



More people
More active
More often

ukactive

Chair of the Board

Brief for candidates

June 2025

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming our next Chair at ukactive.

At ukactive, our long-standing and uncompromising vision is to get more people, more active, more often. We are committed to improving the health of the nation through promoting active lifestyles. We exist to provide expert support to our members on issues of reputational concern, to promote growth and champion the sector through campaigns, to provide business intelligence on sector trends, and to lobby Government to improve members' operating landscape, ensuring the impact the sector can have on major societal issues is acknowledged and maximised.

Mike Farrar stood down as Chair at the end of March 2025 following his appointment as interim Permanent Secretary for Health in Northern Ireland. Katy Cox, our Treasurer, has been appointed Interim Chair as we recruit a new Chair. We are seeking to grow the physical activity sector, demonstrate value to our members, and ensure strong external relationships, particularly with Government and bodies such as Sport England. More generally, we are keen to increase our leadership of the physical activity sector overall and to ensure the ongoing financial sustainability of our organisation.

As Chair, you will provide credible and inspiring leadership to the ukactive Board and hold the Executive team accountable for delivery of ukactive's strategy, whilst also instilling an innovative and collaborative culture for Board and the wider organisation. You will be experienced in performing external and media-facing activities in order to help increase the organisation's profile and, in an emblematic role such as this, ideally you will have experience of political engagement or influence. Although not essential, we would welcome applications from individuals with a public profile.

The current Board of ukactive is highly committed, skilled, and capable, and dedicated to realising the mission of the organisation. You will be someone who shares that passion for promoting active lifestyles and the benefits that this brings to the nation's physical, mental, and social wellbeing. You will also recognise our significance within the sector and demonstrate a desire to help us consolidate and increase our influence and impact, as well as support our membership in promoting physical activity. With that in mind, you will have exceptional interpersonal and alliance-building skills to leverage stakeholder networks to the greatest effect, and to ensure we have a voice.

You will have a dynamic outlook, an outstanding reputation for ambassadorial capability, unimpeachable integrity, a commitment to diversity and maturity of judgement. You will demonstrate high intellectual and strategic acumen but engage with energy, warmth, and wisdom both externally and internally with the Board of Directors and ukactive staff.

If you believe you have what we are looking for, we very much look forward to hearing from you.

About ukactive

ukactive is the leading not-for-profit membership body for the physical activity sector, comprising members and partners from across the UK. With over 3,500 members we represent the full spectrum of the physical activity sector across the public, private and third sector. Our membership spans from gyms, public leisure centres, sports bodies and other activity providers, to major consumer brands and equipment providers. We exist to provide expert support to our members on issues of reputational concern, to promote growth and champion the sector through breakthrough campaigns, to provide business intelligence on sector trends, and to lobby Government to improve members' operating landscape, ensuring the impact the sector can have on major societal issues is acknowledged and maximised.

We are committed to getting more people more active, more often, and to working with any organisation who shares this goal. We recognise the vital role of the active lifestyle sector in facilitating, sponsoring, and promoting physical activity. That is why we undertake key research into the physical activity sector and work closely with commercial brands and local authorities to develop and support initiatives which encourage more people to be more active, more often.

ukactive is predominantly independently funded by subscriptions and other revenue generated from members and partners. We work in partnership with other organisations to achieve shared goals. We can influence positively by making connections between active lifestyle providers and those who promote active lifestyles and anybody else who is interested in getting the nation more active, more often.

Our values represent us as an organisation and our Board. These are "We are a Community", "We Care", "We are Driven", "We Empower" and "We are Progressive".

To find out more about us, please visit www.ukactive.com.

Role profile

The role of Chair of ukactive is to provide inspiring leadership and effective governance to the organisation. The Board of Directors is responsible for setting the strategic aims, objectives, and direction of ukactive and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the organisation. Day-to-day management of the organisation is delegated to an executive team led by the Chief Executive. The Chair ensures the Board is effective, cohesive, and collaborative and acts as an ambassador and visible champion for ukactive and the physical activity sector.

Leadership

- Lead with an inspiring and dynamic outlook, providing direction to the Board and wider organisation and challenging the Executive where necessary.
- Hold the Executive team accountable for delivery of ukactive's strategy, whilst also instilling an innovative and collaborative culture.
- Ensure that the organisation promotes diversity and inclusion for all its stakeholders.
- Safeguard the reputation of ukactive, upholding the values of the organisation by example.
- Support and champion specific projects/workstreams as required.

Governance

- Take responsibility for the Board's composition, development, and succession planning, supported by the Nominations and Remuneration Committee.
- Promote the highest standards of governance, ethics, compliance and risk management within the Board and the wider organisation with reference to Sport England's Code for Sports Governance.
- Ensure the Board provides appropriate influence, expert advice, support, and constructive challenge both within ukactive and the wider physical activity sector.
- Ensure the Board reviews, scrutinises and evaluates ways of working by ukactive and its members and partners.
- Ensure conflicts of interests are recognised, recorded and managed.
- Ensure an annual Board evaluation and individual Board member appraisals are performed and that results from these are acted on.

Ambassadorial

- Act as an ambassador and visible champion for ukactive and its membership with key external stakeholders, including political stakeholders.
- Champion the organisation to, and manage relationships with, membership/potential membership.
- Play a leading role in representing ukactive in the media and at internal and external conferences and events.
- Mobilise effective Government engagement and lobbying.

Person specification

Knowledge and experience

- Strategic leadership experience.
- Significant experience of engaging with Government or the political environment at a senior level, with a strong focus on influencing and partnership working: you are likely to have a track record of influencing at the most senior levels in the UK and / or in the devolved administrations.
- Understanding of ukactive's role as a membership body and the various parts of the physical activity sector.
- Understanding of the health sector and links with the physical activity agenda.
- Sound understanding of UK governance requirements.
- Ideally bring an existing level of credibility within the physical activity or health sector.

Skills and abilities

- High intellectual capacity and a clear and independent thinker.
- Strong commercial acumen and ability to identify and convert growth opportunities.
- Highly effective relationship and alliance building abilities.
- Sound judgement with high capacity for self-reflection.
- Outstanding verbal and written communication skills with excellent media and spokesperson abilities to showcase the work of ukactive.
- Has the capacity to support both the Board and Executive development.

Personal style and attributes

- Dynamic leadership style that guides and inspires the Board and Executive to fulfil their respective responsibilities.
- A natural networker who secures confidence immediately, has a diplomatic style that will galvanise support for ukactive's work.
- Collaborative approach with excellent interpersonal skills.
- A demonstrable passion for physical activity and the benefits it can bring.
- A strong commitment to ukactive's mission and values.
- Although not essential, we would welcome applications from individuals with a public profile.

Note: The Chair must be independent. This is defined in the Code for Sports Governance as follows: "A person is independent if they are free from any close connection to the organisation and if, from the perspective of an objective outsider, they would be viewed as independent. A person may still be deemed to be independent even if they are a member of the organisation and/or play the sport. Examples of a 'close connection' include:

A. they are or have within the last four years been actively involved in the organisation's affairs, for example as a representative of a specific interest group within the organisation such as a sporting discipline, a region, or a home country.

B. they are or have within the last four years been an employee of the organisation.

C. they have close family ties with any of the organisation's directors or senior employees."

Terms of appointment

Time commitment

The role requires up to 2.5 days a month. This includes:

- Chairing Board meetings – quarterly meetings 2-3 hours in length are held in central London and ½ hourly update calls are held in the intervening months.
- Attendance at Nominations and Remuneration Committee. Meetings are held virtually as required (generally maximum three times a year).
- Attendance at regional membership events across England, Northern Ireland, Wales, and Scotland.
- Attendance at ukactive events including ukactive awards, Active Uprising and Strategic Partner Group events.
- Media-facing activities as required, including as part of National Fitness Day.
- Attendance at least one of the quarterly ukactive all staff in-person meetings each year.

Remuneration

The role is remunerated at £12,000 per annum.

Length of appointment

All Board appointments are for an initial three-year term, renewable to up three times for a maximum of nine continuous years.

Equality, diversity and Inclusion

ukactive is committed to championing equality, diversity and inclusion throughout all aspects of the organisation's work. As part of this the Board has made a commitment to achieving greater diversity.

How to apply

To make an application, please provide by email to hr@ukactive.org.uk:

- your CV; and
- a covering letter (maximum one side of A4) that sets out your motivation for applying for this appointment and why you think your skills and experience make you suitable.

We would be grateful if you would also complete the Equality and Diversity monitoring form provided. This form is for monitoring purposes only and is not treated as part of your application.

The closing date is 11th July 2025.

Formal interviews for shortlisted candidates are expected to take place in early September. Short-listed candidates will have the opportunity to have an informal conversation with the Chief Executive and/or Interim Chair.