



# Community Leisure UK **Strategy 2020–2023**



# Contents

<b>1: Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2: About Community Leisure UK</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3: Strategic links &amp; policy contributions</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4: Context</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5: Our aims, objectives &amp; outputs</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>6: Implementing the strategy &amp; measuring our success</b>	<b>15</b>

# To achieve our vision and mission, our priority aims for the next 3 years are:

AIM 1

## MEMBERS ARE THRIVING & VALUED

Ensure that the community leisure and cultural trust sector is visible, thriving and valued for its contribution to public benefit.

AIM 2

## ORGANISATIONALLY SUSTAINABLE

Be a valued, effective and sustainable membership association.

AIM 3

## MEMBERS ARE RESILIENT

Further build the resilience of community leisure and cultural trusts.

### VISION

Our members are the leading providers of accessible leisure and culture services.

### MISSION

To be the recognised voice of leisure and culture trusts across the UK.

### OUR VALUES

Collaborative

Passionate

Professional

Transparent

# 1: Introduction

This strategy sets out the vision, mission and priorities of Community Leisure UK for the next three years. It summarises our approach to leading and supporting our members in a way which is designed to contribute to the achievement of their own objectives as well as ours.

This strategy is primarily focused on communicating, the longer term focus and aims of the association to our members. Equally, it is hoped that the strategy will help build the understanding from and engagement with partners and stakeholders.

Importantly, as with all our work, this strategy is member-led. It has been created to respond to members' needs, mitigate landscape risks, and help members to grasp opportunities. Building Community Leisure UK's resilience is a key part of the strategy.



# 2: About Community Leisure UK

## Who are we and what do we do?

**Community Leisure UK is a unique, powerful and pro-active membership association that specialises in representing charities and social enterprises delivering public leisure and culture services across England, Scotland and Wales. These organisations are commonly called trusts.**

We care about the future of public leisure and culture services and are passionate about the trust model being an effective and community-focused delivery partner.

We engage with, support and represent over 100 charitable leisure and culture trusts. We are the collective voice of our members and exist to champion, position, strengthen and protect the trust model; showcase its benefits; and inform policy. We do this through:

1. Providing a nationwide platform enabling members to meet peers and access strategic partners to find best practice solutions to common problems and recommendations to tackle future industry developments, and
2. Using the power of the collective membership to represent, reach, influence and promote the charitable trust model benefits at a national level, to inform policy and increase understanding of the trust model.

### Our governance

We are governed by a Board of 12 directors who are mostly elected from within and by their fellow members. The Chair and two of the director posts are open to being independent and non-members.

Our Board is entirely comprised of non executive directors who are all leaders of member leisure and culture trusts across the UK. The Board give their time to Community Leisure UK for free, for the purpose of furthering the community trust model and ethos.

The Board meet five times per year, three of which are before formal company General Meetings or the Annual General Meeting. The Board has one committee which is the Staff and Remuneration Committee.

In Scotland, there is a Community Leisure Scotland Executive. This is not a legally constituted or responsible structure. This Executive provides a strategic support and guidance role to Community Leisure UK's work in Scotland. The colleagues sitting on the Executive are elected by the members in Scotland.

### Our legal structure

Community Leisure UK is the trading name for The Sports and Recreation Trusts Association (05932294) (known as Sporta), and is a company limited by guarantee. In early 2018 the organisation invested in insight and research with Fireworks Consultancy and Netfluential to understand the proposition of member trusts to customers; understand the proposition of Sporta to stakeholders and members; and identify recommendations for members and Sporta.

This research led to the recommendation and subsequent approval by members, of creating the trading name of Community Leisure UK for the association. Equally, the insight has led to the re positioning of member trusts in the landscape, shaped the communications work of Community Leisure UK, and importantly helped to secure conversations and engagement with critical stakeholders and policy makers.



# Who are our members and what do they do?

**Community Leisure UK's members manage a diverse and extensive portfolio of facilities and deliver vital community services. They are rooted in their local communities and pride themselves on providing inclusive, supportive and welcoming environments, and offering participation, training and employment opportunities.**

Our members have no shareholders or controlling company, are non-profit-distributing and governed by skill-based Trustee boards made up of local people. Any profits they generate are re-invested into the provision of high-quality leisure and cultural services and facilities. Trusts tend to be Companies Limited by Guarantee with charitable status, Community Interest Companies, Society with charitable status, or Charitable incorporated organisations.

The trust model is built on a founding principle of cross-subsidy; to support those in most need. Trusts:

- cross-subsidise services i.e. more profitable leisure activities subsidise some non-income generating activities;
- cross-subsidise individuals i.e. using profit generated to support reduced cost or free activities for those with less disposable income.

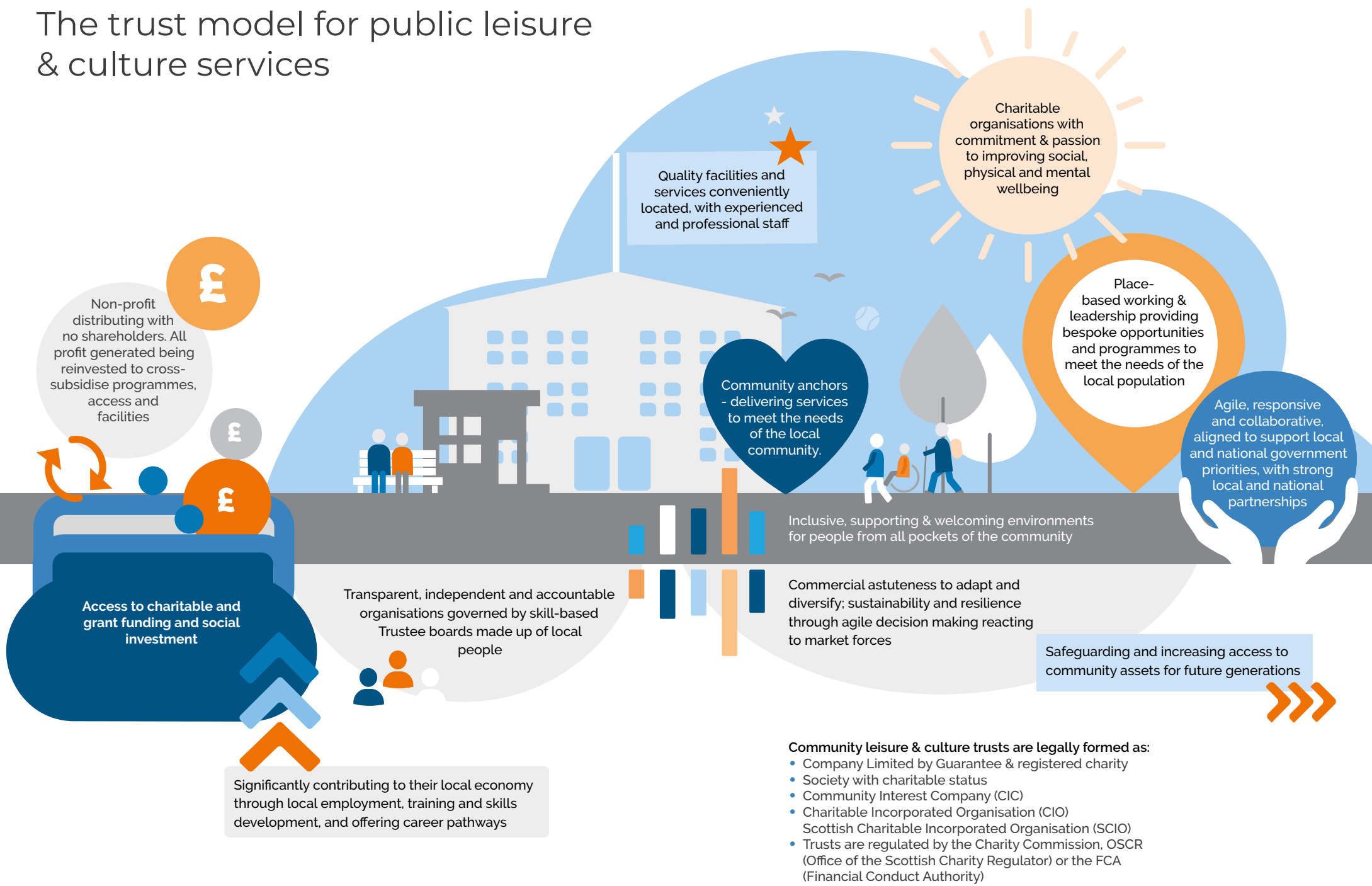
Our members are passionate about and committed to meeting local needs and improving the social, physical and mental wellbeing of their communities. Trusts are incredibly and beautifully diverse in the facilities they run, from libraries and heritage buildings, to swimming pools, parks, theatres, pitches, health hubs, lidos, museums, soft play centres and gyms. They are equally as diverse in the services they deliver, including health checks, falls prevention, cancer rehabilitation, exercise referral, books on prescription,

Across the UK there has been an expansion of the general portfolio of work of trusts with taking on more diverse community assets. In the past members have traditionally worked with leisure, sport and physical activity services and facilities. However, over the past years, there has been a stark increase in members managing cultural facilities and organising arts, heritage and cultural activities for the benefit of their communities; recognising their diversity and supporting community development and cohesion.

In particular, members have strong roots in safeguarding heritage buildings, and managing libraries, community centres, town halls, theatres, and community museums and galleries. The increase in their portfolio of work is testament for members being strong community anchor organisations; organising activities for the benefit of their diverse communities and contributing to their physical, mental and cultural wellbeing.



# The trust model for public leisure & culture services



- Community leisure & culture trusts are legally formed as:**
- Company Limited by Guarantee & registered charity
  - Society with charitable status
  - Community Interest Company (CIC)
  - Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
  - Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)
- Trusts are regulated by the Charity Commission, OSCR (Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator) or the FCA (Financial Conduct Authority)

# 3: Strategic links & policy contributions

## Members' Strategic Links

**The trust sector is agile, forward-thinking, innovative, collaborative, astute and resilient.**

The charitable and social aims of our members are closely aligned with the priorities of a wide range of leading policy-making organisations. Those such organisations with whom Community Leisure UK engage with, and who decide and create policy are noted in the table on right:

UK WIDE	ENGLAND	SCOTLAND	WALES
Charity Finance Group Charity Tax Group CIMSPA Co-Operatives UK Fair Tax Mark Keep Scotland Beautiful Local authorities Members Parliament Social Enterprise UK	APSE Arts Council England Crown Commercial Service Culture & Leisure Officers Association (CLOA) Department for Health and Social Care Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport Department for Housing, Communities & Local Government Government Inclusive Economy Unit Libraries Connected LGA NCVO NHS England Public Health England Sport England	Active Scotland Division Audit Scotland COSLA Creative Scotland Improvement Service Members Scottish Parliament Observatory for Sport Scotland OSCR Public Health Scotland Relevant Scottish Parliament Committees and Cross Party Groups SCVO Sportscotland SLIC Scottish Towns Partnership	Arts Council of Wales Assembly Members Future Generations Commissioner's Office Public Health Wales Sport Wales WLGA Welsh Government Division for Arts, Culture and Sport

Community Leisure UK work alongside and collaborate with multiple partners across the UK. These collaborations are vitally important to Community Leisure UK and for member leisure and culture trusts too.



# Policy Contributions

**Our members' independence, agile nature and understanding of their communities enable them to react quickly to meet local needs and respond to wider market forces. They work proactively and collaboratively with a wide variety of national and community-focussed organisations to achieve outcomes with high social value.**

This approach enables members to develop thriving, local, community leisure and cultural services that deliver real impacts on the following national and local policy priorities:

- Improving physical health and wellbeing
- Reducing health inequalities
- Improving mental health and wellbeing
- Place making and contributing to local economies
- Local and national skills development, jobs and training
- Supporting community cohesion and engagement
- Reducing crime and anti-social behaviour
- Delivering and protecting public services
- Reducing social isolation and loneliness
- Reducing childhood obesity
- Proactively reducing environmental impact
- Safeguarding local cultural and community assets and making them accessible to the community
- Supporting local community groups - and organisations, businesses / entrepreneurs, and artists

The agile and responsive nature of the trust model also allows members to quickly adapt to changing policies and priority areas, reflecting changes in the political landscape.



# 4: Context

The work of Community Leisure UK has always been built on members' needs. Through listening and responding to, and proactively foreseeing, needs, opportunities and challenges. Consultation, engagement and in-person contact with members defines the work and actions of the association, whose role it is to respond to these and support member trusts as best possible.

Working across Scotland, England, and Wales, Community Leisure UK recognises and appreciates the individual opportunities and challenges that these different national environments bring to workstreams and how that impacts on members' own services. Importantly, the work of Community Leisure UK will continue to respond to nation-specific opportunities and challenges when and if they arise to support the development of the leisure and cultural trust sector.

This section describes some of the strategic opportunities for leisure and culture trusts across the UK. These opportunities have influenced the context of the strategy, and respond to challenges that the sector is facing. Section 5 builds from here and articulates the aims, objectives and outputs that are designed to positively reflect these opportunities and how these can be enabled, and proactively respond to challenges.



## AIM 1

# Members are thriving and valued

Ensure that the community leisure and cultural trust sector is visible, thriving and valued for its contribution to public benefit.

## PROPOSED OPPORTUNITIES

- Public leisure and culture services positioned and recognised as important for local communities and their wellbeing.
- Trusts' culture and values are driven by prioritising social and environmental impact, and community needs.
- Trusts' articulate their economic and social contribution to their place.
- Local authorities, health and social care partners commission services from trusts, because trusts are part of the solution to the increasing demand for services across the life course.
- Trusts are present and willing partners with the ability to work in partnership with local authorities, health, social care and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors locally.
- Re focus procurement to truly prioritise social value, environmental impact and community needs.
- Develop the relationship with a local partner that focuses on both sides being enablers, strategic involvement of the trust, relationship based on trust, collaboration, involvement, open-book accounting and transparency of workforce arrangements
- Trusts have clear and transparent trading structures, and reinvest profit back into facilities and services.

## AIM 2

### Members are resilient

Further build the resilience of community leisure and cultural trusts.

#### PROPOSED OPPORTUNITIES

- Co-develop new or redeveloped innovative community focused integrated services and facilities with local partners and decision makers.
- Embed data and capture of insight to shape business decision making to deliver greater impact and drive efficiencies.
- Trusts' ability to diversify services, activities and revenue streams focused on community need.
- Accessing social investment and maximising charitable reliefs and opportunities for giving and recovery.
- Trusts' role in supporting the redevelopment of town centres and high streets by being community hubs and places for engagement, interaction and supporting wellbeing.
- Maximise peer to peer learning opportunities within the Community Leisure UK network.

## AIM 3

# Organisationally sustainable

Be a valued, effective and sustainable membership association.

## PROPOSED OPPORTUNITIES

- The UK-wide organisation solely focused on representing, developing and sustaining charities, societies and CICs in public leisure and culture.
- Continue to positively engage and support policy maker's objectives.
- Work collaboratively with significant partner organisations.
- Be present, lead and contribute to public leisure and culture service discussions and debates. Equally, fill the void where no or limited discussion or debate is taking place.
- Develop further evidence-based materials to articulate the value and abilities of the trust model.
- Continue to prioritise closeness to member trusts – hearing and listening to their needs, challenges and opportunities.
- Ensure Community Leisure UK continually scans the horizon, listens to partners and policy makers, and foresees potential changes and impacts for members.

# 5: Our aims, objectives & outputs

## AIM 1

### MEMBERS ARE THRIVING & VALUED

Ensure that the community leisure and cultural trust sector is visible, thriving and valued for its contribution to public benefit.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Build effective relationships and communications to influence and respond to policy and raise the profile of trusts.
- Position and champion the trust sector as significant contributors to national policy objectives and to their local communities.
- Advocate the impact and social value generated by member trusts to ensure they are recognised and understood.
- Campaign for good procurement practices, transparent trading structures and a shift towards commissioning public leisure and culture services.

#### OUTPUTS

- Positively shape policy and thinking with regards to public leisure and culture services
- Effective engagement with politicians, advisers, regulators and policy makers in the leisure and culture trust sector.
- National and local partners recognise the significance, contribution and impact of the trust sector and actively seek to engage Community Leisure UK and its members.
- Advocate procurement and commissioning practice to be based on outcomes, social value and cost effectiveness.

## AIM 2

### MEMBERS ARE RESILIENT

Further build the resilience of community leisure and cultural trusts.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Proactively support and facilitate collaborative working and peer to peer sharing of best practice to enhance members' knowledge, skills and explore sustainable business development opportunities.
- Encourage greater understanding and use of technology, data, insight and impact measurement tools.
- Support trusts to strengthen and develop their workforce, Boards and leaders.

#### OUTPUTS

- Member-led peer network and support opportunities are regularly provided for members.
- Members have increased confidence and actively measure and articulate their social impact.
- Trusts proactively use data, insight and opportunities afforded through technology to inform the development and delivery of services.
- Trusts are supported with volunteer development and management through the Bridging Communities programme learning.
- Trustees of members can build their understanding of the broader trust landscape and have opportunities to interact with peers.
- Leaders within member trusts are supported to develop their strategic thinking, confidence with influencing, and skills to be organisationally resilient.

## AIM 3

### ORGANISATIONALLY SUSTAINABLE

Be a valued, effective and sustainable membership association.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Ensure Community Leisure UK is widely known and recognised for being the trusted voice of community leisure and cultural trusts.
- Promote the benefits of the trust model and offer technical support to local authorities considering their options to ensure that they make an informed choice.
- Provide support and advice for other non-profit-distributing models and local authorities regarding public leisure and cultural services.
- Keep pace with and respond to the changing landscape.
- Community Leisure UK has good governance and is considered a good place to work.

#### OUTPUTS

- Members are satisfied and consider that their needs have been listened and responded to.
- Partners value the support of, advice from and relationship with Community Leisure UK.
- Staff team take a proactive approach to understanding, analysing and articulating the opportunities and challenges associated with the changing landscape.
- The association's governance demonstrates transparency, accountability and financial integrity.
- Business development and funding opportunities are actively sought.

# 6: Implementing the strategy & measuring our success

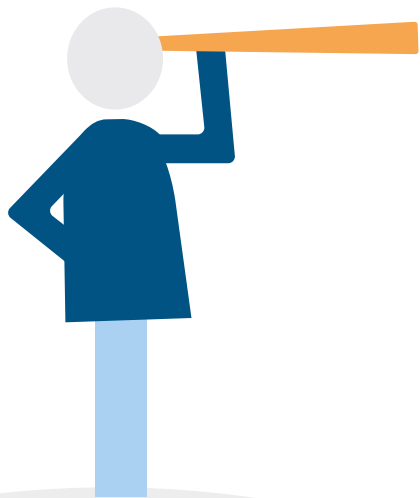
This strategy plan sets out our longer-term view for the aspirations of the organisation. This will be our guiding document. Each business year, we will develop a bespoke business plan and budget that will describe the annual plan of work for and with members. Our commitment to being member-led very much remains, and this will be represented within the annual business planning.

One of the organisation's values is transparency. The Community Leisure UK Chief Executive Officer will report to members at the members' General Meetings and Annual General Meeting. This enables members to scrutinise, discuss and agree the strategy, business plan and budget.

Equally, the Chair of Community Leisure UK will formally report to members at the Annual General Meeting held each November.

With our commitment to transparent reporting and accountability to members, it is important that there are measures of success aligned to the strategy. We have developed a suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which we believe are fundamental to measuring our success and demonstrating our strengths and weaknesses. These KPIs will be reported back to the Executive Board and to members as appropriate.

We have decided what we think good looks like, and then mapped appropriate KPIs and measurement tools to match those.



AIM 1

**MEMBERS ARE THRIVING & VALUED**

Ensure that the community leisure and cultural trust sector is visible, thriving and valued for its contribution to public benefit.

**WHAT DOES GOOD LOOK LIKE?**

There is increased understanding of the trust model across politicians and advisors – meaning that Community Leisure UK (and/or members) are proactively contacted because their views and opinions are respected and valued.

Members are positively communicating with their MP(s) and have an open channel of contact.

**KPI**

External awareness, understanding and recognition of the trust model increases year on year. *Baseline to be established in 2020/21 year.*

Members report effective or more effective engagement with their MP, MSPs, AMs.

**TOOL FOR MEASUREMENT**

Research questions carried out by external company with MPs, MSPs and AMs.

Research questions carried out by external company with advisors, secretaries and departments as appropriate.

Trust in Numbers Survey' question asking members about their communication, channels of communication and levels of change with MPs and MSPs or AMs.

AIM 2

**MEMBERS ARE RESILIENT**

Further build the resilience of community leisure and cultural trusts.

**WHAT DOES GOOD LOOK LIKE?**

Leisure and culture trusts produce social impact reports and present them at the forefront of their websites, annual reports and in open communications.

The Sport England funded Bridging Communities programme delivers the impact through the stated outcomes detailed in the Theory of Change.

The focus on and strength of the peer networking opportunities are the most effective support mechanism for members.

**KPI**

Trusts are more confident with capturing their social impact.

An increasing number of trusts publicly communicate their social impact.

375 volunteers are recruited through the Bridging Communities programme and a Volunteer Toolkit and Volunteer Manager Toolkit is created.

Members report that Special Interest Groups (peer networks) and members; meetings help to

- enhance their knowledge,
- enhance their skills, and
- explore sustainable business development opportunities.

**TOOL FOR MEASUREMENT**

'Trust in Numbers Survey' question asking members about their measurement and communication of their social impact.

Reporting methods already established with Sport England and the programme's evaluation partners – the Charity Evaluation Service at NCVO.

'Trust in Numbers Survey' questions asking members about the impact of SIGs and members' meeting.



AIM  
3

**ORGANISATIONALLY SUSTAINABLE**

Be a valued, effective and sustainable membership association.

**WHAT DOES GOOD LOOK LIKE?**

Community Leisure UK is a proactive organisation that is recognised as positively engaging and supporting partners and stakeholders. ,

Members state that being a member of Community Leisure UK is important.

Community Leisure UK is stable, effectively governed and financially sound to continue to function as required by members.

The staff team at Community Leisure UK is small and vital to the effective delivery of the strategy – their wellbeing, enjoyment, engagement and effectiveness is a priority.

**KPI**

Partners state that they trust and value Community Leisure UK.

Community Leisure UK are a collaborative organisation who add value to partners and stakeholders.

Members remain promoters of Community Leisure UK and state that being a member is important to them.

Financial reserves remain within agreed levels.

Achieve the Fair Tax Mark

Achieve Tier 2 of the Governance Code for Sport.

All staff report that they:

- would recommend Community Leisure UK as a great place to work,
- find their work engaging,
- receive the flexibility to meet the needs of work and personal life.

**TOOL FOR MEASUREMENT**

Establish a 'Partner Survey'.

The Net Promoter Score is included in the 'Trust in Numbers Survey'.

Baseline of 62% in 2019 equals promoters

Achieved or not achieved.

Achieved or not achieved.

Achieved or not achieved.

Establish a 'Staff Survey'.



[communityleisureuk.org](http://communityleisureuk.org)

 @CommLeisureUK

 Community Leisure UK