

North Northamptonshire Leisure: A Journey Through Reorganisation

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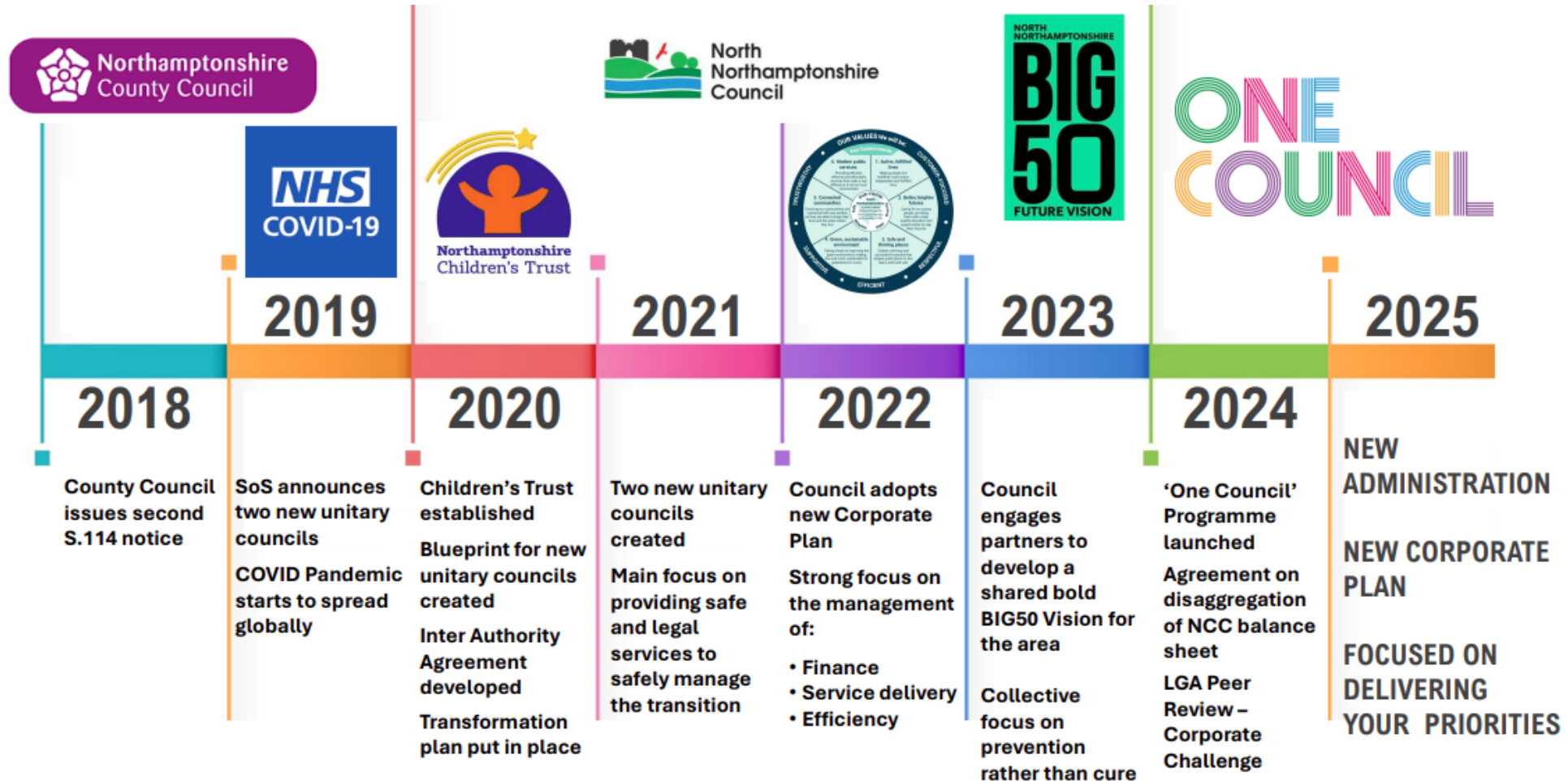


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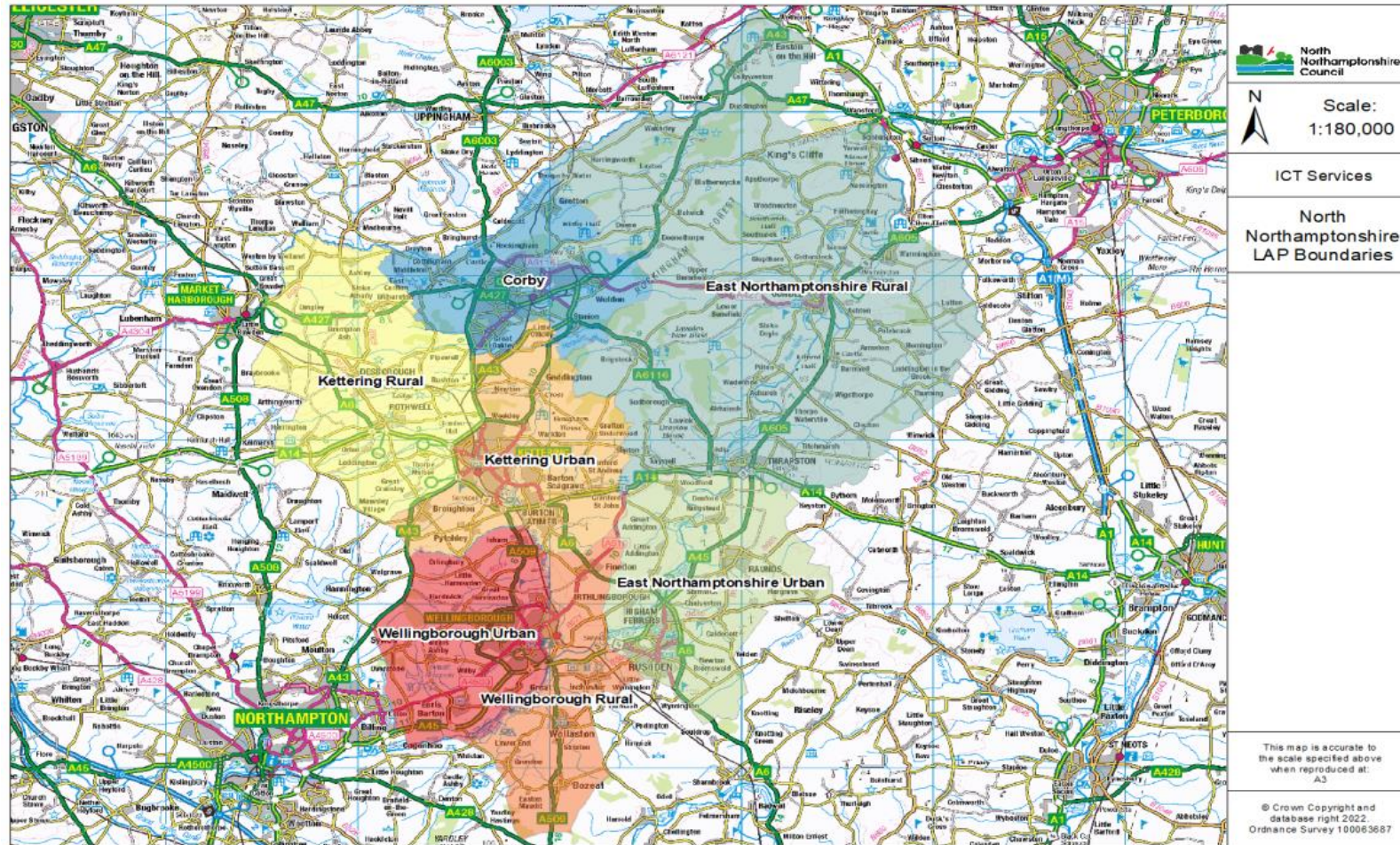
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Our History



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Sovereign Districts



Transformation Issues

Context of the Transition (2021)

- The transition to the new council coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic, with many staff working remotely.
- There was a strong need to maintain “business as usual” so that customers did not experience a drop in service or quality.

Staff Experience and Morale

- Staff uncertainty of jobs and future roles
- Staff experienced anxiety and uncertainty during the transition and needed support.
- There was an ongoing need for clear communication and consistent messaging to both staff and customers.

Structural and Team Changes

- Ongoing changes to staffing and organisational structures as the new council developed its teams.
- Each legacy authority initially continued operating under its previous sovereign structures for leisure services.
- Different management structures, priorities, and arrangements across the sovereign councils created inconsistencies.
- Gradual team building and introductions were needed to integrate staff from legacy councils.



Transformation Issues

Operational and Technical Challenges

- Migration to new IT and management systems created uncertainty and significant learning needs.
- Staff were unclear about who to contact for key support functions such as finance, HR, procurement, and IT.
- The loss of informal support networks—no longer having colleagues “in the next office”—made quick problem-solving more difficult.
- Pay and Grading – Staff assimilation

Strategic Needs

- Leisure services needed to raise their profile and create an identity within the new authority to ensure visibility and strategic support.

NN Leisure Services Current Delivery

In-House Leisure Facility Delivery & Four Leisure Contracts

- 5 x Facilities with Pools
- 6 x Facilities with Sports Halls
- 8 x Gyms
- 1 x 18-hole Golf course
- 5 x Astro/3G pitches
- 2 x Athletics tracks
- Over 12 outdoor tennis courts
- 1 x Indoor Tennis Centre
- 1 x Football stadium
- 3 x Pavilions
- Football pitches and a Gaelic football pitch



Active Communities Programme

Health and Wellbeing Services

Projects and Capital programmes



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In-House Leisure Services Delivery

In-House Facility Delivery

- Corby East Midlands International Pool
- Lodge Park Sports Centre
- Priors Hall Golf Course
- West Glebe Park and Pavilion
- Nursery and Creche facilities
- Bar and catering services
- Swimming and Diving programmes
- Adult Leisure Membership
- Teen Fit Membership
- Junior Leisure Club
- Health and Fitness



In-House Capital Programme

- Priors Hall Golf course simulators
- Gym refurbishments
- Decarbonisation & Energy use reduction
- Ongoing Facility improvement



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In-House Leisure Services

Health and Wellbeing Programmes

- Lodge Park Sports Centre – Active Wellbeing Centre & Corby East Midlands International Pool
- Overview of Lodge Park Facility
- Active Aging provision
- Activity on Referral
- Cardiac Rehab
- Cancer Rehab
- Smart gym/E Gym
- Good Boost
- NHS Health Checks



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Active Environments and Partnerships

Management of 4 Leisure Contracts:

- Kettering – Freedom Leisure
- Kettering – Phoenix Leisure
- Rushden and Thrapston – Freedom Leisure
- Wellingborough – Places Leisure
- Numerous leased leisure facilities

Leisure provision S106 & new developments

Capital project support and delivery:

- Kettering Sports Park
- Tennis Court improvements
- Village Halls Leisure Facilities
- Desborough Leisure Centre
- Football pavilions
- 3 G Pitches
- Decarbonisation and energy use reduction programmes
- Ongoing facility improvement and development



Active Communities Team

- Events – Kids of Steel Triathlon, Active Communities Awards, Play Days, Sports promotional days, I can You can We Can events;
- Shape Dance programme and shows
- Walking football and netball
- Cheerleading
- Schools coaching
- Holiday programmes
- Holiday Activity Fund schemes
- Coach Development and training
- North Northamptonshire Sport Network
- Sport England Place Partnerships programme - Corby & Wellingborough
- Wellbeing Walks programme
- Active Families programme



Transformation Positives

- **Greater Strategic Influence:** Larger authority can shape and deliver leisure services with a broader vision and more consistent standards.
- **Cross-Cutting Opportunities:** Easier to collaborate across departments such as public health, libraries, schools, children's trust, and social services.
- **Improved Access and Inclusion:** Ability to design services that reach more residents and address inequalities across a wider area.
- **Integrated Service Delivery:** Closer links with health, education, and social care enable holistic approaches to community wellbeing.



Transformation Positives

- **Workforce Development:** Broader career pathways and training opportunities for staff across the new, larger organisation, opportunity to work with more directorates in cross cutting work.
- **Consistent Customer Experience:** Residents benefit from unified branding, booking systems, and service standards.
- **Innovation and Best Practice:** Easier to share and scale up successful initiatives across a wider network.
- **Stronger Partnerships:** More influence when working with external partners, national bodies, and funding agencies.

**Transitioning to a unitary authority is a journey—patience is essential.
Be Positive, it takes time, but with perseverance and teamwork,
you will get there.**



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Strategic Transformation

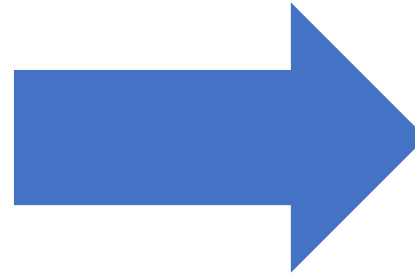
Former Borough Leisure Teams

Corby

East Northants

Kettering

Wellingborough



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Integrated Partnerships

- Our collaborative model brings together in-house teams and operators like Freedom Leisure and Places Leisure to deliver high-quality, accessible services across North Northamptonshire.
- Closer partnership working with leisure providers – monthly facility manager catch ups and Quarterly audits
- Integration of Active communities' teams and activities – Swim programmes – free swimming, play days, holiday delivery
- Alignment of concession scheme criteria
- Joint Sponsorship of NN Active Communities Awards
- Active for Health programme supporting operators to train staff to have skills to delivery health programmes
- Leisure providers working together on Active Communities working groups
- Wellbeing walks programme – bringing together one brand



Strategic Transformation

Through strategic transformation we have:

- Elevated the profile and identity for leisure within the authority
- Integrated the Leisure Team under Public Health, shifting focus to an active, community centred wellbeing service
- Developed the Active Communities Framework to guide our direction
- Refocused on health outcomes and reducing inequalities
- Aligned services with community needs
- Enhanced inclusivity and impact of leisure provision
- Established the North Northants Leisure Brand
- Restructured the team for greater effectiveness



Active Communities Framework

Active Communities Framework:

- Leisure Facilities Strategy
- Playing Pitch Strategy
- Active Communities Strategy

Health and Wellbeing Board Strategy

- Priority - Keeping Active

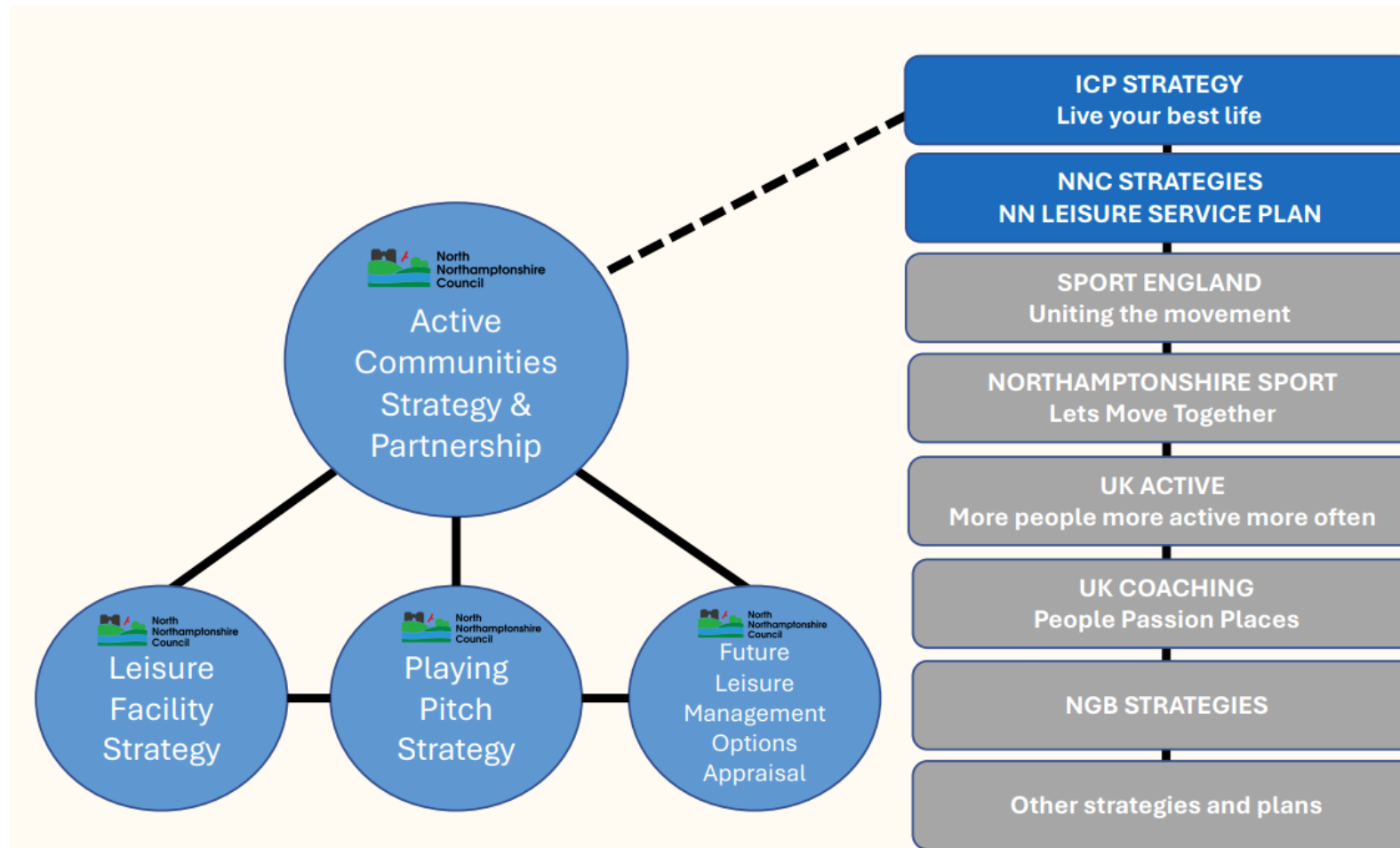
North Northamptonshire Council – Corporate Plan

- New plan underdevelopment – Keeping Active embedded



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Active Communities Framework



ACS Active
Communities
Strategy



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ACTIVE COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

Active Communities

Healthy Communities

To improve health and wellbeing by increasing participation in active wellbeing, movement and physical activity through the development and delivery of opportunities that provide better access to healthy lifestyle options.

Connected Communities

Connecting people and communities through active wellbeing, movement, and physical activity to improve mental and social wellbeing and provide active wellbeing assets that communities are proud of.

Thriving Communities

Utilise active wellbeing, movement, and physical activity to create vibrant and safe communities where there are increased opportunities for training and development. Active wellbeing services are sustainable and contribute to the visitor economy in North Northamptonshire.

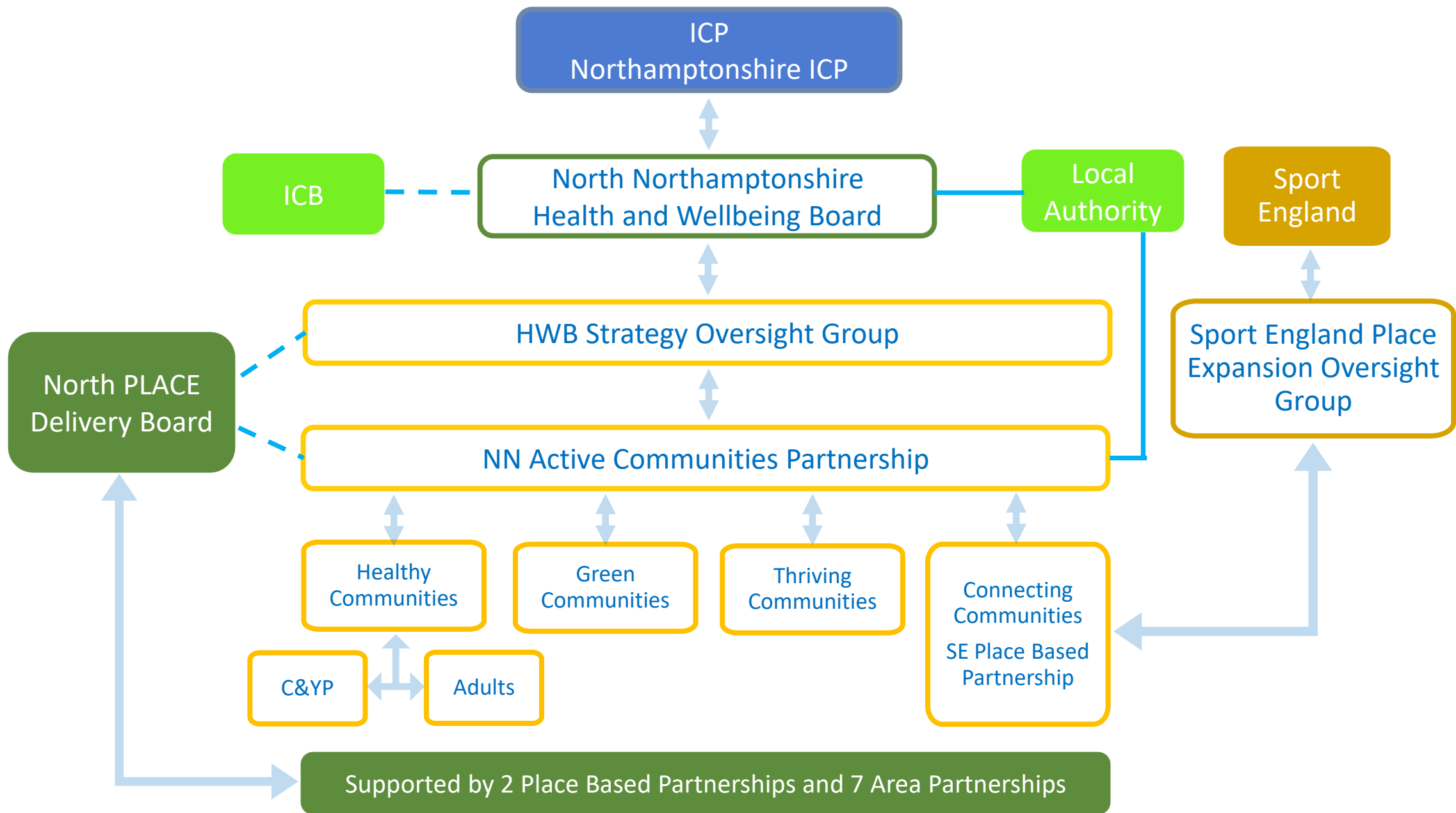
Green Communities

Active travel is the easy choice for residents and local developments embrace active environments.

The Council's active wellbeing portfolio is sustainable.

Outcomes





Looking Ahead: The Future Leisure Management in North Northamptonshire

Over four years on and the transformation continues.....

Corby's In-House Model

Continues to lead with specialist health programmes including:

- Cardiac & Cancer Rehabilitation
- Muscular skeletal support
- NHS Health Checks
- Rehabilitation & Falls Prevention
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Support

Our Ambition

Expand these life-changing services **across all NN Leisure Facilities**, ensuring equitable access to health and wellbeing support for all communities.



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Looking Ahead: The Future Leisure Management in North Northamptonshire

Contract Milestones

Sovereign Leisure contracts begin to expire **March 2027** - a key opportunity to reshape and align delivery.

Future Management Options Under Review

- In house

- External Leisure Contracts

- Hybrid models

Our Commitment

NN Council remains committed to a **sustainable, inclusive, and health-focused** leisure service that meets the evolving needs of our residents.



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