA – the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity – is the chartered professional body for the sport and physical activity sector workforce.

In 2023, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport published “Get Active: A strategy for the future of sport and physical activity”. This strategy explicitly backs CIMSPA’s rollout of local-based skills and training: “We will support CIMSPA in the development of local skills improvement plans with full national coverage.”

In line with its “Uniting the Movement” strategy, Sport England has commissioned CIMSPA to help accelerate local-focused skills improvements within the sport and physical activity workforce.

CIMSPA already have a team of workforce development managers working at a local level across England, Wales and Scotland.

The CIMSPA workforce development manager within South Yorkshire works with the area’s local skills accountability board and with other organisations, carrying out skills diagnostics and helping to deliver the recommendations within this local skills plan.

[LOCAL SKILLS ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD WEBSITE PAGE](#)

Vision and context

Vision

“To recruit, support and retain a flexible, skilled and inclusive sport and physical activity workforce in Doncaster, enabling people to lead healthy, active lives and contributing to vibrant communities.”

To achieve this vision, we must ensure that the local sector workforce is motivated and valued. We will work with partners in health, education and local authorities to ensure that sport and physical activity is recognised as playing a key role in achieving broader regional targets.

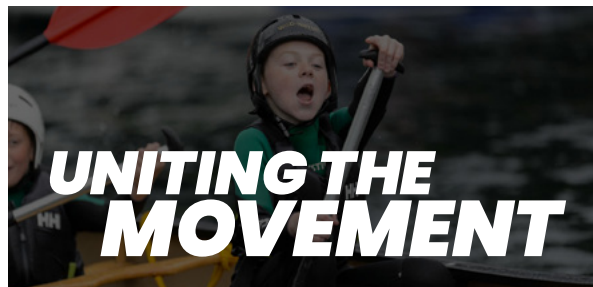


National context



DCMS strategy context

In August 2023, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport published “Get Active: A strategy for the future of sport and physical activity”. This strategy explicitly backs CIMSPA’s rollout of local-based skills and training: “We will support CIMSPA in the development of Local Skills Improvement Plans with full national coverage.”



Sport England strategy context

In 2021, Sport England launched Uniting the Movement, a 10-year strategy outlining the importance of the workforce in driving change to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity.

Uniting the Movement strategic priorities include:

- Unleashing the power of diversity
- Ensuring people have access to help from those who relate to their experiences
- Training and qualifications fit for the future
- Better career choices
- Organisations contributing more to the social fabric of their communities

With this, the sector’s workforce must be representative of the community it serves, creating sustainable careers, placing local employer and individual need at the heart of training and development. There is a collective responsibility to ensure the sport and physical activity sector is a valued and accessible career choice with progression for individuals.



The Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 context

The passing into law of the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 places employers at the heart of the skills system, making it easier for people to access the skills required to secure well paid jobs in industries with skills gaps.

Employers and training providers must work together to identify the skills needed locally and address the skills gaps. For further education colleges and training providers who access funding to deliver their training, it is now a legal requirement to work with employers to develop skills plans. Adult skills funding is being developed, and funding must align to the employer-identified priorities.

Local context

This local skills plan focuses on supporting the sport and physical activity workforce and its employers and educators. It also closely aligns with and reflects the work of several key strategies and initiatives already in place in Doncaster. By achieving the recommendations of this plan, the sport and physical activity sector will contribute to and complement regional priorities in skills, education and physical activity.

South Yorkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan 2023–2026

Encompassing three chambers of commerce – including Doncaster – the South Yorkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan was one of the trailblazers for regional skills programming.

Building on learning from its previous People and Skills Manifesto, the plan focuses on digital skills as a priority for the region.

While sport and physical activity has not been specifically incorporated within the South Yorkshire LSIP, there is a focus on current and future skills requirements and priorities over the coming years. This is reflected in the recent [research report into the lifestyle, leisure and cultural sector](#). The interest in understanding the sector provides an opportunity to align with the LSIP more closely as it evolves.

[SOUTH YORKSHIRE LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2023–2026](#)



City of Doncaster Council Education and Skills Strategy 2030

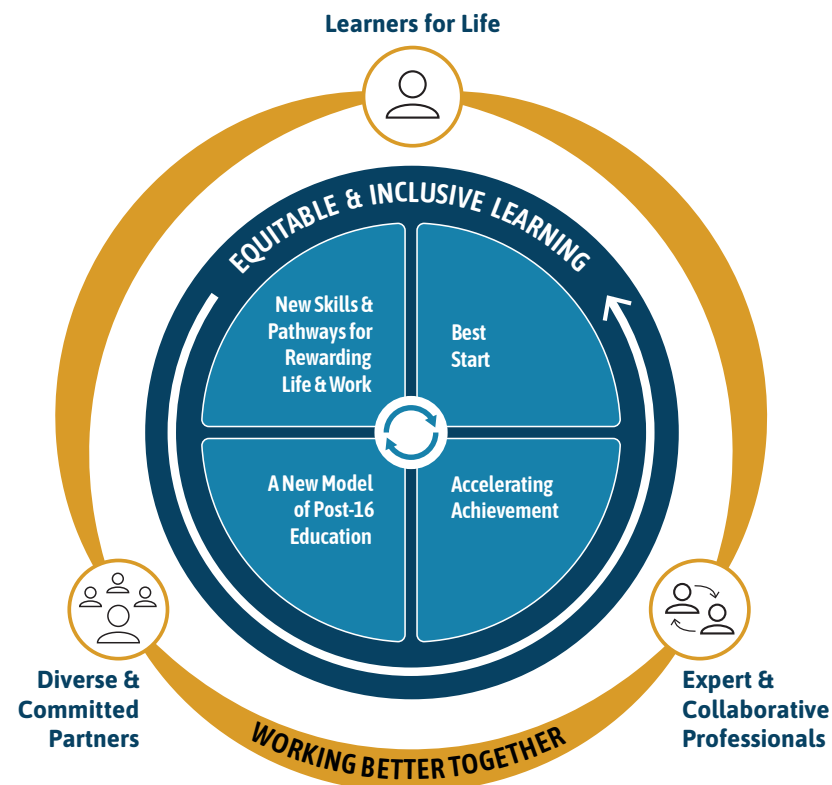
Doncaster City Council's education strategy aims to establish "equitable and inclusive lifelong learning that empowers people to fulfil their potential and thrive in life and work".

It focuses on five key priorities in order to achieve this:

- Providing solid foundations for children before starting and around school
- Accelerating achievement in key stages 2 to 4
- Reforming post-16 education with a focus on employability
- Creating more opportunities for adult learning and career development
- Ensuring that education is equitable and inclusive

This local skills plan will contribute to the education strategy through its recommendations around aligning education with industry and increasing the accessibility of jobs in the sector. By ensuring that sport and physical activity careers are achievable and attractive to young people, this plan will support the progress of the broader skills strategy in Doncaster.

CITY OF DONCASTER COUNCIL EDUCATION AND SKILLS STRATEGY 2030 [↗](#)



VISION AND CONTEXT

Get Doncaster Moving strategy

Get Doncaster Moving (GDM) is Doncaster's strategic approach to increasing levels of movement, physical activity and sport.

The organisation's strategy centres around aligning with the Doncaster Delivering Together priorities. Its themes are creating active environments, education, travel and workplaces, integration with health and care, communication and community outreach, and equitable access to active opportunities.

This local skills plan will support the GDM strategy by helping to develop a workforce equipped to deliver more inclusive physical activity programmes, including those aligned with healthcare needs.

[GET DONCASTER MOVING](#)



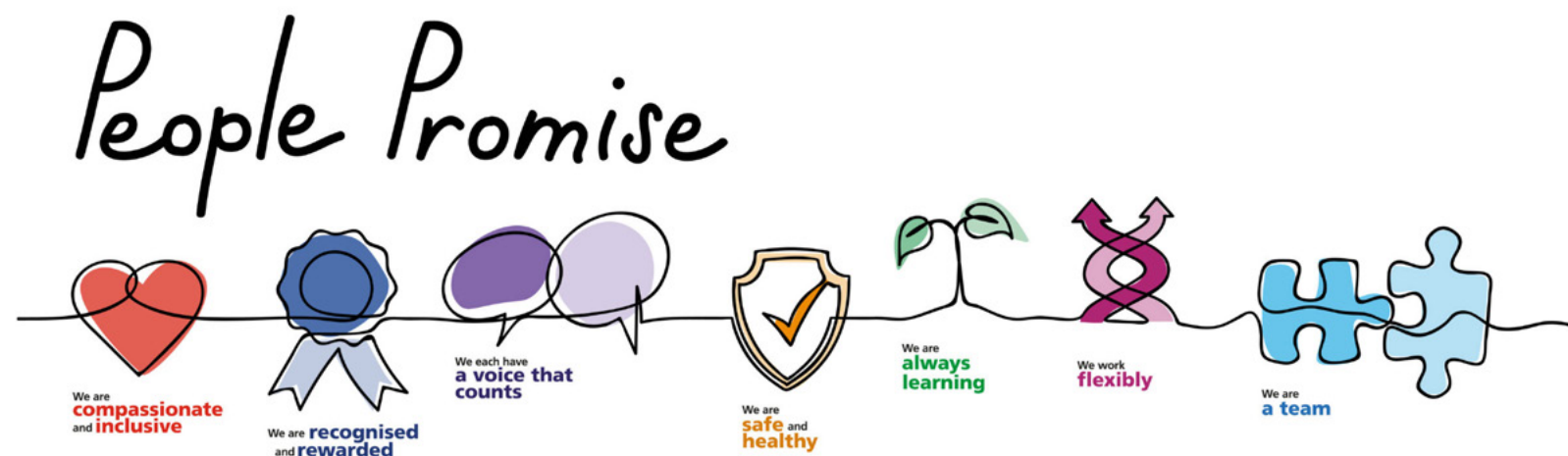
NHS Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals People Strategy 2023–2027

The Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals People Strategy 2023–2027 aims to improve employee experience and retention within the NHS in Doncaster in line with the national [NHS People Plan](#).

By supporting personal development and training and focusing on delivering effective management and leadership, the strategy intends to create a more sustainable career environment for existing employees.

This local skills plan intends to engage and support workforce development by encouraging leadership and exploring opportunities for innovative training. By learning from the NHS strategy and its achievements so far, the local skills accountability board intends to use it as a model for success in the sport and physical activity sector.

PEOPLE STRATEGY 2023–2027 [↗](#)



Themes, recommendations, partners and stakeholders

Themes

This plan has four themes.



Recommendations

This plan has three headline recommendations:

1 Integrate with health and care

Build a skilled and trusted workforce to integrate physical activity into health and care systems for effective long-term condition prevention, treatment and recovery.

2 Align education with industry

Align Doncaster's sport and physical activity education system with local community and business needs, providing students with industry-specific experience to be job-ready for the sector.

3 Raise awareness and accessibility

Raise awareness and accessibility of, and employability for, sport and physical activity careers to boost recruitment.



Partners and stakeholders

CIMSPA and the board will work collaboratively with a range of partners and stakeholders to deliver on the actions that underpin this plan's recommendations.

These include:

Education and training providers

Those delivering accredited training both sector/role specific and training around basic skills, knowledge and behaviours, for example further education colleges and higher education institutes.

Skills and sector partners

Those with knowledge and understanding of the sport and physical activity sector, with expertise to support both employers and training providers, for example Active Fusion and Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust, Active Partnerships, national governing bodies of sport and other system partners.

Employers and deployers

For example, leisure providers, coaching companies and gym owners.



Recommendations, actions and milestones

RECOMMENDATION 1

Integrate with health and care: Build a skilled and trusted workforce to integrate physical activity into health and care systems for effective long-term condition prevention, treatment and recovery.

Theme(s)	No.	2025–2028 actions	What does success look like?	How will it be measured?*
SUPPORT	1a	Strengthen existing partnerships that integrate physical activity into the management of long-term health conditions and preventative care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The sport and physical activity sector is represented on relevant boards and steering groups ▶ Increased representation of the health and care sector within the local skills accountability board ▶ Increased referrals by healthcare professionals to sport and physical activity services ▶ Improved knowledge and confidence among healthcare professionals in promoting physical activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust exercise referral data ▶ Get Doncaster Moving data ▶ Qualitative data
SUPPORT	1b	Increase awareness across health and care of physical activity as a trusted solution to address health inequalities and prevent long-term health conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The sector's workforce is recognised for its ability to support individuals transitioning between different levels of medical care, as well as those exiting the healthcare system ▶ Sport and physical activity organisations are championed in health and care advice, support and referral services ▶ More individuals are connected to sport and physical activity providers through exercise referral pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Local documentation and reporting ▶ Qualitative data
RECRUIT TRAIN SUPPORT	1c	Collaborate with the education sector to develop a pilot with a further education provider that aligns training with the requirements of health and care programme delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ More learners on sport and physical activity courses gaining healthcare-aligned roles on leaving education ▶ More sport and physical activity professionals with specialised healthcare qualifications ▶ Individuals who complete the further education course positively impact exercise referral participants ▶ Reduced need for further sport and physical activity professionals with healthcare specialisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Doncaster College course destination data ▶ Local workforce skills diagnostic data ▶ Qualitative data

*See [glossary below](#) for more information on specific terms.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Align education with industry: Align Doncaster's sport and physical activity education system with local community and business needs, providing students with industry-specific experience to be job-ready for the sector.

Theme(s)	No.	2025–2028 actions	What does success look like?	How will it be measured?*
TRAIN SUPPORT	2a	Develop a mapping tool to articulate sport and physical activity training, education and employment pathways across Doncaster.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Training and qualifications are linked to sustainable career pathways ▶ Identified gaps in provision and collaboration are addressed ▶ Increased understanding of available pathways boosts interest in sport and physical activity careers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Doncaster College course destination data ▶ Local workforce skills diagnostic data ▶ Qualitative data
RECRUIT TRAIN SUPPORT RETAIN	2b	Offer accessible and affordable qualifications and CPD across Doncaster.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Options for employability-relevant endorsed qualifications to include in training courses have been explored ▶ Micro-credential courses are delivered to support individuals and employers with flexible endorsed training to suit their needs ▶ Greater workforce retention due to clear career progression routes and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Local workforce skills diagnostic data (reduction in skills needed) ▶ Local documentation and reporting
RECRUIT SUPPORT RETAIN	2c	Work with employers to create more work placement opportunities that develop employability skills and industry awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Sport and physical activity employers are engaged with education providers to increase accessibility of work placement opportunities in Doncaster ▶ Employers effectively share work placement opportunities with education providers ▶ Sport and physical activity organisations are delivering quality work placements that support young people to gain skills that enhance their work readiness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Local workforce skills diagnostic data ▶ Education provider work placement qualitative data ▶ Doncaster College course destination data
RECRUIT SUPPORT	2d	Increase the number of sport and physical activity apprenticeships available in the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Local employers are equipped to offer apprenticeships ▶ Apprenticeships in sport and physical activity are available in Doncaster ▶ Apprentices are retained as employees resulting in filling skills gaps ▶ Apprenticeship programmes support people from underserved communities as an alternative route into employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Local workforce skills diagnostic data ▶ Apprenticeship data from local providers

*See [glossary below](#) for more information on specific terms.

RECOMMENDATIONS, ACTIONS AND MILESTONES

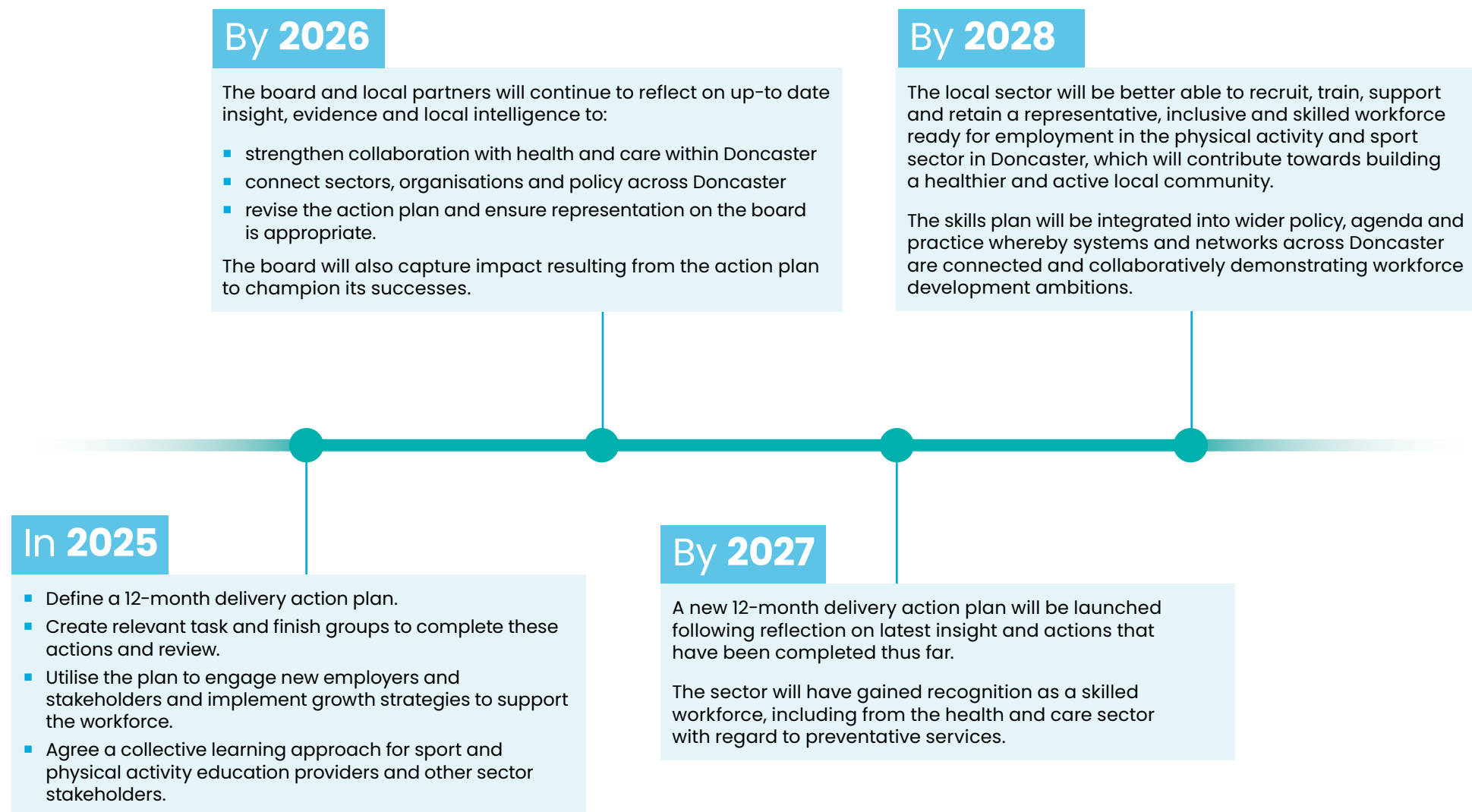
RECOMMENDATION 3

Raise awareness and accessibility: Raise awareness and accessibility of, and employability for, sport and physical activity careers to boost recruitment.

Theme(s)	No.	2025–2028 actions	What does success look like?	How will it be measured?*
RECRUIT TRAIN SUPPORT	3a	Support partnerships between employers and employment and skills services to develop sport and physical activity employment opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Widespread awareness of career pathways in sport and physical activity ▶ People are more attracted to sector careers ▶ Improved workforce recruitment due to more employment opportunities ▶ More opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to work in sport and physical activity ▶ More economically inactive people pursue sport and physical activity career pathways as a vehicle into employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Doncaster Culture and Leisure Trust recruitment data ▶ Local workforce skills diagnostic data ▶ Local documentation and reporting
RECRUIT	3b	Promote the diverse career opportunities within sport and physical activity, particularly roles aligned with healthcare.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Career explorers understand how the sector's professional standards and CIMSPA professional status support their career progression and specialisation in healthcare support roles ▶ Raised profile of the role sport and physical activity can play in improving health and enhancing wellbeing ▶ Increased recruitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Number of CIMSPA professional status holders in Doncaster ▶ Local skills diagnostic data
RECRUIT SUPPORT RETAIN	3c	Identify transferable skills and behaviours from outside the sector aligned to sport and physical activity roles to boost recruitment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Individuals from outside the sector understand their transferable skillset can gain employment in the sport and physical activity sector ▶ Increased recruitment of career changers ▶ Employers understand transferable skills that can be applied within sector occupations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Local workforce skills diagnostic data ▶ Qualitative data

*See [glossary below](#) for more information on specific terms.

Milestones



CASE STUDY

Speakup Self Advocacy – diversity and inclusion

Speakup is a Rotherham-based advocacy organisation run by and for people with learning disabilities and autistic people. It works with local councils, educational institutions and healthcare providers to improve accessibility and inclusivity of regional services as well as to create employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities and autistic people.

In collaboration with other learning disability-focused organisations in South Yorkshire, Speakup founded the Employment is for Everyone social movement in the region. This has helped to deliver supported internships and pathways into paid employment for those with learning disabilities.

The support that Speakup provides is both life-changing for those involved and gives direct value to the people of Doncaster's active wellbeing through a more diverse and inclusive sport and physical activity workforce.

How the Doncaster LSAB will align with Speakup

Showcase the sector to this cohort

As part of this plan, the local skills accountability board will work with Speakup to ensure that people with learning disabilities and autism in the Doncaster area fully understand how the sport and physical activity sector offers great potential careers for them.

Connect employers with diverse and inclusive talent

The board will also focus on connecting local employers to Speakup's audiences and on supporting work placement opportunities. This will help these people to get the skills and experience they need to gain employment in our sector, both in frontline and support chain occupations.

Success with these initiatives will help to ensure both that the local sport and physical activity workforce is more diverse and inclusive and that people with learning disabilities and autistic people in the local area can play a part in the region's economic and active wellbeing success.

Impact on individuals

Doncaster LSAB member organisations are already committed to supporting everyone, whatever their circumstances, into employment in sport and physical activity.

Here's what a young career starter supported by Speakup who has autism, ADHD, dyspraxia, a speech and language disorder and mental health issues relating to early life trauma said about their recent experience:

"I am really enjoying working as an apprentice golf greenkeeper. It combines my love of being outside in nature, doing physical hard work, and my love of sport. I find being part of a small team works very well for me. I enjoy the daily routine, but also the interest of how this changes through the seasons. There's always something new to learn.

I think that someone else with similar disabilities and similar interests to me would also enjoy this type of job. The nature of the work is very grounding and has helped me with my mental health and my confidence."

Find out more

[SPEAKUP SELF ADVOCACY](#) ↗

["EMPLOYMENT IS FOR EVERYONE" SOCIAL MOVEMENT](#) ↗

Wider alignment with local skills work

This local skills plan aligns with several other regional projects that extend beyond the sport and physical activity sector. By working in alignment and collaboration with these initiatives, the Doncaster local skills accountability board will be able to achieve its recommendations for the sector workforce and contribute to broader local skills development and health improvement.

Yorkshire Sport Foundation

The Yorkshire Sport Foundation is the active partnership covering South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire. It is a National Lottery-funded charity dedicated to harnessing the power of sport and physical activity to transform lives, unite communities and address inequalities.

Serving nine districts – including Doncaster – the foundation's vision is to create a vibrant, healthy and prosperous Yorkshire through everyone moving more. To do this they connect, influence and support the work of local, regional and national organisations, offering initiatives encompassing a range of programmes aimed at increasing participation in physical activity. The organisation also supports community projects and works to develop skills among individuals and organisations.

Through these efforts, the Yorkshire Sport Foundation aims to make physical activity accessible and enjoyable for all, ultimately contributing to the overall health and prosperity of the region.

Yorkshire Sport Foundation has been part of the work of the Doncaster Sport and Physical Activity Local Skills Accountability Board from the outset:

Establishment of the LSAB

Yorkshire Sport Foundation was the first organisation to respond to the need for a local skills accountability board (LSAB) in the region and played a leading role in setting it up, laying the groundwork for collaborative, place-based skills development in Doncaster.

Strategic connectivity

The foundation actively facilitated connections between the LSAB and key stakeholders, ensuring that the board remained embedded within wider regional strategies.

Aligning physical activity with skills development

Yorkshire Sport Foundation brought valuable insights into how sport and physical activity aligns with broader skills strategy in the region, particularly around workforce development, inclusion and community engagement.

Driving inclusion and equity

Yorkshire Sport Foundation works with the LSAB to champion equitable growth of the sport and physical activity sector workforce through incorporation of inclusivity initiatives in skills interventions such as this local skills plan.

Evidence sharing

The foundation contributed relevant data, insight and case studies of best practice to inform local skills accountability board priorities.

YORKSHIRE SPORT FOUNDATION [↗](#)

South Yorkshire Combined Authority Skills Strategy

South Yorkshire's Skills Strategy, established and overseen by the region's mayoral combined authority, revolves around three central missions to improve skills across the county. These are to move those far from the labour market towards work, to raise core knowledge and skills attainment and to increase the supply of a high-skilled workforce.

As an ongoing programme, the strategy will be refreshed after four years.

[SOUTH YORKSHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY SKILLS STRATEGY](#)

South Yorkshire Careers Hub

The South Yorkshire Careers Hub works in partnership with the Careers and Enterprise Company and the county's local authorities to connect education providers, employers and other employability-focused organisations in South Yorkshire to improve career opportunities and support for young people.

[SOUTH YORKSHIRE CAREERS HUB](#)

Business Doncaster

Business Doncaster is an initiative aimed to grow business investment in the Doncaster area. It offers support, workshops and networking events to businesses of all sizes. It is connected to the Advance Employment Hub, a funded project that supports individuals and employers with careers advice and skills development.

[BUSINESS DONCASTER](#)

[ADVANCE EMPLOYMENT HUB](#)

Doncaster Health and Wellbeing Strategy

City of Doncaster Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy aims to improve the overall health and wellbeing of its residents by focusing on three key missions: reducing health inequalities, supporting healthy ageing and creating healthy environments. The strategy is overseen by the Doncaster Health and Wellbeing Board, which provides a forum for joint working and collaboration between local partners.

[DONCASTER HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY](#)

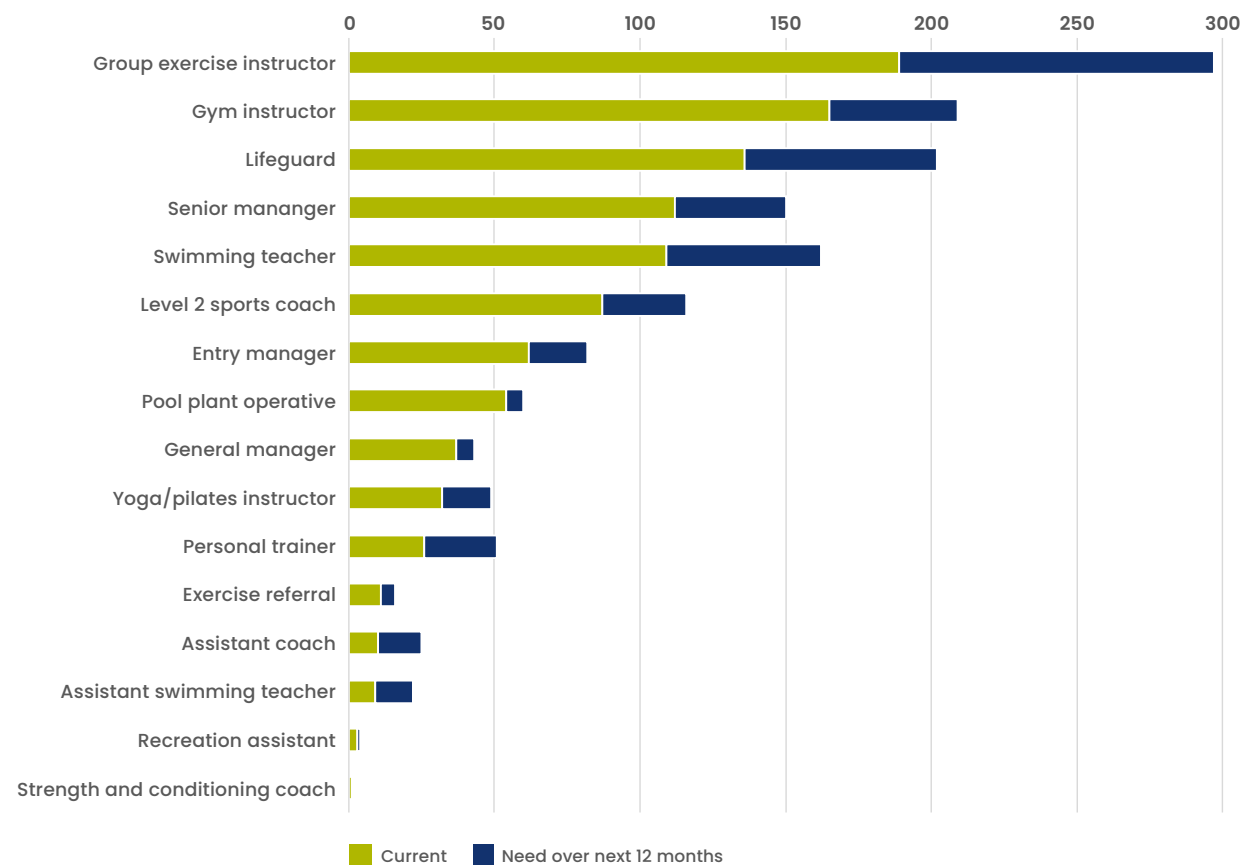
Doncaster Fairness and Wellbeing Commission

The Doncaster Fairness and Wellbeing Commission was established by the City of Doncaster Council to identify and tackle barriers that prevent equal access to opportunities and resources in Doncaster. It has gathered evidence of lived experience in the region and provided a strategic assessment of challenges faced. Local organisations will use the commission's work to develop policies and actions that improve equity and wellbeing across Doncaster.

[DONCASTER FAIRNESS AND WELLBEING COMMISSION](#) 

Data and insight that have informed this work

Current and future workforce requirements (by job role)



Source: CIMSPA local workforce skills diagnostic data from 30 sport and physical activity operators, collected August 2023 – June 2024

This data highlights that roles such as group exercise instructor (189 currently employed, 108 needed), gym instructor (165 current, 44 needed) and lifeguard (136 current, 66 needed) are among the most employed and most needed in the local sector.

Many roles that show high levels of employment – group exercise instructor, swimming teacher and lifeguard – are often part-time or zero-hour contracts. These roles continue to be in high demand due to the nature of the roles and high turnover.

Unlike national patterns, the majority of personal trainer roles captured locally are full-time positions within larger leisure operators. This is likely due to limited engagement with smaller businesses and self-employed professionals during data collection, meaning some segments of the workforce may be underrepresented.

Despite these limitations, the data has been crucial in helping to shape a workforce pipeline between education providers and a major local employer. It is supporting targeted efforts to align training and qualifications with current and future demand, ensuring a more responsive local workforce.

Health and wellbeing in Doncaster – a path to improvement

Sport England reports a £9.3 billion saving in healthcare costs through physical activity, highlighting its crucial role in preventing chronic diseases¹.

- **Life expectancy and health:** Doncaster's life expectancy is 76.8 (M) and 80.6 (F), which has led to a focus on improving healthy life years².
- **Physical activity:** Encouraging movement is key, as 48,900 adults report inactivity³.
- **Obesity and preventable conditions:** 73.3% of adults are overweight, but prevention strategies can reduce risks².
- **Heart health:** Strengthening access to preventive treatments can cut cardiovascular disease mortality⁴.
- **Diabetes and musculoskeletal conditions:** Awareness and early intervention can lower rates above the national average².
- **Mental wellbeing:** Being active generates a £2,500 wellbeing boost per person¹.

Education and career pathways in South Yorkshire

- **Education and careers:** 92% of KS4 pupils move on to further education, training or employment⁵.
- **Qualifications and workforce:** 55% of working-age adults hold Level 3+ qualifications, with opportunities to improve⁵.
- **Inclusive career entry:** Many sport and physical activity careers offer entry-level roles requiring no or few formal qualifications and accessible pathways starting at Level 2 certification³.

Demographics and physical activity in Doncaster

- **Population and diversity:** Doncaster's population is becoming more diverse, with a growing Other White (5.7%) and African (0.8%) population. Multi-ethnic households have also increased to 5%⁶.
- **Employment trends:** In 2021, 58.3% of adults were economically active, while 41.7% were inactive, reflecting opportunities for workforce engagement⁶.
- **Physical activity levels:** 30.5% of adults and 25.7% of children are physically inactive, engaging in less than 30 minutes of exercise per week. This highlights the importance of accessible fitness initiatives to encourage movement across all age groups⁷.

DATA AND INSIGHT THAT HAVE INFORMED THIS WORK

Doncaster's economy

- **Improving financial stability:** 35.2% of children in Doncaster live in poverty, with half in working households. Support for lone parents and diverse families is key to progress².
- **Employment growth:** In Doncaster, the unemployment rate decreased between 2022 and 2023 from 3.9% to 3.2%⁸.
- **Workforce health and wellbeing:** Economic inactivity due to health conditions (5.4%) and disability (7.3%) highlights the need for inclusive employment strategies².
- **Preventing economic loss:** Addressing preventable illness could recover billions in productivity and tax revenue, reinforcing the value of health-focused policies^{1 2}.

By **expanding employment access, supporting families** and **improving workplace health**, Doncaster is on the path to a **stronger, more inclusive economy**.

Other relevant insight

City of Doncaster Fairness and Wellbeing
Commission Report 2024

[CITY OF DONCASTER FAIRNESS AND WELLBEING COMMISSION REPORT 2024](#)

References

- 1 [LOCAL AREA INSIGHTS AREA REPORTS, SPORT ENGLAND](#)
- 2 [TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITIES STRATEGY 2023–2028, NHS DONCASTER AND BASSETLAW TEACHING HOSPITALS](#)
- 3 [DATA HUB DEMOGRAPHICS DASHBOARD, YORKSHIRE SPORT FOUNDATION](#)
- 4 [CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE \(CVD\) PRIMARY CARE INTELLIGENCE PACKS, NHS DONCASTER CLINICAL COMMISSIONING GROUP](#)
- 5 [SOUTH YORKSHIRE SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT EVIDENCE BASE, SOUTH YORKSHIRE MAYORAL COMBINED AUTHORITY](#)
- 6 [TEAM DONCASTER – DEMOGRAPHICS](#)
- 7 [GET DONCASTER MOVING – OUR IMPACT IN COMMUNITIES 2023/24](#)
- 8 [EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC INACTIVITY IN DONCASTER DATA, OFFICE FOR NATIONAL STATISTICS](#)

The scope of the sport and physical activity sector

Sector and industries definitions

The sport and physical activity sector:

“Everyone working in the sport and physical activity workforce in the industries and occupations detailed below and overleaf.”

Sector industries

Industry definitions from CIMSPA for the purpose of this strategy are shown in the table (right).

Paid/voluntary workforce

This sport and physical activity sector local skills plan aims to be broad enough in its outcomes to not need to be separated by employment/deployment status.

Industry	Definition
Exercise and fitness	Services, activities and venues that predominantly improve participant physical fitness.
Community sport	Sport/skill-based services, activities and venues that increase participation and develop skill, sometimes targeting under-represented groups and inequalities.
Leisure operations	Services, activities and venues that predominantly improve participation in physical activity.
Health and wellbeing	Holistic services and activities that promote improvements across all aspects of health, sometimes involving health care and other non-sector professionals.
Adventure sport	Activities, services and venues both indoor and outdoor improving participation in sport perceived as having a high level of risk.
Performance sport	Competitive sport and activities including those in which athletes receive payment for their performance; professional, semi-professional and grass roots sport.

Occupations

Introduction

“Occupations” are a standardised set of job roles that cover the whole of the sport and physical activity sector. For example, what some operators might call a “leisure attendant” is considered to be part of the “recreation assistant” occupation.

Definitions

- Frontline – occupations in sport and physical activity directly servicing the needs of the participant.
- Support chain – occupations in sport and physical activity servicing the needs of the front line and/or the facilities.
- Extended workforce – enablers and influencers of sport and physical activity who are not part of the sector workforce.

Frontline occupations

Sector workforce Occupations aligned with CIMSPA professional standards	Gym Instructor, core group exercise instructor, coach, coaching assistant, personal trainer, strength and conditioning trainer, pilates based matwork instructor, yoga instructor, aspiring manager, entry manager, health navigator, swimming teacher, lifeguard, recreation assistant, assistant swimming teacher, sports therapist*, nutritionist*, sport nutritionist*, physiotherapist*.
Broader workforce	Receptionist, bar staff, kitchen and catering assistant, waiting staff, cleaning assistant, domestic assistant, sales and retail assistant, chef.

*Occupations supported directly by other professional bodies

Support chain occupations

Sector workforce Occupations aligned with CIMSPA professional standards	Entry manager, general manager, senior manager, tutor, assessor, coach developer, health navigator, pool plant operative.
Broader workforce	Sport development officer, researcher, teacher, administrative occupations, finance occupations, health and safety, quality manager, environmental manager, auditor, sports media and reporters, general assistant, maintenance operative (examples).

Extended workforce

Enablers Enablers of sport and physical activity who don't necessarily hold a CIMSPA-recognised professional qualification	Primary school teachers, teaching assistants, PE teachers, childcare workers, carers, sport event staff/volunteers, activity group leaders (e.g. scouts, guides etc), officiating.
Influencers Influencers of sport and physical activity who don't necessarily hold a sector-specific professional qualification	Parents, sport role models, sport and fitness models, sport and fitness social media influencers.

Glossary

Business skills diagnostic

CIMSPA has developed and launched a business diagnostic process through its workforce development team.

Sole traders and micro-enterprises of fewer than 10 employees make up 89% percent of the businesses in our sector, including over 73,000 freelancers and sole traders.

The diagnostic focuses in particular on this business type – building an understanding of their business needs and exploring how we can position our product offer and partner support to meet these.

CIMSPA Data Lens

The CIMSPA Data Lens is a real-time intelligence dashboard for the UK's sport and physical activity sector.

The Data Lens system uses web-scraping APIs to open access data and machine learning, all segmented through real-world definitions specific to the sport and physical activity sector.

It can be interrogated specifically in niche areas such as exercise and fitness or community sport, or even specific geographies at a county or town level.

[DATA LENS](#) 

Local documentation and reporting

Throughout the lifespan of this local skills plan, CIMSPA and the local skills accountability board will look to incorporate any new sector-specific data created by local stakeholders that helps us understand the impact of our actions.

For example – employability and skills reports, survey results and impact reports.

Local skills accountability board (LSAB)

A group of local education and training, skills/employability, health and employer stakeholders across a region and within the sport and physical activity sector.

LSABs are co-ordinated and managed by CIMSPA, enabled by Sport England and National Lottery funding. An LSAB is collectively responsible for the creation, implementation and renewal of a sport

Local skills improvement plan

Local skills improvement plans (LSIPs) provide an agreed set of actionable priorities that stakeholders in a local area can get behind to drive change.

LSIPs:

- place employers at the heart of local skills systems
- facilitate direct and dynamic working arrangements between employers, providers and local stakeholders
- help learners gain the skills they need to get good jobs and increase their prospects.

Each LSIP has a designated Employer Representative Body (ERB), appointed by the Department for Education.

This document is NOT an LSIP.

Local workforce skills diagnostic data

CIMSPA has a team of workforce development managers working across England, Scotland and Wales.

These workforce development managers are engaged in collecting workforce skills intelligence directly from employers in their local area, through a detailed and standardised workforce skills diagnostic survey.

This data can then be segmented at the level of the local skills accountability board for use in better understanding local workforce needs and in monitoring the success of workforce improvement initiatives.

Micro-enterprises

Micro-enterprises are very small organisations with 1–9 employees and a turnover or balance sheet total of less than €2 million.

Professional status

Professional status is a defined understanding of the level at which an individual can apply their skills, knowledge and experience to working in the sport and physical activity sector. Professional statuses are issued by CIMSPA as a chartered professional body and recognised regulator.

Qualitative data

Qualitative data is non-numeric, descriptive information that gathers experiences and perceptions. It includes case studies, feedback via surveys and forms, and interviews.

SME (small- and medium-sized enterprises)

An SME is any organisation that has fewer than 250 employees and a turnover of less than €50 million or a balance sheet total less than €43 million.

Sport and physical activity sector local skills plan

This document is a sport and physical activity sector local skills plan. It is a local skills plan specific to the sport and physical activity sector in a specific region.

The plan has been created by the local skills accountability board (see above), coordinated and managed by CIMSPA.

The Sport and Physical Activity Sector Local Skills Accountability Board – Doncaster



PUBLISHED BY:

The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity
Incorporated by Royal Charter Charity Registration No. 1144545 www.cimspa.co.uk

November 2025