



Annual Report

2024 – 2025



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A Message from John Oxley, CEO.

Undoubtedly, our third trading year has been the most successful and rewarding since the inception of Stockport Active CIC. Progress, both commercially and strategically, has made been substantial and affirms the impact that the organisation has as a critical delivery partner of Stockport Council.

Whilst driving improved commercial performance that is essential to the sustainability of the company, we are immensely proud of the range of initiatives that have been developed, using physical activity to profoundly affect not just the physical, but also the mental and social wellbeing of our communities. Importantly, the impact we have had on those who need us the most has been clearly demonstrated by working collaboratively with other services at a neighbourhood level and delivering essential active wellbeing services as part of a preventative health system.

Trading performance has been outstanding with turnover increasing by 17% (£1.8M) and the net subsidy falling by £1.18M delivering a substantial saving to the Council against its original budget.

This performance has been supported by significant growth of 16% in health and wellbeing memberships and the organisation now carries the highest membership in Life Leisures' history. This is indicative of an increasing commitment by more people to place more importance to the care of their own health and it is a recognition that brand messaging is more inclusive and has broader appeal. The business completed gym refurbishments during the year at Stockport Sports Village and Grand Central in September 2024, and at Cheadle and Houldsworth Village in December 2024, and these essential modernisations have stimulated growth. There has been a commitment to improved programming and new group activity formats which have also broadened reach and fulfil an increasing need for social connection.

The continued development of the Aquatics strategy has shaped revised pool programming to enable balanced opportunity and meet the community demands for skill development, recreational swimming and performance aquatics. The learn to

swim and school swimming programmes are essential services within the Borough and it is very encouraging that the Key Stage 2 indicator (76% pass rate) is substantially better than the national average. Moreover, the performance swimming programme maintained its international heritage having a representative at the 2024 Paris Paralympic Games.

Whilst these traditional activities remain a core component of Life Leisure's service, the Active Communities team has expanded the provision considerably as they seek to engage those traditionally under-served. Strong partnership work is no better illustrated as each facility plays an essential role as part of the Family Hubs service across the Borough. Additionally, a range of new initiatives has served to illustrate the commitment to engage with those across the Borough who can feel excluded from those traditional activities: 'Brew and a Biscuit' was launched at every Hub to provide an opportunity for social connection and to combat loneliness and isolation, we have expanded our activity range for the SEND community, who without these specific programmed activities would continue to find themselves excluded, and it was a delight to open our first Community Sensory Garden at Hazel Grove, which has created new inclusive and accessible opportunity for an ever-expanding range of community groups across all ages.

There are many in our communities for whom introducing an element of physical activity can be achieved through walking. Our partnership with Age UK Stockport has yielded a highly acclaimed concept of Confidence Walks, which whilst originating in Brinnington, has been developed in other locations. Equally, our monthly Wellness Walks brings together both staff and our communities in a free service that promotes activity with social connection.

Our modest investment at Houldsworth Village in February 2024 which saw the introduction of the first indoor Padel Court in the north-west, has been a resounding success, with occupancy consistently over 90% and a whole new range of customers inspired by this easy-access racquet sport. That success has been supported by the wider introduction of Pickleball at our

Hubs with Sports Halls. In addition, we will be launching our second Padel court adjacent to Grand Central and within the Stockport Exchange development in May 2025.

Notwithstanding the growth and success of the year illustrated within this report, the prevailing challenges that an ageing portfolio of assets brings should not be underestimated. The Board and Leadership team have worked well to drive immediate in-year improvement whilst also establishing strong strategic agility in economically challenging and uncertain times. Notably, a particular focus on energy efficiency has reduced consumption by 8.9% for gas consumption and 3.3% power which has realised carbon savings of 187 tonnes.

It has been a privilege to make a contribution to improving the lives of the communities of Stockport through the promotion of movement. What is unequivocal is the positive impact that active wellbeing can have in improved population health and in addressing health inequality. This is illustrated no better than the work of the Specialist Physical Activity team. Providing a service for almost 3000 people with long-term health conditions, and in some of our most deprived communities, we undertook an evaluative study that compared the self-reported wellbeing status of those awaiting the start of their prescribed activity programme with those already on the scheme. In all measures of life satisfaction, wellbeing and community cohesion, the improvement as a result of physical activity was significant. Indeed, as a point of comparison, it was three times better than the nationally recognised impact of moving from unemployment to employment, and it is estimated has an economic value of c£22,000 per person per year. It is such demonstrable results that illustrate the vital role that an active wellbeing service can have on communities and will ensure that Stockport develops more active and healthier communities.

We look forward to the continuing development of this organisation and enabling our neighbourhoods to live well and thrive.

Our Purpose and Mission

Our purpose is simple: “we exist to improve the lives of others”. We believe that physical activity can enhance the health and wellbeing of communities and we work to positively impact the mental, social, and physical good health of local people. This drives everything we do and is as relevant for our workforce as it is for our customers. Our mission is “to develop a healthier and more active community” and we enshrine all of this into our strap-line “Live well, live life”.

To help us achieve our new purpose we have created three pillars:

- We **promote** daily activity
- We **connect** across the system with health, social care, education, and other partners, and deliver health intervention and preventative programmes
- We **provide** facilities and activity programmes that enable communities to take charge of their own health



Financial Review

2024/25 represents the third year of trading of Stockport Active CIC. Income has grown considerably compared with the prior year (c. 17%), mainly due to an increased uptake on swimming lessons, additional income from football at Stockport Sports Village, the creation of a padel court at Houldsworth Village and increased membership income due to the impact of the gym refurbishments we have been rolling out over the past two years. Expenditure has also increased, but overall at a much lesser rate than income. Staffing costs have increased by 14% as we move towards the Real Living Wage, however utility costs have decreased by 38% due to stabilisation of the energy market.

The result is that the annual operating loss has decreased substantially from £1.95m in 2023/24 to £0.77m in 2024/25.

The operating loss we make as an organisation is funded by our parent organisation, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council. This funding support ensures we maintain a breakeven position in any financial year.

Income and Expenditure
Summary

	2024/25	2023/24
	£M	£M
Income	12.51	10.73
Operating Costs	(13.28)	(12.68)
Operating Profit / (Loss)	(0.77)	(1.95)
Management Fee from Stockport Council	0.77	1.95
Net Profit / (Loss) after Management Fee	0	0



Social Value

The Moving Communities platform plays a vital role in demonstrating and enhancing the social value generated by publicly funded leisure services across the UK. Developed to support Sport England's strategic ambitions, the platform gathers robust data from leisure centres and local authorities, providing a clear picture of how community sport and physical activity contribute to individual wellbeing, community cohesion and economic resilience.

By capturing usage patterns, demographics, and user feedback, Moving Communities enables stakeholders to assess how facilities serve diverse populations. This helps identify underrepresented groups, monitor participation trends, and ensure equitable access. Such insights are crucial for shaping inclusive policies that deliver real impact in communities.

One of the core aspects of social value highlighted by the platform is health improvement. Regular participation in leisure activities reduces the burden on health services by preventing lifestyle-related conditions such as obesity, diabetes and mental health issues. Moving Communities quantifies these outcomes, translating physical activity into measurable health savings for the NHS and local councils.

The dashboard has undergone a significant change, offering a more powerful and nuanced way to assess the value of participation in physical activity. Central to this update is the inclusion of the WELLBY methodology (Wellbeing-Adjusted Life Year), which measures subjective wellbeing on a 0–10 scale in response to the question: "Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?"

This new approach allows for a clearer distinction between the primary value to individuals, such as improved mental and emotional wellbeing, and the secondary value to society, including reductions in health and social care costs. By adopting the WELLBY metric alongside traditional tools like the QALY (Quality-Adjusted Life Year), the dashboard aligns closely with NHS frameworks and brings enhanced rigour to social value reporting.

The updated model also incorporates recent health outcomes, the social cost of inequalities, and the latest UK government guidance from HM Treasury's Green Book and Sport England's 2024 National Social Value Model. This ensures that the platform reflects the most current and credible evidence for valuing social impact. With these enhancements, the Moving Communities platform becomes a more robust and trusted tool for councils,

operators and policymakers – enabling targeted action that maximises return on public investment and supports thriving, active communities across the UK.

We are delighted and proud to report that over the course of 2024-25, the services provided by Life Leisure have contributed over £18.2m in social value, making a substantial impact upon the health, happiness and productivity of the people of Stockport.

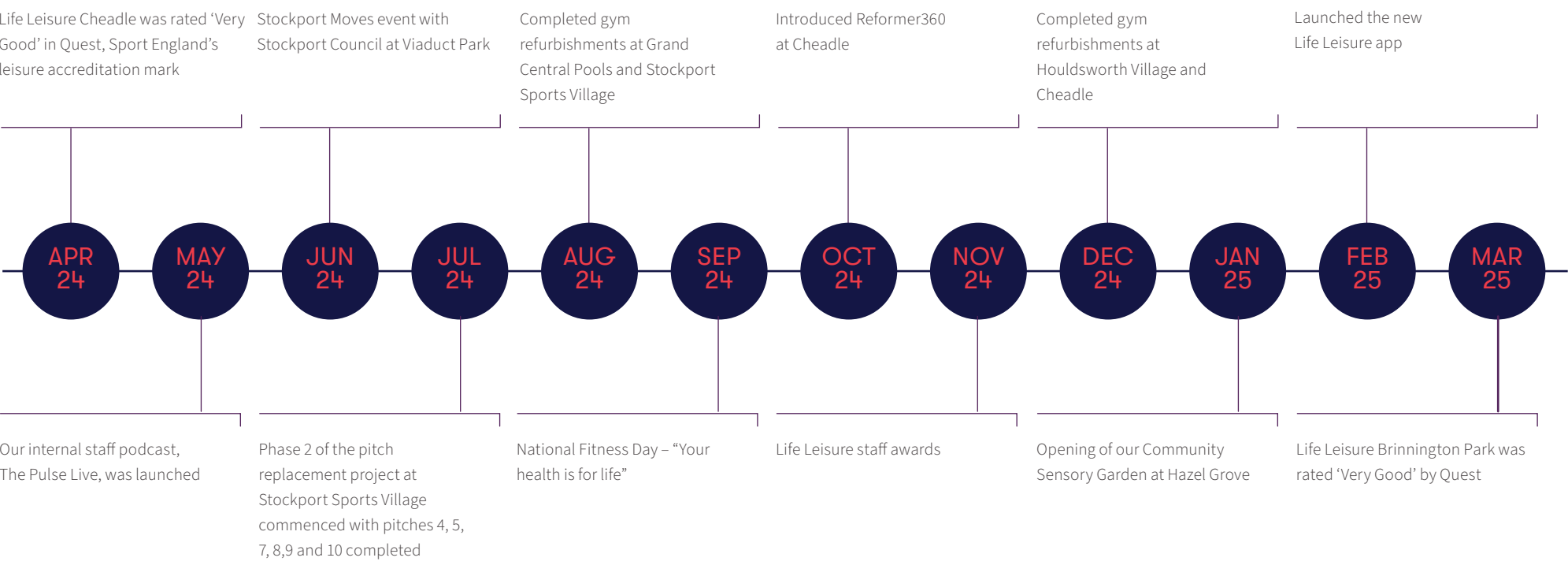
Total Social Value
£18,239,280

Total Social Value per person
£257

£150,475
saved in reduced GP visits

£596,221
saved against Type 2 diabetes

2024 – 2025 Timeline





I'll go if you go! 😊

Just **try** it

Promote

Marketing and Branding

In 2024/25, Life Leisure focused on supporting even more people across Stockport to live healthier, more active lives. To do that, we ran several major marketing campaigns that raised awareness and encouraged more local residents to get involved in our programmes, centres, and community activities.

Our campaigns, 'Part of the Family', 'I'll Go If You Go', and 'Just Try It!', were all created with a clear purpose: to help people overcome real-life barriers to being active. Whether it's feeling isolated, lacking motivation, or simply not knowing where to start, these campaigns were designed to show that Life Leisure is for everyone. No matter your background, age, fitness level, or confidence, you're welcome here.

For example, our 'Part of the Family' campaign aimed to make people feel like they belong. It brought in over 2,600 new members, each staying with us for just over a year and spending around £28 a month. This equates to almost 1 million in customer lifetime value from just one campaign. The following campaigns performed just as strongly and altogether brought in over £2 million in customer lifetime value. But more than numbers, they helped people start their wellbeing journey in a way that felt easy, friendly, and accessible.

We also worked hard to make connecting with Life Leisure smoother and more convenient. We improved our Life Leisure app, making it easier to book sessions, track

progress, and refer friends. Our website was updated to be quicker and simpler to use, and we introduced 'Stockport Sam', an AI-powered assistant to help answer customer questions instantly and support people 24/7.

We proudly took part in local initiatives like One Stockport and the Town of Culture programme, helping to bring people together and show that Life Leisure is part of the wider community.

Inside the organisation, we introduced the Love Life Leisure brand. This helped bring our team together with a shared purpose to support the health and happiness of our community. It's helped strengthen our team spirit, improve staff engagement, and make Life Leisure an even better place to work.

We also made better use of data to understand what people in Stockport really want and need. This meant we could shape our services and programmes to be even more relevant and inclusive. One example is the Stockport Active scheme, which gave more people, especially those who may not usually be able to afford or access exercise, the opportunity to get involved and feel the benefits of an active lifestyle.

Together, all of these efforts have helped make Life Leisure more visible, more welcoming, and more valuable to the people and communities we serve.

Digital Transformation

In 2024/25, we continued to modernise how people connect with Life Leisure, making things simpler, faster, and more welcoming, whether you're a member, a guest, or just exploring ways to get more active.

We made big updates to the Life Leisure app, adding features like guest booking for activities such as swimming. This made it easier for non-members and families to get involved without needing a full membership. The app also now includes options like 'Refer a Friend' and digital membership cards, making it easier to stay connected and motivated.

We introduced 'Stockport Sam', our new AI-powered sales assistant available 24/7 to help answer questions and

guide users, any time, day or night on finding the right membership package. Alongside this, our website is being improved to make it easier to find key information, such as walking groups and Confidence Walks. These activities support our campaigns and help more people take their first steps toward a more active lifestyle.

Behind the scenes, we're investing in systems that make things run more smoothly. This includes better Wi-Fi and hardware across our centres, improvements to how customers join online, and integrating partner platforms so everything works together more effectively. We're also using tools like ActiveXchange and Power BI to help us understand what people need and make smarter decisions.

We've strengthened internal communication and training for our team through updated digital learning, the launch of a staff podcast, and the regular distribution of 'The Pulse', our monthly e-newsletter that keeps everyone connected and informed.

All of this is part of our ongoing digital journey to make Life Leisure easier to access, more enjoyable to use, and better connected to the people and communities we serve in Stockport.

Over the past year, our website has experienced notable engagement with:

2.1m
views on the website

167,000
total website users

14,488
active monthly App users

55%
increase in App usage

Memberships

Membership Growth

Life Leisure has experienced a significant increase in membership, concluding the year with an additional 2,000 new health and wellbeing members, bringing the total to more than 16,300 by the end of March 2025. This growth highlights the effectiveness of our strategies in attracting and retaining members, resulting in a notable rise in health and wellbeing subscriptions.

Strategic Campaigns

Our success is attributed to targeted campaigns and the implementation of a comprehensive campaign message designed to resonate with the community. These efforts have been instrumental in promoting health and wellbeing through movement. We ensure our outreach is inclusive, effectively engaging all demographics through various channels.

Diverse Membership Options and New Initiatives

Life Leisure offers a wide range of memberships, for all ages and demographics, including the newly introduced Stockport Active Scheme. This initiative aims to provide support and access to health and wellbeing facilities, helping individuals in our community to get active, improve wellbeing and adopt healthier lifestyles.

Customer Retention and Journey Automation

To enhance customer retention, we have invested in strategies that automate the customer journey from the moment of membership initiation. This approach has enabled us to sustain growth and extend the average membership duration by two months.

Future Goals and Community Commitment

We aim to further expand our reach by welcoming new members to our Hubs and ensuring the Stockport community leads a healthy lifestyle. We take pride in successfully engaging individuals of all ages and remain committed to our mission of fostering a healthier and happier community.

Throughput
154,500

Average visits per month

11,339

Health and wellbeing new
membership subscriptions

16,333

Live health and
wellbeing members
(growth of 2,222 live members)

Here's some positive feedback we have received over the past 12 months:

“ It's 1st class preventative medicine.

Great facilities, always clean and tidy. Lots of equipment which is well maintained. Good variety of classes on offer. Super friendly and helpful staff.

“ Life Leisure is life itself. I never thought I would reach 70, let alone 75. Avondale is so friendly. I have so many friends there, including staff (who are now my friends). The nine years I have been going have flown by so quickly - it is my main routine of the day. Off to the gym, spin, and Tai Chi... best prescription ever!

Great facilities, approachable and friendly staff, supportive atmosphere. Fab range of classes, good price point for membership, high standard of overall cleanliness, good range of equipment.

“ Great range of facilities. Friendly and helpful staff. Great value for money.

Going to a Life Leisure gym is my happy place and gives me a sense of wellbeing and the staff are friendly and helpful.

Promote

Customer Feedback

At Life Leisure, customer feedback is of paramount importance, offering crucial insights into the needs, preferences, and expectations of our customers. This feedback is essential in shaping our business strategies, driving innovation, enhancing customer satisfaction and ensuring long term success and growth. Consequently, we prioritise the collection, analysis, and implementation of customer feedback as a core aspect of our operations.

As we continue to evolve, we actively gather feedback through various channels, including online platforms like Net Promoter Score (NPS) surveys, receiving 3500 responses, face to face interactions, and customer comment cards. Our current NPS stands at 48 for 2024/25, which is 14% above the industry benchmark. This approach ensures that Life Leisure remains attuned to the needs of our community and continues to positively impact the lives of our customers.

Active Communities

The Active Communities team have delivered over 4,000 sessions over the past 12 months, supporting the facilitation of 79,963 visits across various projects and programmes. Our successful management, implementation and coordination of projects has been supported by the successful acquisition of £189,898 funding, which alongside commissioned programmes, means we have secured total funding of £340,559.

Our focus has been on the Borough-wide Active Communities strategy and our responsibility for implementing a whole systems approach to contribute to local authority, public health and wider public sector priorities has continued. We have seen a 10.8% increase in attendances across our programmes, the result of building on our strengths in community engagement, inclusion and partnership working. Some of our key developments include the continuation of the R Time Stockport programme, alongside the charity network for Stockport – Sector 3 and the Targeted Youth Justice service. We have continued our positive delivery on the Holiday Activity and Food programme, further inclusive provision across our hubs and the activation of Viaduct

Park. Our Place Partnerships work in conjunction with Stockport Council and that is part of a Greater Manchester-wide initiative and supported by Greater Manchester Moving, has been rewarded with extended funding through to 2028. Our successful funding for a Brinnington Benches project and a newly formed Inclusive Swimming partnership with the Seashell Trust are growing aspects of our team's efforts.

A significant progression took place at our Hazel Grove hub, where we were successful with a £22,000 UK Shared Prosperity Fund application to install a Community Sensory garden. The garden finished construction in January 2025. Following a launch event that attracted 100 people, we have delivered various workshops and sessions to support local schools, SEND specific groups and families across the borough. This has added further value to our commitment to inclusion and innovative ideas to support the health and wellbeing of our communities for the future.



4,000

sessions across Stockport

79,963

visits



10.8%

increase in attendances

Secured over

£340,000

of funding to continue work
in the community

Health Initiatives

The Specialist Physical Activity Service, which encompasses PARiS and Stay Steady (Falls Prevention), has again seen another year-on-year increase in demand, reaching a record high of [2653 referrals received and delivering 30 specialist sessions per week](#), ranging from cardiac exercise rehabilitation phase 4 to falls prevention classes.

The greatest increase in referrals has been to PARiS (exercise referral), demonstrating the positive shift in attitudes and behaviour towards physical activity and acknowledging it's benefits in supporting people to take charge of their own health, instead of relying solely on medication and the NHS to take this responsibility.

In addition, there has been a change in who has been requesting support. This year [53%](#) of all referrals have been [“self-referrals”](#) and almost 24% of all requests are from residents living in the [20% most deprived areas](#) which is a [5% increase](#) from pre-covid levels.

New roles have been deployed across the organisation in the form of health and wellbeing coaches which have helped reduce service waiting times from 6 months to 3 months and we expect to see a continued reduction in wait times with an aspiration to have patients wait no longer than 1 month for their first appointment, by July 2025.

The service has been part of a Greater Manchester wide independent evaluation through State of Life, assessing the impact of exercise referral service on participants. With over 3000 respondents across 8 GM boroughs, preliminary results are indicating that services such as PARiS have a positive impact on an individual's wellbeing almost 3 times greater than someone going from unemployed to employed, creating £22,000 per person of wellbeing value.

**PARTICIPANTS REPORTED A DAILY
DECREASE IN SITTING TIME OF**

144 minutes

**ON AVERAGE, PARTICIPANTS INCREASED
THEIR WEEKLY ENERGY EXPENDITURE BY**

520%

47%

**OF ALL REFERRALS LIVED IN THE 40% MOST
DEPRIVED AREAS OF STOCKPORT**

82

**DIFFERENT ORGANISATIONS REFERRED
INTO THE SERVICE IN 24/25**

Our People

We value our people and we want to continue to develop a healthy and happy workforce. We appreciate the richness that diversity brings to our teams and our communities and so we want to ensure that **everyone feels welcome** within our business. We know that by empowering and enabling everyone to flourish and thrive, we can provide facilities and services to more people and deliver on our purpose to improve the lives of others.

Wellbeing has been a people priority for us throughout 24/25 as we continue to see high rates of sickness absence and mental health related incidences amongst our employees. We launched our **flexible working policy** as one of our wellbeing initiatives and our annual summit focused on different wellbeing activities that employees could take part in, including yoga and sleep sessions. We have also launched **Essentials Plus** training and a sickness absence workshop as part of our management development offering, which aims to give managers the tools to support employee wellbeing

and the knowledge in what to do when they are absent from work. Alongside this a **wellbeing conversation** form that has been created to guide conversations, either led by employees or their managers to ensure that regular wellbeing check-ins are taking place where necessary.

‘Give me opportunities to **grow**’ is one of the 5 People Principles of Love Life Leisure, our internal People Proposition. In 24/25 we have continued to develop our **Grow Academy** and workforce development strategy, ensuring that all employees have the opportunity to learn, develop and progress, with guidance from our **Grow Guide**. The aim of the Grow Academy is to have clear career pathways to support with succession planning across key roles within the organisation. This will ensure that Life Leisure has capable and competent managers and teams, which will ultimately have a positive impact on recruitment, retention and performance.



553
Employees



97.4%
Staff retention



52%
Female



48%
Male



£1.05



£1.00

gender pay gap

76.9%
of staff live in stockport

Partners and Stakeholders

We are dedicated to making a positive impact on the lives of all Stockport's residents. To achieve this, we collaborate with a diverse array of partners from across the Borough and Greater Manchester, ensuring that our services reach all corners of the community.

Commissioned by Stockport Council, we provide leisure and wellbeing services tailored to our residents and deliver directly in our communities. Our strategy is aligned with the One Stockport Borough Plan and the Stockport Active Communities Strategy, and we work closely with various partners to ensure we achieve our aims and objectives and support the council with theirs.

Our delivery model focuses on neighbourhoods rather than assets and this allows us to reach people directly where they live and offer solutions which are relevant to them. We are proud to be a collaborative partner across both public and voluntary sectors to enhance the wellbeing and activity levels of residents and our Active Pathways programme is a key component of an aligned delivery model across the Borough. Active Pathways brings together information on a wide range of physical activity sessions in one inclusive space, making it easier for individuals to access the service

which best supports them. This collaborative approach to support more holistic wellbeing objectives will allow for enhanced provision and service across our communities.

Throughout the year, we've led local pilot initiatives on behalf of the Council, delivered commissioned services through Public Health, facilitated HAF-funded projects during school holidays, and worked closely with the Criminal Youth Justice Service and Stockport Homes on our co-produced youth intervention program, R Time. We were also the main delivery partner for the opening of Viaduct Park which features play equipment, community space and a link to the new railway station as part of the Borough's £1 billion pound regeneration of the town centre.

We are a founding member of GM Active who play an important role across the sector as we aim to change how local leisure centres can serve our communities to better support active lives for all, tackle health inequalities and ensure active wellbeing becomes an integral and valued contributor to the wider health and social care system in our neighbourhoods. As part of GM Active, we access funding to deliver the Prehab for Cancer programme locally, which is the first UK

integrated care service rehabilitation and recovery programme for cancer patients.

Throughout the year, we have continued to strengthen our partnership with Stockport County, who use Stockport Sports Village to deliver a successful further education programme to over 200 learners whilst the site also provides a base for the Club's junior academy.



Proud to be part of SHG



Facilities and Environment

We manage a number of facilities across Stockport on behalf of Stockport Council. While many of these facilities are ageing and require investment for upkeep and maintenance, our priority remains ensuring safe, clean and inviting spaces. We collaborate closely with our Council colleagues on a long-term development strategy for the facilities.

Over the past year, we've allocated £666,854 for planned preventative maintenance and related remedial projects, along with an additional £1,566,309 for facility improvements. We maintain a collaborative approach with the council to highlight projects that contribute to a more sustainable asset base in the long term. Over the last 12 months, we have replaced the remaining six 3G football pitches at Stockport Sports Village, and completed substantial gym refurbishments at Grand Central, Stockport Sports Village, Cheadle

and Houldsworth Village with the two remaining hubs planned for summer 2025.

Life Leisure have an ambition to reduce our environmental impact and reduce the consumption of both gas and power. Based on 2023/24 data, our consumption was around 9.1 million kWh of gas and 2.3 million kWh of power. We have worked hard to reduce this by 8.9% and 3.3% respectively saving £142,000 of expenditure against budget. Our tariffs have reduced from the all-time highs of 22/23, but remain 100% higher than 2020 levels with a total spend of £1,484,857.

In conjunction with the Council, we're striving to meet ambitious targets aligned with Stockport Climate Action Now (CAN), aiming for carbon neutrality by 2038. We have made a number of capital investments to support this objective and alongside the council our

efforts to reduce consumption have saved 187 tonnes of CO2 throughout the year. Significant strides have been made across the estate and further opportunities will be progressed throughout 2025/26 focusing on better system control, in depth site audits and improved infrastructure.

Furthermore, we're committed to minimising our environmental impact through recycling initiatives. We've established recycling contracts to reduce landfill waste, resulting in the recycling of 7.6 tonnes of paper and 2.6 tonnes of plastic across our facilities this past year, with plans to increase this year on year.

£1,566,309

invested in facility
improvements

£142,000

energy saving

187 tonnes

of CO2 saved from
reduced consumption

Aquatics

Public Swimming

Community Swimming revenue approached £750,000 with almost 325,000 swim tickets sold across our lane, fun, inclusive, and general swims. We also offer provision for local SEND and community groups, ensuring our pools are accessible to all.

We have been working towards the Swim England Water Wellbeing accreditation, which supports swimming facilities in delivering inclusive, health-focused aquatic sessions and highlights our commitment to improving health and wellbeing through aquatic activity.

All of our pools can now be found on digital search platform Poolfinder, providing clear information on accessibility, sessions and facilities, making it easier for everyone to find the right swimming options for their needs.

The requirement to maintain a large cohort of trained and qualified lifeguards is continual and we have delivered 7 NPLQ courses and employed 51 new lifeguards, with ongoing monthly training provided to 249 qualified staff members. This ensures the continued safety and smooth

operation of our facilities. We have also trained 5 colleagues to deliver Aqua Aerobics classes and have increased this provision on our timetable. This ongoing work reflects our commitment to providing a variety of swimming opportunities for everyone in the community.

Swimming Lessons Engagement

Our swimming lesson programme has 6,070 learners enrolled across 913 classes per week, representing a 9% increase in classes year on year. We cater to different demographics and abilities, including 22 adult lessons, 7 SEND lessons and a recently introduced SEND activity session. Additionally, our Rookie and Junior Swimfit programmes continue to provide pathways for children to progress in their swimming development after completing the junior lessons.

We deliver school swimming lessons to 78 LEA and 4 private schools with an overall National Curriculum pass rate of 76%. In addition, 73% of pupils demonstrate efficient stroke technique and 73% meet the water safety and personal survival criteria. To ensure the continued success of our swimming programme, we have delivered 4 Level

1 courses and 4 Level 2 courses, resulting in the addition of 38 new employees to our teaching team. Presently, our teaching team comprises of 35 Level 1 and 75 Level 2 qualified teachers, supported by a dedicated team of 8 mentor teachers.

As part of Water Wellbeing initiative, our swimming teachers have received training in inclusion and disability awareness, as well as in teaching adults with long-term health conditions. This ensures that our programmes are inclusive, supportive, and responsive to a wide range of needs within the community.

Performance Coaching

Our performance coaching programme, Stockport Metro, continues to be a key talent pathway for over 300 swimmers across various age groups, from academy through to high performance, including synchronised swimming and masters. Squads have access to all five of our pools with an average of 5,500 coaching and 620 land based training hours delivered annually.

£4,100,614
TOTAL AQUATICS INCOME

6,070
ON LIFE LEISURE
SWIM LESSONS

45,650
TOTAL CLASSES

82
SCHOOLS

Health and Fitness

We learnt that more members want an “experience” when they train, whether that is via group exercise or on their own in the gym and having contemporary spaces to do that enhances our member acquisition and helps improve retention.

Over the last 12 months, we have refurbished four of our hubs, investing over £1 million to create vibrant and welcoming environments for people to become physically active. Members at those hubs can now choose whether they want to be coached through one of the 17,000 + iFIT coach led cardiovascular workouts, improve their strength with enhanced and dedicated strength zones or train for their next Hyrox event in one of our dedicated functional R1G areas.

We have responded to the current trends of increased demand for holistic classes that led to the introduction of Reformer Pilates classes at Cheadle, seeing classes filled within minutes every single week.

Group Exercise continues to go from strength to strength with an average of 1800 classes delivered every month, creating 34,000 opportunities per month

for Stockport residents to enjoy the benefits of training within our thriving group exercise community. Dance and holistic style of classes continue to lead the way in terms of popularity with occupancy often exceeding 78% of overall capacity and making up 30% of our total group exercise offer.

A new member’s early experience of the health and wellbeing journey will determine their length of stay; the better the journey, the more likely they will engage and interact with the services and products Life Leisure offer. 24/25 saw the first step in the transition of our new member journey, providing a more tailored approach resulting in a 10% improvement in the number of new members who have an onboarding experience compared to 23/24.

Personal training revenue has continued to grow as we saw more of our internal health and fitness coaches delivering more personal training sessions throughout the year. Year 24/25 realised a 30% increase in income compared to the previous year and has continued to grow since the new model was introduced in 2023.



442,947

total gym visits



240,676

total attendance of
group exercise classes



20,368

classes delivered



336,647

gym visits

ATTENDANCE



65% v 35%

30%

PT Income increase

2025 Onwards

Over the next 12 months, we will continue to build upon the significant progress made so far, and we will be informed by the wider strategic objectives of Stockport Council and the Greater Manchester region, as well as responding to the socio-economic landscape and conditions which prevail. The strategic planning process that supports our Business Plan has committed to continue to pursue a transformational approach to the development of the company, shifting its focus from being facility dependent and fitness oriented, to becoming place-based and with an unequivocal focus on wellbeing, contributing to the preventative health agenda.

We will:

- Become an advocate and enabler of active wellbeing, accelerating the development of the [Active Pathway](#) in partnership with Stockport Council public health colleagues.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues within Stockport Council, playing a key role in the [Live Well](#) initiative, building upon Family Hub bridges and the integration of other services across our assets to more effectively meet the needs of our neighbourhoods.
- [Expand](#) the work of the Active Communities team, building upon learnings from the Local Pilot in Brinnington and seek a 10% increase in participation amongst the most deprived neighbourhoods.

- Continue the development of our [digital transformation](#) strategy aimed at improving the customer journey and improved connectivity across communities and specifically using AI to enhance the on-boarding experience and to increase adherence to exercise in our universal offer and within the PARiS scheme.
- Embed the new [fitness proposition](#) and on-boarding journeys ensuring that service delivery is people-centred and improves average length of stay by one month.
- [Invest](#) in the fitness experiences at Avondale and Brinnington to create more contemporary exercise environments.
- [Grow](#) fitness membership by 6% to close FY26 at 17,300 members
- [Grow the Learn to Swim programme by 4% to close FY26 in excess of 6,250 students.](#)
- Continue to develop opportunities for [health intervention](#) programmes working collaboratively with health commissioners, and notably working to increase the capacity of the [Specialist Physical Activity Service](#) so that it can capably meet the needs of those with long-term health conditions.
- Improve operational quality by using [NPS, a Mystery Customer programme and Quest](#) accreditation as key indicators.
- Develop a [lifecycle replacement](#) programme in partnership with Stockport Council that supports the strategic and commercial objectives of the organisation.
- Reduce [energy consumption](#) by 5% and use and manage resources that minimise the effect upon the environment

- Continue to work towards becoming a [fully inclusive](#) organisation that champions the needs of those who are least likely to engage in physical activity.

‘Leisure Centres’ become ‘[Community Wellbeing Hubs](#)’; a ‘hub’ within a ‘place’ from which in-venue and in-community activity can take place, and where the physical, social and mental wellbeing of people can be improved.

Where we are going...

Stockport Active CIC becomes a credible and valued contributor to life in Stockport, existing to:

- Address [health inequality](#)
- Improve the [health](#) and [happiness](#) of the community
- Support the [productivity](#) and [prosperity](#) of the Borough
- Function responsibly in support of an improved and [sustainable environment](#)

We are an essential and pivotal partner enabling local Borough objectives to be fulfilled whilst acting as a [beacon of best practice](#) in support of the wider Greater Manchester ambition. Our [social](#) contribution is valued, and we work towards becoming [commercially](#) sustainable.

Our Year in Numbers

Active Communities

AC2	88,709 Leisure Key visits (74,065 23/24)
AC3	£13,596 secured for sports and activity clubs (£10,997 23/24)
AC4	340,885 swimming lesson visits and 6070 swimming lesson pupils (315,100 visits and 5945 pupils 23/24)
AC5	66,613 visits on outreach programmes and activity (63,466 visits 23/24)
AC6	900 people completed specialist physical activity service (860 completed 23/24)

Facilities Management

FE1	£2,233,163 invested in facility improvements and maintenance (£1,721,568 23/24)
FE2	Overall energy consumption 8,274,401 kWh Gas – 8.9% reduction 2,220,362 kwh electric – 3.3% reduction

Customer Experience and Reach

CE1	1,854,888 total throughput (1,677,462 23/24)
CE2	872,500 visits from specified target groups (720,871 23/24)
CE3	Quest – Very Good
CE4	Average Net Promoter score = 48 (Benchmark 44) (39 23/24)
CE5	34% retention rate on average over 12 months

Financial Management and Commercial

FC1	Income less expenditure (excluding management fee) = £769,448 (£1.9m 23/24)
FC2	£0.41 Subsidy per visit (£1.16 23/24)
FC3	£626,566 secured in external grants (£507,540 23/24)
FC4	% cost recovery - 94% excluding management fee (85% 23/24)

Organisational Governance and Management

OG1	Social value = £18,239,280
OG2	4 apprentices employed (3 apprentices 23/24)
OG3	Stockport workforce = 76% (76% 23/24)
OG4	3843 training hours completed (2372 hours 23/24)
OG5	97.4% retention of workforce (97.5% 23/24)

