



AI-assisted collective ad regulation

The ASA's
2024-2028 strategy

Revised October 2026

Legal, decent, honest and truthful



October 2026

AI-assisted, collective ad regulation

Our strategy at a glance

Who we are

We are the UK's independent frontline regulator of ads by legitimate businesses and other organisations in all media, including online. We are authoritative and influential on ad regulation; the centre of expertise.

Our purpose and ambition

Our purpose is to make sure ads are responsible.
Our ambition is to make sure every UK ad is a responsible ad.

What we do is important

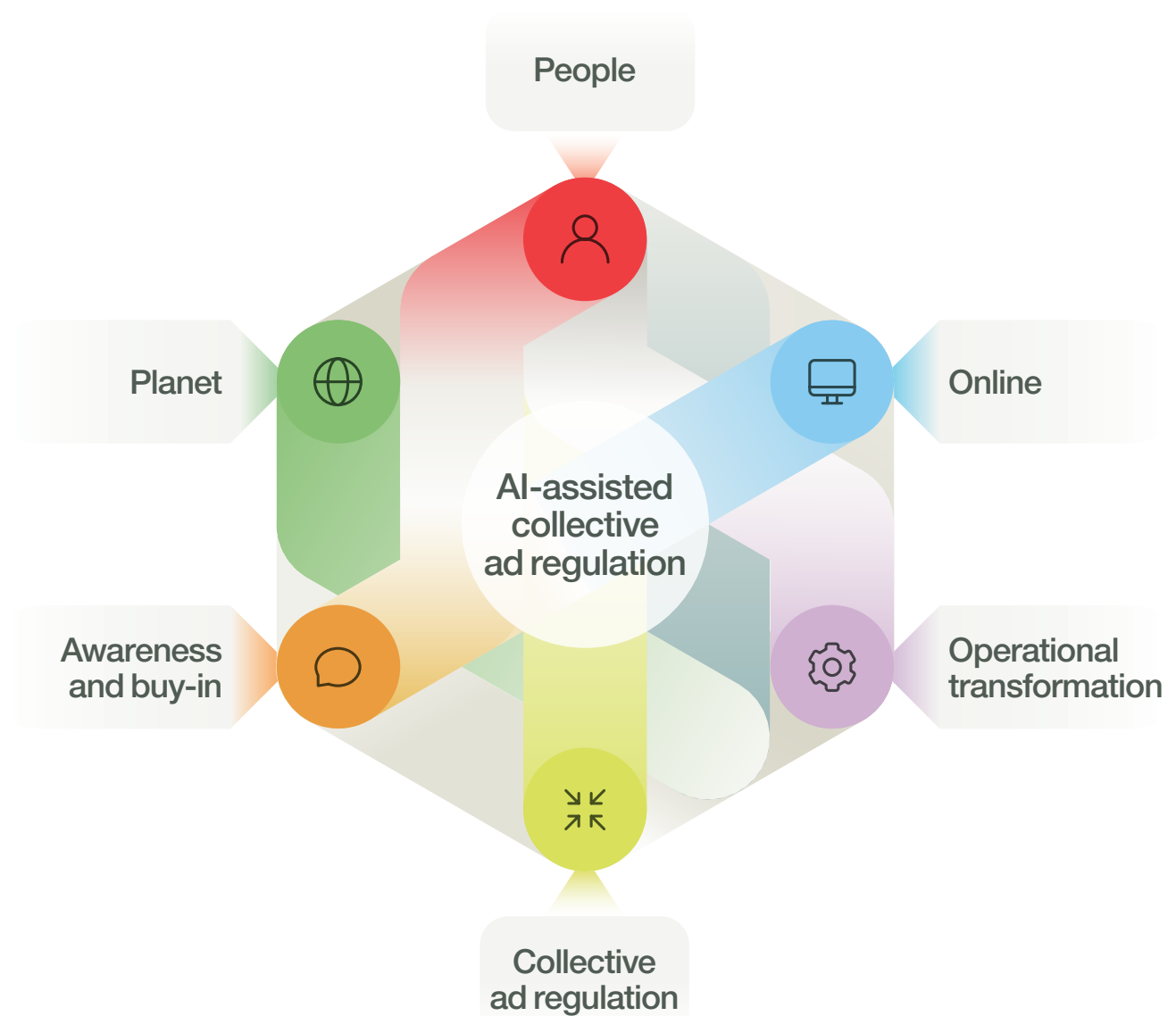
We are passionate about what we do because responsible ads are good for people, good for society and good for business.

How we regulate

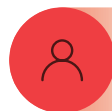
We put people first and particularly focus on online ads. We use technology, including AI, to enhance our effectiveness and efficiency. We work with the advertising industry and other regulators too, delivering collective ad regulation.

2026 review

We undertook a review of this strategy at the mid-point to check the assumptions we had based our decisions on in 2023 and identify any developments or changes we need to take account of or respond to in the remaining strategy period. Page three of this document summarises the changes made.



The six strands of our strategy



1 > People

We will put people first and prioritise protecting vulnerable people. On matters of offence, we will prioritise only the most serious cases. We will take account of prevailing societal trends and beliefs to inform our regulation and ensure we represent everyone. And we will make sure we have the best people, recruiting, retaining and exploring more flexible working practices for people from both diverse backgrounds and a wider geographical area.

2026 revisions

Changes have been made to recognise increasing concerns about fraudulent ads and advertising inappropriately targeted at children.



2 > Planet

We will run our Climate change and the environment project throughout the strategy period, as well as helping businesses make responsible environmental claims. We will continue to implement our own Net Zero plan.

2026 revisions

Changes reflect the importance of helping businesses to make responsible environmental claims.



3 > Online

We will continue to regulate all forms of online advertising that we cover, using our AI-based Active Ad Monitoring system to identify and swiftly act against irresponsible online ads, as well as provide more comprehensive reporting on compliance levels. We will champion a permanent Intermediary and Platform Principles regulatory framework to help meet the challenges we face regulating online ads, bringing greater transparency and broader accountability. We will work closely with other statutory regulators whose remits overlap with ours and play our part in tackling fraud involving online ads. And we will be authoritative and influential in online ad regulation.

2026 revisions

This strand has been updated to take account of new online safety legislation and the Government's fraud strategy.

Changes recognise developments in generative AI and AI advertising, as well as plans to ban social media for under-16s.

We have updated our commitment to publishing more reports to show increasing compliance rates and using the full range of our sanctions to improve standards.

We have also referenced our work with Ofcom on fraudulent advertising.



4 > Awareness and buy-in

We will be ambitious in increasing public and opinion-former awareness of, and trust in, the nature and extent of our ad regulation in all media. We will continue to make the case for collective ad regulation to the ad industry. We will better promote our advice and training services, charging for premium bespoke copy advice. And we will continue to invest in our data science capability, more people to address over-leanness in some areas and more people to act on data science insights.

2026 revisions

Changes reflect our commitment to raise compliance levels and our move to charging for premium bespoke copy advice.



5 > Collective ad regulation

We will continue to work with governments and statutory regulators, including to explore and as necessary address any material gaps in ad regulation. We will continue to engage with the UK Government's Online Advertising Taskforce. We will maintain our targeted and proportionate approach to regulation, promoting a level playing field, which allows responsible advertising to flourish and contributes to a stable, pro-growth regulatory framework. And we will, through our membership of EASA and ICAS, continue our engagement with supranational organisations and institutions.

2026 revisions

This strand has been updated to include the Government's Industrial Strategy and Creative Industries Sector Plan and our commitment to maintaining a targeted and proportionate approach to regulation, contributing to a stable, pro-growth regulatory framework.



6 > Operational transformation

We will prioritise proactive regulatory projects that adopt a 'whole system' approach on ad-related issues that cause the most detriment to people. We will resolve investigations quicker. And we will fully exploit data science to deliver our proactive, preventative and reactive regulation.

2026 revisions

Changes to this strand reflect our commitment to continue to rebalance our regulatory investment from reactive complaints casework to more proactive work.

We will review our operating model in light of the impact of AI, striving for greater efficiencies, including in our use of technology.

Who we are, our purpose and how we regulate

The ASA

We are the UK's independent frontline regulator of ads by legitimate businesses and other organisations in all media, including online. We are authoritative and influential on ad regulation; the centre of expertise.

The rules we administer and enforce are contained in the UK Advertising Codes, written by the industry Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP). To help maintain our independence from the industry that funds us, we are primarily funded at arm's length by the Advertising Standards Boards of Finance (Asbof).

Together, the ASA, CAP and Asbof make up the ASA system.

Our purpose, ambition and values

Our purpose is to make sure ads are responsible.

Our ambition is to make sure every UK ad is a responsible ad.

Our values are to be proactive, collaborative, accountable, transparent and decisive. We want external stakeholders to find us to be: independent in administering the Codes; evidence-based, proportionate, targeted and consistent; and reflective of society, not a social engineer.

What we do is important

We are passionate about what we do because responsible ads are good for people, good for society and good for business. They entertain and inform us, helping us to choose products and services. They fund the media, sport and culture we all enjoy. They can be a force for social good, encouraging us to contribute to good causes, make more responsible choices and stay safe. And they help deliver competition and power the economy.

By making sure ads are responsible, we protect people from being misled, harmed or offended, helping them feel more confident in the ads they see and hear.

How we regulate

We put people first. Protecting them from irresponsible ads sits at the heart of what we do.

We mainly focus on online ads. That is because: people, particularly children, spend so much time online; businesses advertise online more than anywhere else; our experience of regulating ads in all media tells us there are relatively more problems with online ads; and the online environment is vast, diverse, often subject to few or no media gatekeepers and is subject to rapid innovation. But we do not take our eye off the important task of making sure ads are responsible in other media too.

We use technology, particularly AI, to enhance our effectiveness and efficiency and we invest as much in preventative and proactive regulation as we do in reactive regulation. However, knowing what ads the public and others complain to us about remains important, as does acting on complaints that identify breaches of the Codes.

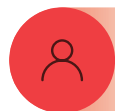
We have always worked with the wider advertising industry, which depends on trust in advertising. We strive to make sure advertisers play by the same rules, helping to create trusted media environments in which their responsible ads can flourish. We rely on their arm's-length funding, and the support, buy-in and, in some cases, funding of all parties involved in the preparation and publication of ads. We attach great importance to the benefits of working with a world class UK advertising industry, which supports the self-/co regulation independently administered by the ASA.

But that support is coupled with our robust and independent decision-making to ensure we deliver the best outcomes for people, who remain our priority. We are independent of the businesses who pay for what we do, independent of government and independent of special interest groups.

Our partnering with other regulators is crucial too. Our frontline ad regulation often complements their activities, or even frees them up entirely to concentrate on their other duties. And they are sometimes able to tackle ad-related problems that we cannot.

We call our model of partnering with businesses and other regulators 'collective ad regulation'. Our independence and the buy-in and support we receive through collective ad regulation delivers faster, more flexible, more joined-up and proportionate regulation.

AI-assisted, collective ad regulation



1 > People

Key drivers

1. People in the UK value the creativity, entertainment, social contribution and information provided by ads. But many of them also distrust ads, driven in particular by feeling bombarded and concerns about misleading (particularly fraudulent) advertising and ads inappropriately targeted at children. They have a broad definition of advertising, little sympathy for remit boundaries between regulators and high expectations that their problems should be resolved.
2. People are more likely to share similar views on the importance of tackling misleading and scam advertising, and protecting children and vulnerable people, than they are on more subjective (and sometimes socially divisive) issues like harm and offence.
3. People in the different nations and regions of the UK share many perspectives on ads, but their experiences, and the ads they see, hear and are influenced by, are not always the same.
4. Our own people, our employees, are our key asset. By recruiting and retaining talented and engaged people, equipping and treating them well, and by being an inclusive and diverse organisation, including in thought and protected characteristics, we will regulate better.

Strategic decisions

1. We will put people first. (And people potentially means anyone, not just those who complain to us.) Given people have little sympathy for remit boundaries between regulators and high expectations that their problems should be resolved, we will be their first port of call. The frontline regulator of UK ads, authoritative and influential on ad regulation and the centre of expertise.
2. We will prioritise protecting vulnerable people¹. Those will include children and financially vulnerable people, but we will also identify, and develop our understanding of other vulnerable groups, and people who are situationally vulnerable, who we will need to prioritise protecting, including by taking into account variations between the nations and regions. We will use various intelligence-gathering methods, including desk research, increased investment in public research and AI-assisted monitoring, to find out what ad-related issues are the most important for us to tackle and which vulnerable people need protecting. And we will identify additional robust external indicators of our positive impact.
3. With growing divisions in society, we will not be able to please everyone, for example on matters of harm and offence. We will review the thresholds for intervening against ads on grounds of offence, prioritising the most serious cases.
4. We will make sure we have the best people, which includes recruiting and retaining people, including our ASA Council members, from diverse backgrounds. We will pursue the highest levels of staff engagement and wellbeing and provide people with the skills, tools and support to succeed. We will explore how best to invite fresh input and insights, and take account of prevailing societal trends and beliefs, to inform our regulation and ensure we represent everyone. We will further improve our engagement with the UK nations and regions, for example through taking advantage of recruitment and flexible working practices to widen the geographical distribution of our workforce. And while our own use of technology will include looking for efficiencies, our focus will be on how better to enable our people to do their jobs well.

1. Vulnerability can derive both from membership of a particular group sharing certain characteristics (for example, children) or as a result of particular circumstances (for example, a recent bereavement or financial problem).



2 > Planet

Key drivers

1. Increasing concerns about the climate change emergency and the human impact on the environment have led the UK, Welsh and Northern Irish Governments to commit to net zero by 2050², with 78% of that reduction achieved by 2035, and the Scottish Government by 2045. Instead of UK advertising just being seen as part of the problem, it must be part of the solution to the UK achieving those targets.
2. When it comes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, we must keep our own house in order.

Strategic decisions

1. We will run our *Climate change and the environment* project throughout the strategy period, including in partnership with the other regulators. We will continue to focus on misleading green claims, for example in advertising related to greener homes, given the potential for people to be misled as the UK transitions to net zero. But we will also focus on helping businesses make responsible green claims, given the important contributions those make to helping people make more sustainable choices. We will deliver our regulation to support the rapid and lasting change towards more sustainable business needed, concentrating on the content and targeting of ads, given it is for Government and Parliament to consider the arguments of those who campaign for sector-specific advertising bans.
2. We will continue to implement our own Net Zero plan, reducing our greenhouse gas emissions so we meet our net zero target. We will do that according to the necessarily high standards that we anticipate the UK and/or international expert bodies will develop in the coming years.

2. 2050 target = 100% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990. 2035 target = 78% reduction.



3 > Online

Key drivers

1. Online advertising is diverse. Not only are there differences in how paid ads are served on closed platforms that offer an integrated ad buying service and the open internet, but there are differences between paid ads and other categories of online advertising, particularly influencer advertising and businesses' own advertising claims on their own websites, apps and social media accounts. And the pace of innovation is fast.
2. People spend a lot of time online and businesses have followed them there, advertising online far more than anywhere else. While those businesses are primarily responsible for making sure their ads are responsible, UK society increasingly expects, and for regulated entities UK online safety law requires, the platforms, intermediaries and publishers that make up the online advertising supply chain to play a greater role in helping to uphold standards.
3. Our collective ad regulation approach is key to regulating online ads better. We cannot do it alone. Close partnerships with other regulators, with platforms and intermediaries, and with industry initiatives are key.
4. Fraud is the largest crime type, levels have grown in recent years and many frauds are now perpetrated, or facilitated in part, online, with texts, calls, emails and online social media platforms being among the most common forms of contact by fraudsters. The Government published its 2026–2029 Fraud Strategy in April 2026.
5. Online advertising is evolving rapidly. Technological developments like generative AI promise great opportunities for society, but also carry great risks, including around advertising. The popularity of AI chatbots coupled with the economics of the AI sector make it inevitable that AI chatbots will soon become major advertising platforms. The widescale adoption of connected TVs enables addressable advertising, which offers advertisers the ability to show different ads to different households. Such data-driven targeting is available, or expected soon, in other media too. Meanwhile, societal concerns about AI are increasing, as are concerns about children's exposure to harm on social media, with the Government announcing its intention to ban under-16s from accessing major social media platforms from 2027.
6. Concerns about data and privacy are driving action by data protection authorities. And the online advertising market is changing with the phasing out of the use of third-party cookies for targeting online ads, an issue that matters to some people, but which is of central importance to the online advertising supply chain.

Strategic decisions

1. We will continue to regulate all forms of online advertising that we cover. We will use our Active Ad Monitoring system to help us identify and swiftly act against irresponsible online ads, prioritising high priority areas that cause the most detriment, including influencer ads and inappropriate targeting. Assisted by that deployment of our AI capability, we will publish more reports to show how we are raising compliance levels over a greater range of advertising sectors. And we will prioritise compliance activity based on risk, where appropriate, leveraging partnerships with professional bodies and using the full range of our sanctions and arrangements with statutory regulators, to deliver more meaningful and sustained improvements in standards over the longer term.
2. We will complement that by championing a permanent Intermediary and Platform Principles regulatory framework to help meet the challenges we face in regulating online ads, bringing greater transparency and broader accountability to that important area.
3. We will work closely with other statutory regulators whose remit overlap with ours to improve outcomes for people.
4. Fraudulent ads cause significant harm to people and undermine trust in both advertising and the regulatory system. We will continue to take an active role in tackling consumer fraud involving online ads via our Scam Ad Alert system and partnership working with enforcement authorities, online platforms and businesses across the advertising supply chain. We will work closely with Ofcom as they bring in new rules on fraudulent advertising. And we will encourage businesses to adopt effective self-regulatory initiatives that help prevent fraudsters from entering the online advertising ecosystem.
5. We will be authoritative and influential in online ad regulation, including exploring the impact of AI on advertising and our regulation. We will work towards bringing AI companies within the ASA system, where they are not already. And we will closely monitor the 'AI backlash' and the impact of any under-16 social media ban on our regulation, responding where we need to.
6. We will work closely with the UK's data protection authority, the ICO, in areas where its regulation of data intersects with our regulation of advertising. And we will explore whether and how we can support data and privacy-related ad industry initiatives.



4 > Awareness and buy-in

Key drivers

1. Many people still do not know us or, if they do, do not know the nature and extent of our online ad regulation.
2. Many in the industry who should be familiar with us do not know us well enough, do not feel part of the ASA system in which they have a stake and do not use our advice and training services.
3. Although the UK ad industry continues to support and fund us, and our short-to-mid-term funding is secure, the percentage of our funding coming from online advertising must, in the long-term, broadly match the percentage of UK advertising spent online.

Strategic decisions

1. We will be ambitious in increasing public and opinion-former awareness of, and trust in, the nature and extent of our ad regulation in all media. We will do that through our day-to-day communications, through promoting the impact of our Active Ad Monitoring system in raising compliance levels across a wide range of advertising sectors, and by running our ASA ad campaign regularly throughout the strategy period. We will position ourselves as the frontline regulator of UK ads, influential on ad regulation and the centre of expertise. Our messaging will be more confident and authoritative, but more personal and relatable too.
2. We will increase industry awareness of, and trust in, our work, which helps maintain a level playing field by striving to make sure advertisers play by the same rules. We will position ourselves as above, but we will also stress the importance of (well-earned) trust in advertising and the vital role media owners can play by donating ad inventory to our ad campaign. We will better promote our advice and training services, charging for premium bespoke copy advice. We will prioritise the industry audiences we target, because it will be impractical to target them all.
3. We will continue to make the case for effective collective ad regulation to the ad industry to support Asbof in putting our funding on a long-term sustainable basis, including working with Asbof to consider and find new channels of funding.



5 > Collective ad regulation

Key drivers

1. Governments and parliaments across the UK are increasingly willing to legislate the regulation of ads, in particular Less Healthy Food (LHF) ads.
2. The UK Government's Creative Industries Sector Plan, part of its Industrial Strategy, identifies advertising as one of the four sub-sectors with the highest potential to boost growth.
3. Legislation from outside the UK, particularly from the EU, will continue to affect businesses operating in the UK and may therefore have implications for our regulation.

Strategic decisions

1. We will continue to make the case for effective collective ad regulation to politicians and officials, including through raising awareness of, and trust in, our role regulating online advertising, with our use of data science central to our strategy. We will position ourselves as the frontline regulator of UK ads by legitimate businesses, authoritative and influential, the centre of expertise and providing clear leadership on ad regulation matters. We will maintain our targeted and proportionate approach to regulation, promoting a level playing field, which allows responsible advertising to flourish and contributes to a stable, pro-growth regulatory framework.
2. We will continue to work with governments and statutory regulators to explore and as necessary address any material gaps in ad regulation, including potentially via co-regulation, stressing the importance of targeted and proportionate regulation that allows responsible advertising to thrive. We will work closely with Ofcom on ad regulation it contracts out or designates to us and provide expert insight on any advertising-related issues that fall under the Online Safety regime. We will continue to engage with the UK Government's Online Advertising Taskforce, focused on the regulation of online paid ads.
3. To help solve cross-border issues, share learning and stay close to the development of overseas regulation that might impact our regulation of ads by businesses and other organisations operating in the UK, we will, through our membership of EASA and ICAS, continue our engagement with supranational organisations and institutions. We will champion how we think the regulatory framework should develop to help meet the challenges ad regulators face in regulating ads online.



6 > Operational transformation

Key drivers

1. Proactive regulatory projects are often best for tackling sectoral or thematic ad compliance problems. Those projects increasingly adopt a 'whole-system' approach, where we: use a broad array of intelligence to prioritise ad-related issues, sometimes in partnership with other regulators and industry; use data science to identify candidate ads for investigation; publish rulings following those investigations to generate awareness of the issues and to help draw the line between what is, and is not, acceptable; produce guidance and/or circulate Enforcement Notices to the industry to further raise awareness of the issues; and use our Active Ad Monitoring system to check for compliance and enable follow-up enforcement.
2. Resolving investigations quicker, and preventing or removing obviously irresponsible ads, are important for protecting people and for maintaining a level playing field for advertisers.
3. Our ongoing digital transformation is key to keeping up with the range of regulatory issues people and businesses face. AI technology in particular is essential to us having visibility of the ads that people see and hear, enhancing our compliance activities and delivering efficiencies. If we are unable to source data and ads ourselves, getting data and ads from external providers, including as appropriate from platforms, will be central to that.
4. Our past, current and forecasted investments in people and new capabilities, including above inflation investments from 2022-2024 to address below inflation investments in previous years, have been and remain key to our broader organisational transformation.

Strategic decisions

1. We will prioritise proactive regulatory projects, adopting a 'whole system' approach, on ad-related issues that cause the most detriment to people, focusing on protecting vulnerable people, on age-restricted ads in sectors like food, gambling and alcohol and on issues that are more specific to people in the nations and regions. We will continue to rebalance our regulatory investment from reactive complaints casework to more proactive work.
2. We will resolve investigations quicker. We will focus on preventing irresponsible ads appearing in the first place, where appropriate with the support of agencies, media owners, online ad supply businesses and others, and reporting on our success at that. We will deliver ongoing, agile and visible enforcement, in particular by removing irresponsible online ads quicker, including through enforcement mechanisms developed with platforms and intermediaries. We will explore how we use the ASA Council as efficiently as possible, focusing on the most important issues.
3. We will fully exploit data science, deploying mature in-house data science capability that gives us the confidence and the capacity to take on large strategic projects. We will have access to data and ads through our own systems and external providers, including as appropriate from platforms. Our external reputation as regulatory leaders in using data science will facilitate more partnerships with industry and other regulators.
4. We will continue to invest in: our data science capability; people to deliver our proactive, preventative and reactive regulation; and new capabilities, including any that come about from our championing how the regulatory framework should develop to help meet the challenges we face in regulating online ads. We will review our operating model, including in light of the impact of AI, to help us allocate our finite resources, tightly controlling our operating costs and striving for greater efficiencies, including via our use of technology.
5. We will aim to simplify our regulation where appropriate to deliver consistent and effective regulation across all media, including delivering a 'one Code' experience for stakeholders via our new website.

What success will look like



1 > People

As the frontline regulator of UK ads, we will be an easily accessible first port of call for people's ad-related concerns.

Delivering a sophisticated approach to identifying vulnerable people that has appropriate regard to the approaches of our consumer protection partners, prioritising their protection from irresponsible ads/ad targeting and providing robust external indicators of our positive impact.

And we will be a flexible, diverse employer, embracing hybrid-working and with greater employee representation in the nations and regions.



2 > Planet

We will continue to be a global leader in tackling misleading green claims and otherwise environmentally irresponsible ads. But we will also help businesses make responsible green claims, given the important contributions those make to helping people make more sustainable choices.

Our work will demonstrate that ad regulation is making a meaningful difference to how businesses promote their environmental credentials, supporting the delivery of the UK's net zero and other environmental targets.

As an organisation we will meet our published emission-reduction targets, as assessed by an independent, expert third party.



3 > Online

Through our regulation of online ads, data science capabilities, championing our insights as to how the regulatory framework should develop to help meet the challenges we face in regulating online ads and our partnerships with statutory regulators, we will identify and take swifter action against more irresponsible online ads.

That will involve us processing more than 60 million ads/potential ads (2025 figure) through our Active Ad Monitoring system to help us identify and swiftly act against irresponsible online ads. From that deployment of our AI capability, we will provide more comprehensive reporting on compliance levels in the areas we monitor and report on significantly greater numbers of irresponsible online ads amended or withdrawn.

We will play our part in supporting the significant reduction in fraud targeted in the Government's 2026-2029 Fraud Strategy, including through our championing of effective industry self-regulatory initiatives that seek to prevent fraudsters entering the online advertising supply chain in the first place.

We will be authoritative and influential in online ad regulation, including responding to the impact of AI on advertising and our regulation. We will have made material progress in bringing AI companies within the ASA system, where they are not already.

And we will be a partner of the ICO in regulating ad-related data and privacy issues.



4 > Awareness and buy-in

We will be widely known publicly and in the industry as the frontline regulator of UK ads, authoritative and influential on ad regulation and the centre of expertise, whose messaging is confident, authoritative, personal and relatable. Prompted public awareness of the ASA will be $\geq 70\%$, unprompted/spontaneous awareness of the ASA will be $\geq 20\%$, trust in the ASA will be $\geq 60\%$ and distrust in the ASA will be $\leq 6\%$.

Delivering high quality, targeted advice and training to the industry audiences that need it most.

With our funding secured on a long-term basis, including from new funding channels and charging for premium copy advice.



5 > Collective ad regulation

Independent surveys we have commissioned will show us to be widely known by parliamentarians as the frontline regulator of UK ads by legitimate businesses, authoritative and influential on ad regulation and the centre of expertise, working with both industry and other regulators.

Stakeholders will recognise that our regulation promotes a level playing field, allowing responsible advertising to flourish and contributing to the stable, pro-growth regulatory framework.

UK partner regulators will publicly acknowledge us to be a trusted frontline partner, including in any new co-regulatory frameworks.

And international stakeholder organisations will consider us a trusted partner too, engaging with supranational organisations, solving cross-border issues and championing through our membership of EASA and ICAS how the regulatory framework should develop to help meet the challenges we face in regulating online ads.



6 > Operational transformation

We will be an organisation that prioritises advice and training and proactive regulatory projects, investing at least 65% of our resource in preventative/proactive work than reactive complaints casework (47% in regulatory projects, including proactive complaints casework) and no more than 33% in reactive complaints casework. That will allow us to tackle irresponsible ads at scale and remove them quicker. But our reactive complaints casework will remain important, so we will resource it appropriately.

Stakeholder organisations will consider us to be a global leader in using data science to regulate better, including through large strategic projects, and delivering efficiencies. Data science will be integrated deeply into our processes, providing greatly enhanced visibility of online advertising.

It will allow us to select investigations from a larger pool of candidates, understand compliance levels more accurately and comprehensively, and effectively act against irresponsible online ads at scale in high priority areas.

We will have an up-to-date operating model that harnesses AI and other innovations to ensure our regulation is effective and efficient.

Industry will consider that we have simplified our regulation where appropriate.