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Connecting the dots: a recognised, trusted and professionally recognised workforce

APSE Active Futures: From Facilities to Wellbeing
Thursday 13 November 2025

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What we'll cover today

About CIMSPA and our sector

Who we are; how we "lead by listening"; our sector workforce and industries.

Professional status

The value of professional status and recognition for the sport and physical activity sector workforce.

Local skills project

How sport and physical activity can inform Local Skills Improvement Plans and Trailblazer devolution deals.

Working with DWP

Our work with the Department for Work and Pensions – pathways from NEET to employment and professional status: more people, economically active.



About CIMSPA and our sector





About CIMSPA

The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) is the professional development body for the UK's sport and physical activity sector, committed to supporting, developing and enabling professionals and organisations to succeed and, as a result, inspire our nation to become more active.

VISION

Shaping a recognised, valued and inclusive sport and physical activity sector that everyone can be a part of.



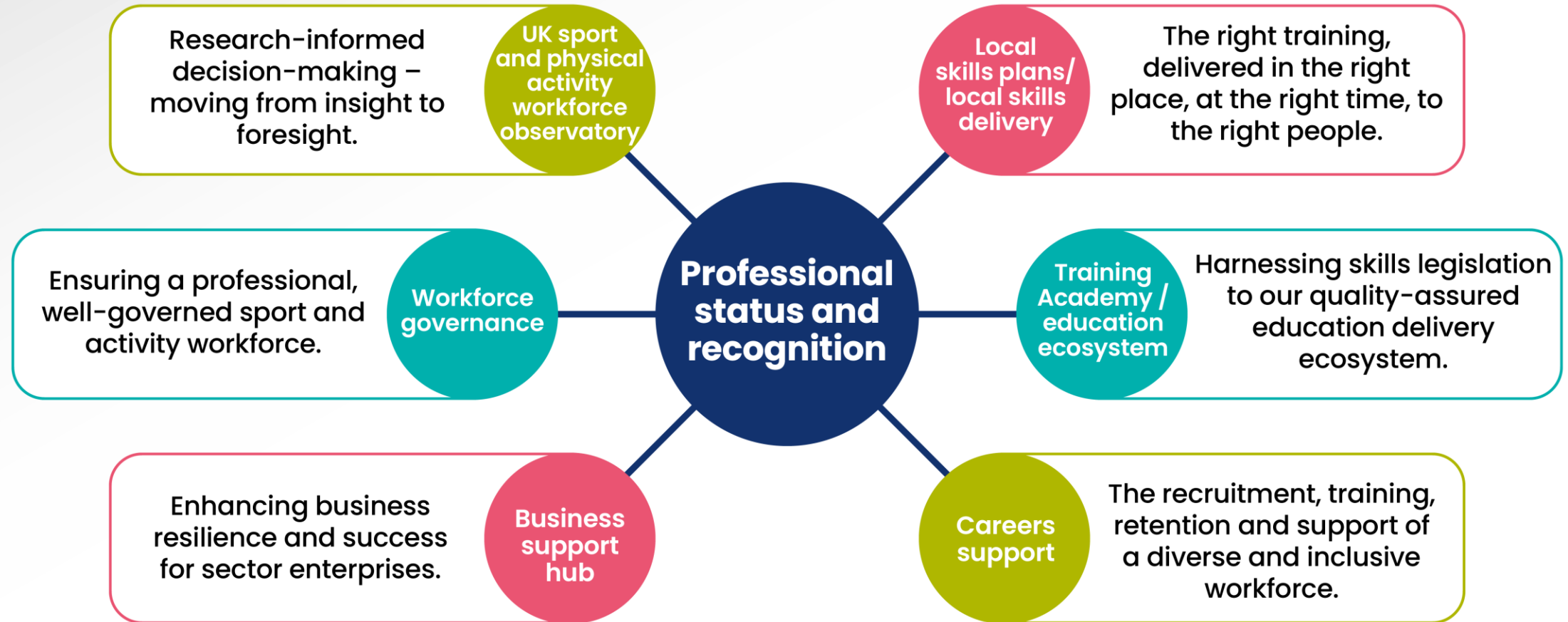
Our mandate and our promise

CIMSPA was created in 2012 with the award of its royal charter. Since then, we have worked collaboratively with organisations across the sector and established a leadership position as the guardian of the sport and physical activity workforce and champion of its professionalism.

Our approach has always been collaborative – “leading by listening” and our influence has been recognised by the UK government, devolved administrations, the home country sports councils and key sector bodies.



Our strategy system interventions



The sport and physical activity sector

Our sector workforce includes

586,000 people

Our sector has six industries

Community sport
Performance sport
Adventure sport

Exercise and fitness
Leisure operations
Health and wellbeing



Professional Status

Releasing
your Power

Understanding professional
status for the sector
workforce



Professional status is set to revolutionise the sport and physical activity sector

A professional status is **earned** through learning and experience, is **issued** by CIMSPA, and then must be **maintained** through learning and skills development and committing to a code of conduct.



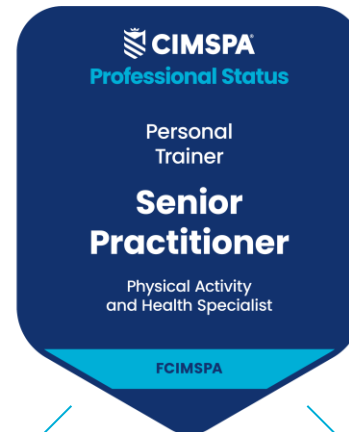
Professional status for flexible, rewarding careers

Showcase your expertise, not just your qualifications

Build credibility with customers and employers

Unlock your career progression and professional growth

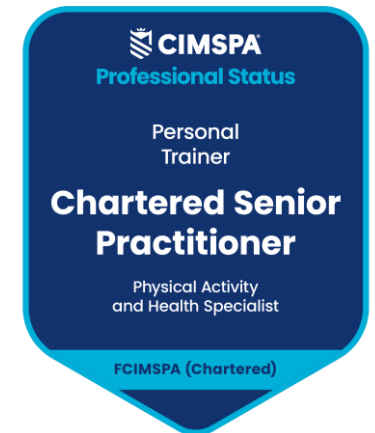
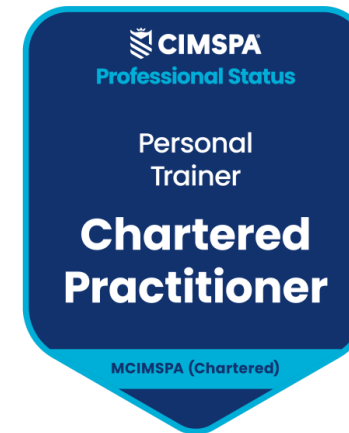
Opens doors across the sector and with allied professionals



Children and Young People Specialist

Physical Activity and Health Specialist

Inclusive practice specialist



Digital accreditation credentials

Your passport to professional recognition

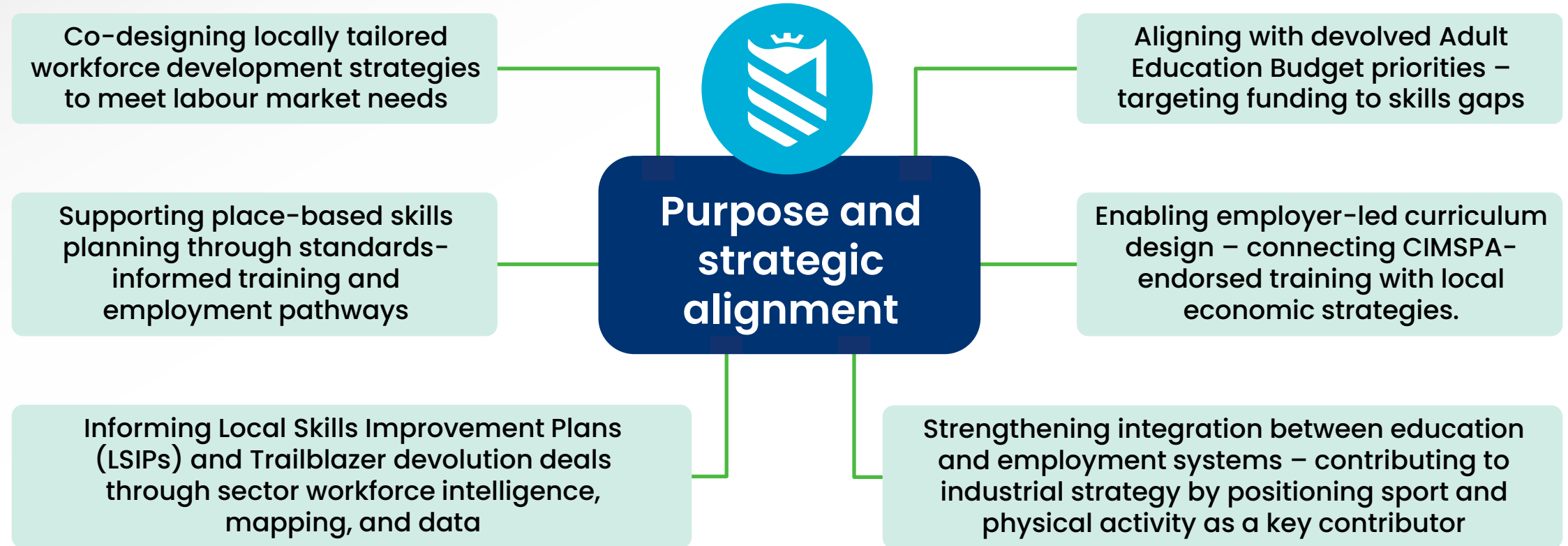
Clients, peers, employers, the public and professionals in other sectors can instantly verify your achievements via a recognised and trusted source.



Local skills plans and delivery progress



CIMSPA local skills plans – purpose and strategic alignment



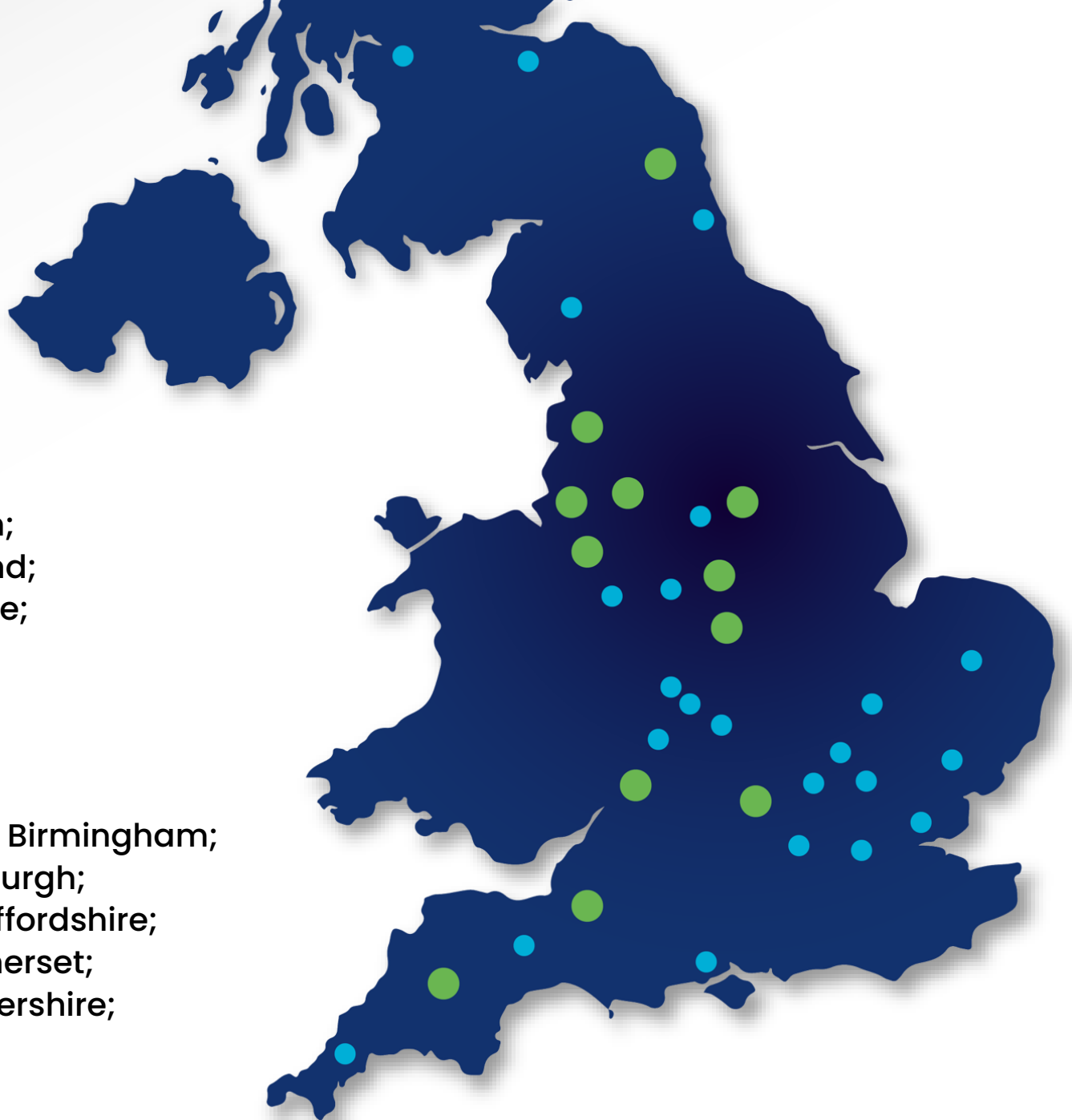
Local skills plans progress

COMPLETED

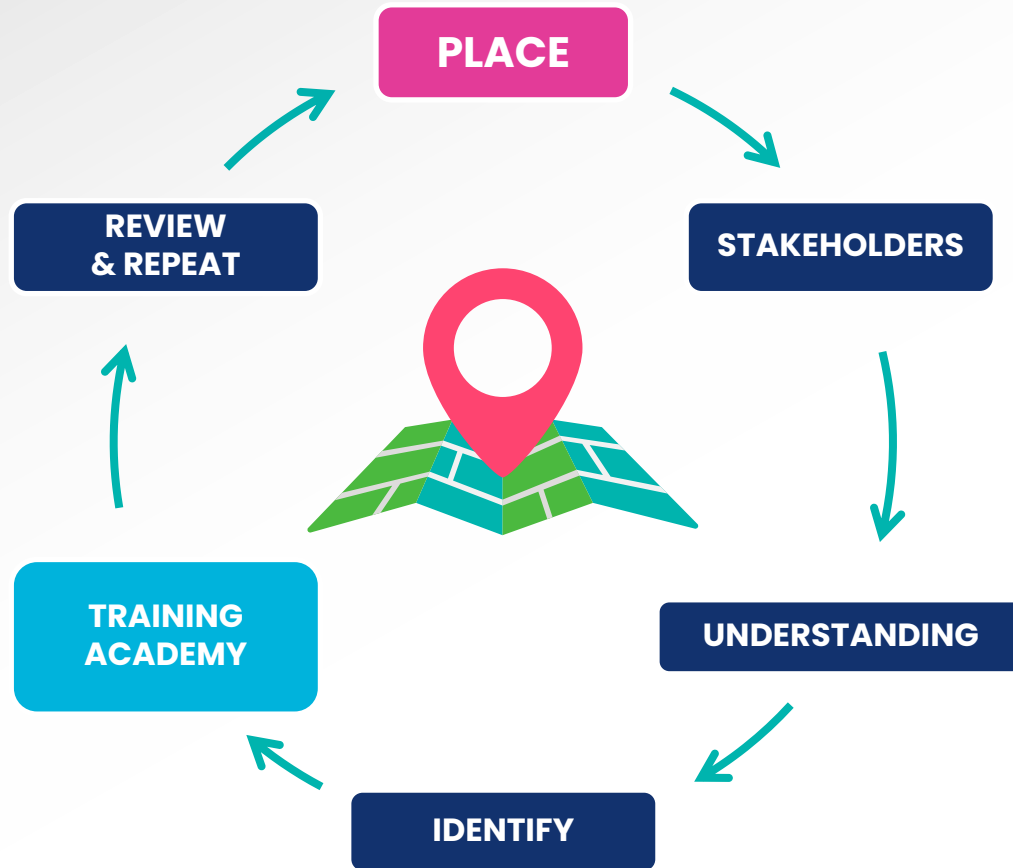
Greater Manchester; Liverpool City Region; West of England; Devon; Cheshire & Warrington; Oxfordshire; Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland; Nottingham and Nottinghamshire; North of Tyne; Doncaster; Gloucestershire; Lancashire.

IN DEVELOPMENT

Sheffield; Buckinghamshire ; Derby/Derbyshire; Birmingham; Black Country; Hertfordshire; Tees Valley; Edinburgh; Glasgow and Surrounding Areas; Cornwall; Staffordshire; Dorset; Warwickshire; Lincolnshire; Suffolk; Somerset; Peterborough/Cambridgeshire; Essex; Worcestershire; Cumbria; Bedfordshire; Swindon and Wiltshire.



Local skills cycle – place



PLACE

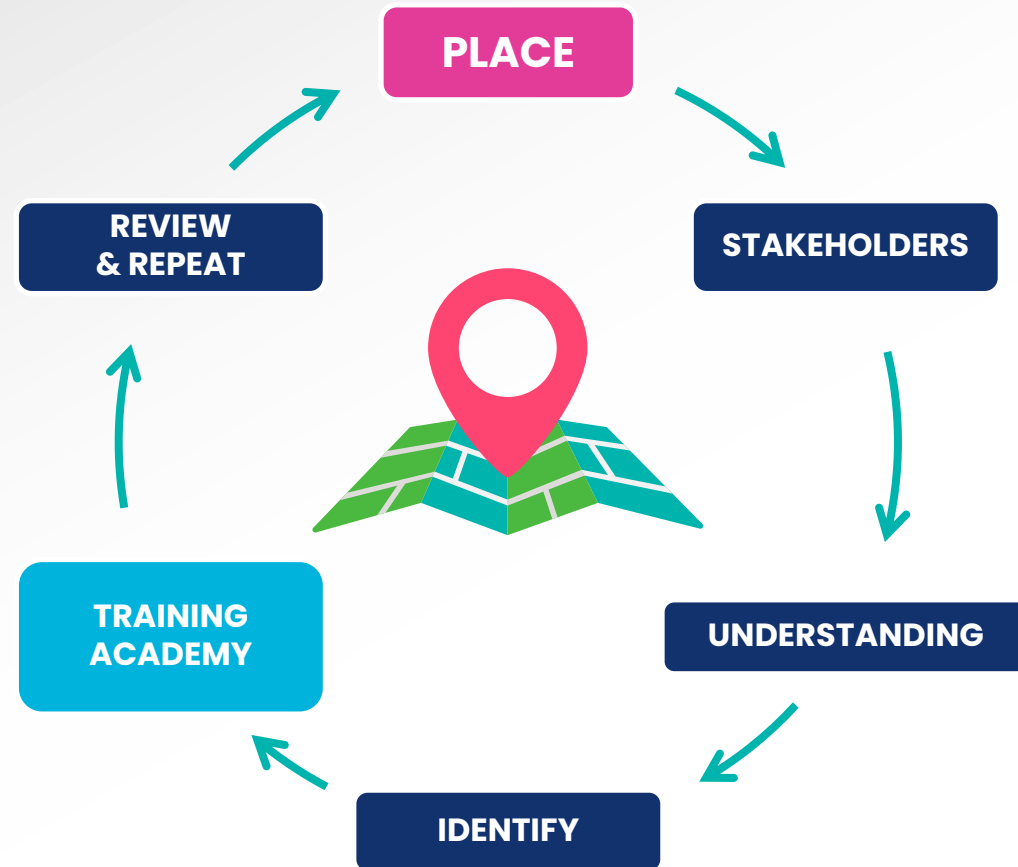
Over 30 local skills hubs across England and Scotland.

Each either:

- Has a CIMSPA-led Local Skills Accountability Board of employers, education providers and other stakeholders.
- Or the local Active Partnership and CIMSPA work directly together.



Local skills cycle – stakeholders



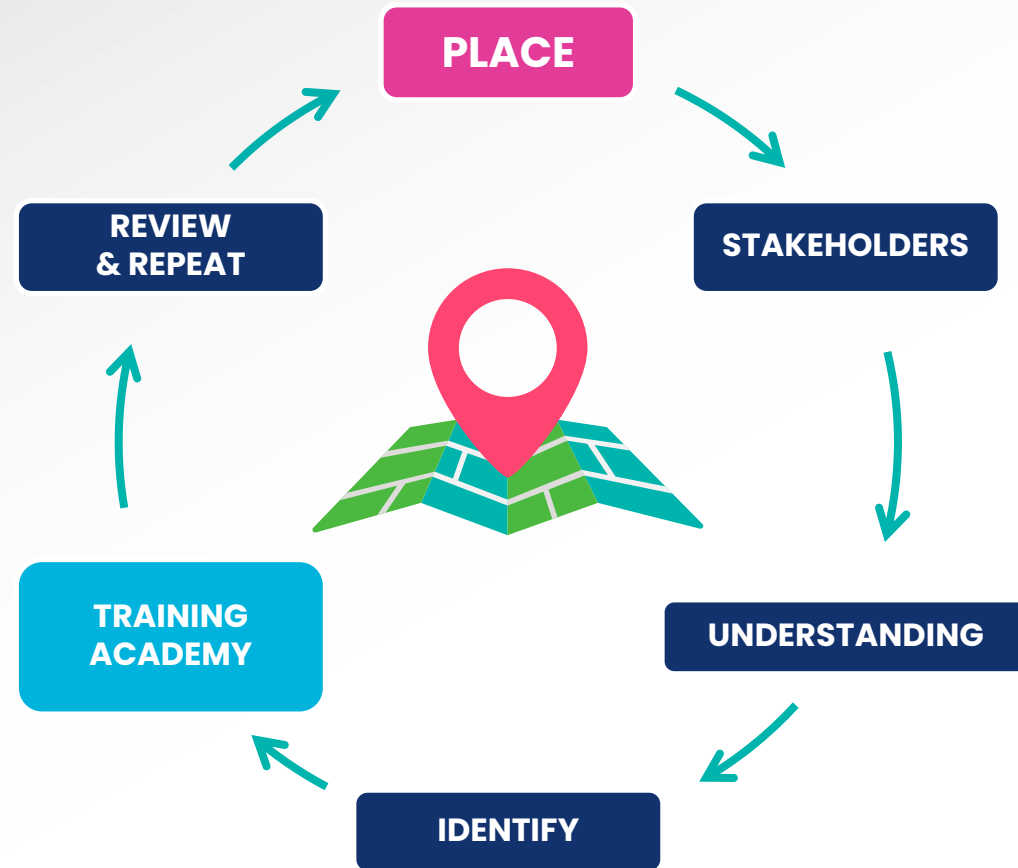
STAKEHOLDERS

Over 1000 organisations involved including:

- Employers
- Education Providers
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Employer Representative Bodies / Chambers of Commerce
- NHS integrated care bodies (ICBS) / integrated care systems (ICSs)
- Active Partnerships
- Local authorities
- Employability organisations



Local skills cycle – understanding



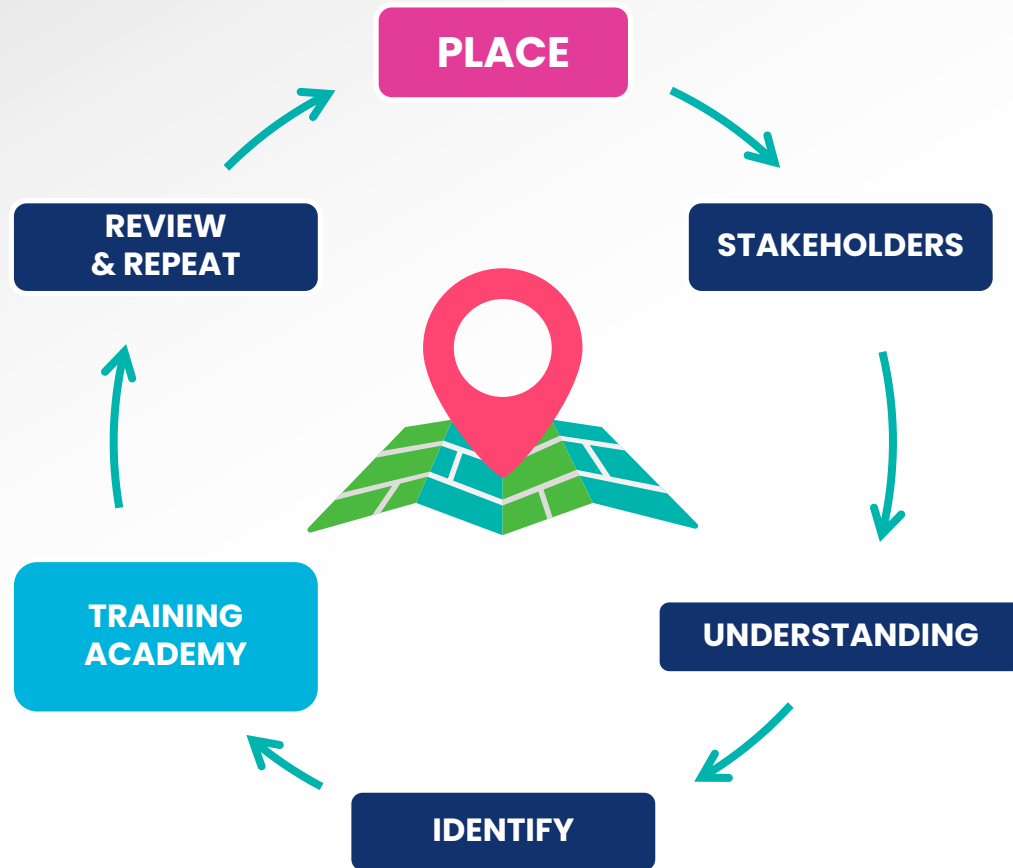
UNDERSTANDING

Local LSIP priorities:

- Confirming sector skills needs
- Employer engagement – to actively inform learning design and delivery (Doncaster)
- Closer working relationships between employers and educators
- Drive economic growth – LSIPs identify and promote areas that have the greatest potential for growth and job creation
- Navigation – establishing an easy-to-find, coordinated, and accessible skills system



Local skills cycle – identify

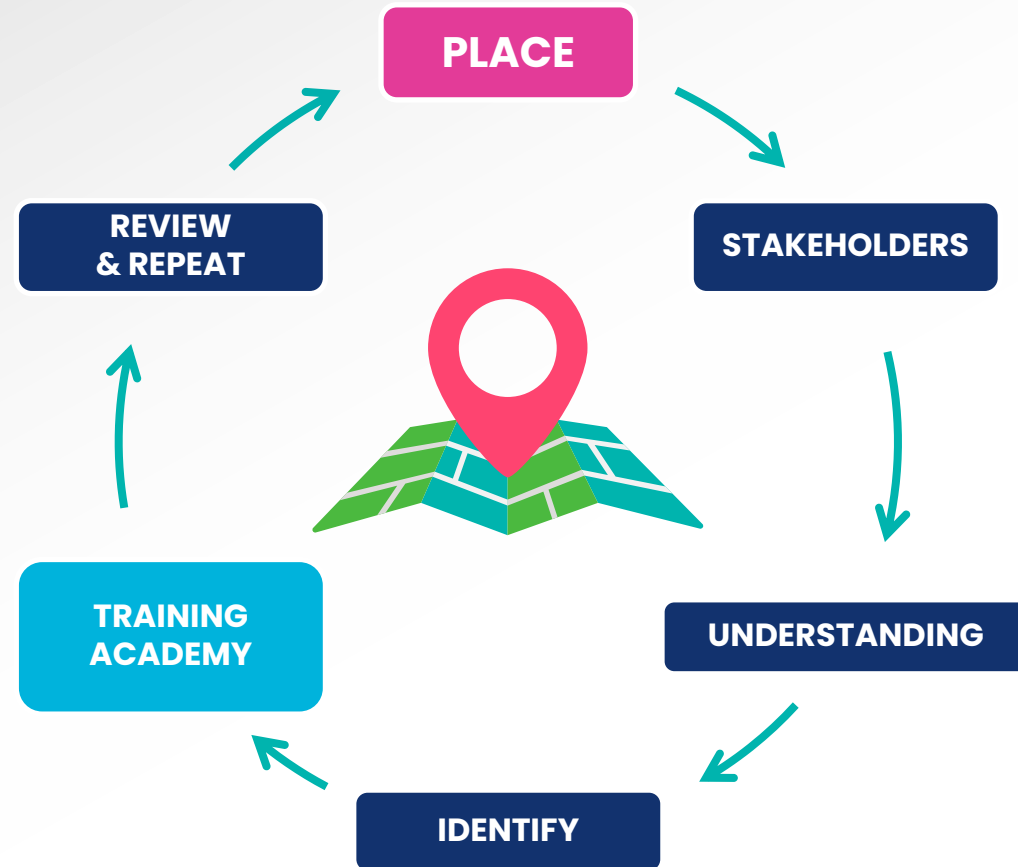


IDENTIFY

Skills diagnostic data - over 1500 completed
Capture recruitment and training needs
across all organisations.



Local skills cycle – review and repeat



REVIEW AND REPEAT

Align our LSAB priorities into LSIPs

- A more inclusive and diverse workforce that represents the community that it works within.
- Professionalisation to develop workforce in roles affiliated with health / integration between health and S&PA pathways.
- A local education network aligned in its approach to working with employers and deployers.
- A workforce inclusive of the under-represented in our sector, so that we better represent those facing inequality.





Department
for Work &
Pensions



CIMSPA®

Working with DWP



Department for Work and Pensions partnership

- Since January we have worked with DWP to support jobseekers to build a great career in our sector.
- Our sector careers support helps over 30,000 Job Centre Work Coaches and DWP Employer Engagement Officers.
- We also help over 130 DWP School Advisers, working across over a thousand schools, to inspire young people into a career in our sector.



Department
for Work &
Pensions



Supporting DWP customers into rewarding careers in sport and physical activity



Outreach & engagement

DWP identifies and shortlists suitable individuals for the programme.

Pre-employment SWAP

A sector-specific work academy placement introduces learners to the sector, covering essential skills like first aid, health and safety, customer service, careers guidance, and work shadowing.

Insight & guidance

CIMSPA collaborates with local employers and education providers to identify regional workforce needs and inform relevant training pathways.

Skills development

Providers deliver targeted training such as SWAPs and skills bootcamps, based on local labour market insight to support learner progression.

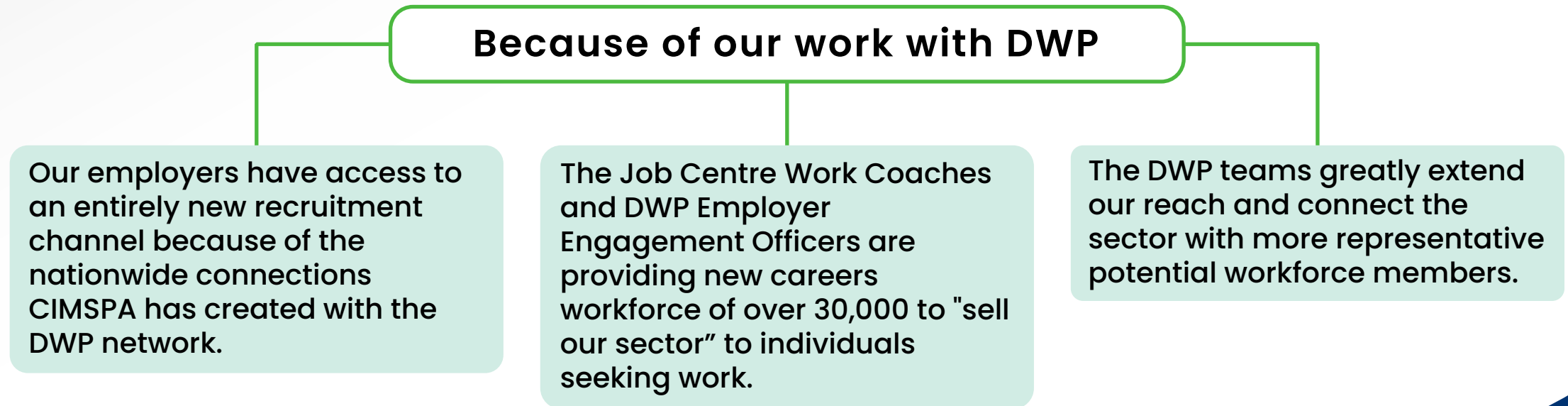
Employment & career progression

Learners are equipped with the skills and experience needed to enter and thrive in the sport and physical activity workforce.



Solving recruitment and representation problems

The key problems we are working to solve are recruitment shortfalls into the sector and a mismatch between our workforce profile in local communities.





Our vision

Shaping a **recognised, valued** and **inclusive** sport and physical activity sector that everyone can be a part of.