



Sport Wales

**Sports Council For Wales Lottery
Distribution Account 2024-2025**

HC 1332

sportwales
chwaraeoncymru



Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
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AWARDING FUNDS FROM
THE NATIONAL LOTTERY®



Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account 2024-25

**Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 26(1) and
Section 26(3) of the National Lottery etc. Act 1993 (as
amended by the National Lottery Act 1998).**

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on 16 October 2025.

HC 1332

Introduction

Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account

1 April 2024-31 March 2025

History and statutory background

The National Lottery etc Act 1993 (as amended) nominated the Sports Council for Wales (known by its trade name, Sport Wales) as the body responsible for distributing funds generated by the lottery to sport in Wales. The duties of Sport Wales in performing its Lottery functions are carried out pursuant to the account directions issued by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, in accordance with Section 26(1) of the National Lottery etc Act 1993 and the Statement of Financial Requirements issued under Section 26(3) of the Act.

Management

The management and administration of the Lottery function is carried out through the Sports Council for Wales and the panels established by Sport Wales to assist in distributing Lottery funds to good causes in Wales.

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This publication is available at www.gov.uk/official-documents.

ISBN: 978-1-915287-65-6

Printed in the UK on behalf of the Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office

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A message from Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, Sport Wales Chair

As I enter the final year of my first term as Sport Wales' Chair, I want to reflect on what a huge year it has been for the organisation, the sector and Welsh sport as a whole.

In Paris, seeing the same number of women competing as men and the largest Welsh medal tally in both Olympics and Paralympics, for me shows that how we are working more inclusively across the sport sector is working. I am thrilled to see the resilience and fortitude of athletes from across Wales making their name on an international stage, and even when medals are missed out on, we saw firsts. Anna Hursey as the first Welsh table tennis player and Ella Maclean-Howell as the first Welsh mountain biker. Paul Karabardak's bronze in para-table tennis marking the first Welsh medal in the sport. And we saw incredible achievements; Elinor Barker became the most decorated Welsh Olympian and Emma Finucane winning three medals in the games, the first Welsh woman to do so since 1964. The list goes on.

Throughout it all, we note the support of the National Lottery for our athletes as they reached their 30th birthday. In such a monumental year for Welsh sport on the international stage, we were also pleased to highlight what a difference their support makes in communities across Wales.

Through our Be Active Wales fund, we awarded £4,191,065 to clubs from Bangor to Brecon and Llanberis to Llanrumney.

I visited the Senedd three times this year, firstly celebrating Welsh athletes alongside the First Minister and Llywydd, then highlighting the massive contribution of sport to the preventative health agenda in a Sport Wales held event and finally celebrating the contribution of the National Lottery to cultural life in Wales. I am pleased to see the recognition and understanding of the benefits of sport and culture in these spaces. For me, so many of the challenges facing our health system in Wales could be alleviated if we could support more people to be active. It's something that's been known for a long time and as we head into an election period in Wales, this is something I am heartened to hear stakeholders from different sectors joining together to speak about.



This year has certainly had its challenges, and I want to pay tribute to the sector and the staff team for ensuring we were able to weather a difficult financial settlement and ensure we have come through that time in a stronger position. I also want to thank our outgoing Minister, Dawn Bowden, who appointed me and with whom we built a long-term relationship. The changes in Government responsibilities this year led to us having four ministers to work with and ensure that our agenda was firmly established with. We thank them all for the time they gave us and we look forward to working with Jack Sargeant, Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership who has already firmly shown his commitment to sport and physical activity and the benefits it brings.

Of course, whilst the athletes took centre stage in Paris, the contributions of UK Sport, and the British Olympic Association (BOA) and ParalympicsGB must not be forgotten. I serve as a Board Member for UK Sport and it will be with sadness that we bid a fond farewell to our Chair, Dame Katherine Grainger, but with excitement as she moves to head up the BOA. Similarly, I wish to offer my sincere gratitude to Professor David Webb OBE who moves on from his role as Chair of the British Paralympic Association and welcome Dan Brooke to the role.



And to our own Board, we are now looking to a new round of recruitment where we will hope to seek the expertise of four new Members, whilst we have also said goodbye to a long-standing member of our Board, Professor Leigh Robinson who has taken up a new role as the Chair of the Central South Sport Partnership.

Finally, I am very pleased to have recently signed the Brighton plus Helsinki Declaration alongside our Chief Executive, Brian Davies OBE. Our formal commitment to furthering the rights and opportunities for women and girls in Welsh sport is something that I am very proud of.

Performance overview

A message from Brian Davies, Sport Wales CEO

Looking back on this year, I can honestly say it has been a genuinely challenging yet encouraging and fulfilling one. From a need to adapt and work differently due to a particularly constrained Welsh Government budget, to a truly inspiring and iconic Olympic and Paralympic Games in Paris, 2024/25 will definitely be another year to remember.



The scale of the cut we and the sector faced was significant, but I was humbled by how both our staff and partners responded, and, once again, such adversity gave rise to a focus on collaboration and joint working.

It is pleasing to note that the budget situation has been reversed giving rise to a more stable footing when it comes to funding for the year ahead, but we must make sure we challenge any future financial obstacles as they cannot be re-introduced without the likelihood of significant negative outcomes.

As an agency that distributes most of our available resource, we wanted to ensure that the impact of our budget reduction passed on to our partners and the people of Wales was minimised as far as possible.

However, the consequences were still a challenge which shook our sector, and the necessary response was not too dissimilar to that required during the pandemic - there has been a willingness to do things differently but, this time, an increased desire to explore permanent new models and innovative solutions. There is a need to build on this moving forward.

I am always grateful for the support of the sector, but this past year has seen more and more examples of the kind of working relationships that we want to encourage; open, mature, discursive, collaborative. Sometimes we have to make tough calls, but we want to do it transparently in the best possible way.

My gratitude also extends to the Government and Senedd for the time they have made for reviewing and understanding the issues faced in the sector.

The annual scrutiny of Sport Wales at the Culture Committee in October was combined with their inquiry into funding reductions, this enabled us to be very clear on the structured and innovative way we managed the financial challenge but also, together with Partners, evidence the way these cuts were impacting. Clearly, the in-year additional funding we received, whilst not replacing the total budget cut, did also help mitigate some of the pressures.

Despite the above, I am proud that we continued to deliver on our priorities, and with a business-as-usual attitude. In October, we brought an event to the Senedd looking at sport and physical activity and its ability as a preventative health tool. We saw great engagement from across the political spectrum and within our own sector, as well as from health partners and the Future Generations Commissioner. Looking ahead, we will want to build on this as we look to the Senedd elections in 2026. We know sport and physical activity can do so much more for the well-being of the people of Wales and we want to play our part.

And to the greatest multi-sport show on earth: Paris 2024 was a true inspiration and what a response from our athletes and coaches to the opportunity presented to them. The largest Welsh contingent at an Olympics and Paralympics coupled with historic success. A Games equal in terms of gender representation, and the whole of Wales thrilled to see Emma Finucane take home three medals as the first British woman to do so since Mary Rand in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics.

And only recently, the phenomenal Olympian Jerimiah Azu, who was disqualified in the 100m heats but bounced back and then won a relay medal, has now become a British record breaker and World Champion. His mental resilience exemplifies the importance of building robust and holistic high-performance athletes.

The Paralympics saw even more athletes of the finest calibre showing us exactly what is possible when preparation, dedication and application combine successfully. From Jodie Grinham's medal while pregnant to Sabrina Fortune's world record breaking first throw of her competition and Matt Bush as the first man to win a para-taekwondo gold medal for ParalympicsGB and becoming a flag-bearer in the closing ceremony. All our ParaGB athletes should be incredibly proud of their journey and achievements.

And finally, we celebrated 30 years of the National Lottery in the UK. Without the resources afforded by the National Lottery, many of our athletes would not be able to devote time to their training or travel to international competitions like the Olympics and Paralympics. We were pleased to celebrate the milestone amongst staff members; with our partners and most recently, with Senedd Members in a brilliant collaboration with other distributors of lottery money in Wales.

To close, whilst celebrating the above let's also push for many more decades of both Welsh Government and National Lottery funded success in pursuit of the Vision for Sport.

Delivering the vision

Overview

The Vision for Sport in Wales

'An active nation where everyone can have a lifelong enjoyment of sport'



Active Nation



Everyone



Lifelong



Enjoyment

Our Strategy

#1

Be Person Centred

#2

Give Every Young Person a Great Start

#3

Ensure Everyone has the Opportunity to be Active Through Sport

#4

Bring People Together for the Long-term

#5

Showcase the Benefits of Sport

#6

Be a Highly Valued Organisation

5 Ways of Working



Long-term



Prevention



Integration



Collaboration



Involvement

Integrated Annual Reporting



Well-being of Future Generations



Welsh Language



Equality



Biodiversity



Socio-economic

The Vision for Sport in Wales

‘An active nation where everyone can have a lifelong enjoyment of sport’



The Vision for Sport in Wales underpins our work as an organisation, the **collaborative** work of the sport sector, and the **involvement** of wider stakeholders. The Vision is not just for Sport Wales to work towards, rather it is the collective vehicle for cross-sector engagement in transforming Wales into an active nation.



Active Nation

We want as many people as possible to be inspired to be active through sport.



Everyone

The Vision is for everyone. From people who don't see themselves as sporty to those that win medals.



Lifelong

The Vision is for life; it responds to the needs of people at different stages of their life.



Enjoyment

The Vision focuses on creating a range of positive experiences so everyone can enjoy sport.



The Vision for Sport in Wales

Our Strategy was formed to play our part in delivering on the Vision for Sport in Wales. Our Strategy is formed by six strategic intent statements. These statements also act as our Well-being Objectives, and we utilise them to frame our Well-being of Future Generations (WFG) (Act) Wales 2015 public duties reporting.

#1

Be person centred

The needs and motivations of the individual lead the delivery, whether just starting out, aiming to progress, or striving for excellence on the world stage.

#2

Give every young person a great start

Every young person has the skills, confidence, and motivation to enable them to enjoy and progress through sport; giving them foundations to lead an active, healthy and enriched life.

#3

Ensure everyone has the opportunity to be active through sport

Sport is inclusive and provides a great experience for all.

#4

Bring people together for the long-term

There is a **collaborative**, sustainable and successful sport sector, led by collective insight and learning.

#5

Showcase the benefits of sport

The impact of sport is evidenced, and sport's reach is fully understood, showcased and celebrated through Wales.

#6

Be a highly valued organisation

Sport Wales is a respected organisation, striving to overachieve by delivering an exemplary service through valued staff.

5 ways of working

At Sport Wales, we have embedded the 5 Ways of Working from the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which also underpin the Vision. You will see these bolded throughout the document, showing how the ways of working affect our day to day activities.



Long-term – The Vision ensures we, alongside our partners plan for the long-term, developing opportunities that respond to the needs of all people in a changing society.



Prevention – The Vision is about ensuring sport is accessible, fun, and affordable, and leaves no one behind. It also ensures we put resources into preventing problems occurring, or from getting worse.



Integration – The Vision unites decision makers and organisations through its ambitions. It is built on the collaborative impact of what we can achieve when we work together.



Collaboration – The Vision belongs to and needs the support of everyone in Wales – working, investing, learning, and succeeding together.



Involvement – The Vision was built following conversations with individuals from every part of Wales and continues to promote involvement into shaping the future of Wales being an active nation.

Integrated annual reporting

We continue to report on our Public Duties throughout this one report, giving a holistic view of our work. Throughout this report you will see these icons below which relate to our individual duties.



**Well-being
of Future
Generations**



**Welsh
Language**



Equality



Biodiversity



**Socio-
economic**

Our areas of work

2024 – 2025

Through the lens of the Vision, our Strategy and the ways of working we determine the business priorities for the year ahead, agreed by our Board and Government. Throughout this report you will see each area of work denoted by the icons below.



Environmental sustainability

- Sustainability in procurement
- Energy Saving Grants
- Pursue collaboration opportunities
- Food pathway to reduce waste



Inclusive organisational culture

- Belonging audit
- Moving to Inclusion - diagnostic
- Anti-racism training
- Approach to staff engagement
- Hybrid working strategy / framework



Supporting a healthier Wales

- Plan transition of health interventions to Sport Partnerships
- Compelling case for sport as preventative tool
- Pilot new approach to mental health and well-being
- Women's health and well-being



Young people – positive experience of sport

- Daily Active
- Partnerships – alignment with inclusive sport system principles
- Foundation Framework and Building Foundations for Sport training
- Coaching development
- Pathway and Performance programmes



Investments

- Revised Capability Framework
- Review impact of the investment model in supporting the Vision for Sport in Wales.
- Further develop Accountability Approach
- Launch new grants system



Person-centred approach

- Mapping insight capability (Sport Wales and sector)
- Community of Learning / Sharing best practice
- Thematic review
- Leadership support to sector



Progressing sport partnerships

- Establish remaining partnerships
- Manage onboarding
- Complete governance reviews
- Support development and diversity of Sport Partnership Boards



Paris 2024, Olympic & Paralympic Games

The Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games reinforced Wales' growing influence on the world stage, with record-breaking participation and outstanding performances across multiple sports.

Wales was represented by a record number of Olympians, competing across a diverse range of sports. From the boxing ring to the velodrome, Welsh athletes played a key role in Team GB's medal success, delivering standout performances and adding to Wales' proud Olympic legacy.

The Paralympic Games saw an exceptional Welsh contingent, with athletes competing across multiple disciplines and securing a strong medal haul. With remarkable performances in para-athletics, cycling, and swimming, Welsh Paralympians once again demonstrated their world-class ability, contributing significantly to ParalympicsGB's success.

Leading into the Games, the Sport Wales Institute (SWI) **collaborated** closely with National Governing Bodies (NGBs), coaches, and athletes to **innovate** and refine training, recovery, and competition strategies. The support team adapted to the unique challenges of the Paris Games, including the city's heat and logistical demands, ensuring Welsh athletes had the best possible preparation.

Beyond preparation, members of the SWI team were embedded within Team GB and ParalympicsGB delegations, providing critical support on the ground. From managing recovery protocols to delivering real-time performance insights, their presence ensured that Welsh athletes had everything they needed to perform at their best when it mattered most.

As we reflect on Paris 2024 and look ahead to Los Angeles 2028, SWI remains committed to evolving our approach, continuing to push boundaries in science-informed athlete development, and ensuring that Wales remains a driving force within Team GB and ParalympicsGB for the **long-term**.



Our strategic intents as our well-being objectives

During 2024-25 we conducted a considered process of reviewing the Vision and the Sport Wales Strategy. Some changes were made to the language used and to update some of the statistics and insight referred to. There was a clear view that the six well-being objectives and strategic intent statements continued to be relevant and to drive Sport Wales' work.

Therefore, Sport Wales confirms that the well-being objectives remain unchanged.

During the end of 23-24 and into this financial year, policy aspirations were developed to further detail what outcomes we would like to see if we were successful in achieving our strategic intents.

To check the progress being made towards our well-being and equality objectives we conducted a review cycle in March/April 2025. The review cycle also strongly confirmed that the well-being objectives remain appropriate.

Our Annual Report is structured around the progress we have made on delivering our well-being objectives and provides a comprehensive account of the steps forward we have made. Our review has also centred on where we can progress further with an accompanying analysis outlining some of the learning and challenges that we have identified. This analysis is at the end of each section.



#1 Person centred

The needs and motivations of the individual lead the delivery, whether just starting out, aiming to progress or striving for excellence on the world stage.

Case Study:

Active Wheels: Inclusive cycling in Merthyr Tydfil



After suffering a brain haemorrhage at just nine years old, Tomas Evans found freedom through cycling. In 2018, he turned that passion into Active Wheels – an inclusive cycling club in Merthyr Tydfil.

With support from the National Lottery through Sport Wales' Be Active Wales Fund, the club has received £16,842 across two grants. This funding has enabled the purchase of e-bikes, regular bikes, a storage container, and safety equipment including helmets, lights, locks and hi-vis vests.

"Active Wheels caters for riders who feel that existing mainstream clubs are a little bit too much for them to join in with. There is a strong focus on the social element, and we always schedule stops at cafes along the routes! All of our rides are determined by the ability of the group, and we ride together – it's all about making people feel confident and comfortable", Tomas explained.

Led entirely by volunteers, the club runs inclusive sessions every weekend including short rides on Saturdays, longer scenic rides on Sundays and one-to-one track sessions at Aber Taf High School.

All of the club's rides and sessions are tailored to different abilities, and fun is always the priority.

Club Chair Phil Lewis, who has helped shape the club since joining three years ago, added:

"We are really grateful for the funding we've received from Sport Wales and the National Lottery, as well as the support we've had from Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council since we began.

"We are passionate about creating opportunities for everyone to enjoy cycling. Everyone is welcome at our club. Around 10% of our riders are people with a disability or diagnosed mental health condition.

"Riders can choose to bring their own bikes, or, thanks to Lottery funding, they have the option of borrowing our bikes as well as safety equipment."



Women succeeding in sport



We have focused on increasing the number of women having a positive experience of leadership in sport this year. Nine innovative online learning labs, aimed specifically at women were held to support progression into board, CEO, and senior management levels with both local and national partner organisations, to address the gender imbalance that currently exists for the **long-term**.

Insight indicates that women continue to be under-represented in leadership and decision-making roles across all sports and sport-related organisations.

The Gender Gap

2018 data: women comprised only **28%** of National Governing Body memberships in Wales

2024: the implementation of gender parity policies and various initiatives has increased female membership on boards to **38%**.

In Olympic and Paralympic sports organisations, women hold only **22%** of board or committee positions.

While this progress appears promising, numerous reports suggest that women on boards often still face negative experiences. And unfortunately, the gender gap becomes more pronounced when viewed globally.

9

learning labs

3

distinct

topics: the Imposter Phenomenon, Leading Self, and Fear-free organisations (focused on psychological safety).

Some of the feedback from those who attended included the following statements:

“The ability to speak with other women in the sector discussing issues that not only I was experiencing. Feeling you are not alone with some of these feelings and insecurities is very powerful.”

“Dedicated time to focus on my own role and attitudes to self and leadership.”

“The opportunity to network with other women in the sector, identify shared experiences and support each other to find solutions.”

Evaluating the programme, two future considerations have been highlighted: male allyship to foster a supportive environment; and though the online format increased opportunity for those across Wales, face to face networking is valued.

243

registrations

152

attendances from women, spanning the breadth of the sector, from entry level management, through to senior leadership.

SHE thrives



Research from the Wales Activity Tracker (2024) highlights that nearly one in two who experience menstrual cycles or associated symptoms, feel that this negatively impacts them when participating in sport and physical activity. We launched 'SHE Thrives: Accelerating Action for Females in Sport', to bring together athletes, coaches, and practitioners to empower female athletes and among those who support them, driving **innovation** in female athlete support and foster **collaboration** for the **long-term**.

The event was held at the Sport Wales National Centre, the day before International Women's Day and was attended by 92 participants. Sessions focused on open discussions, practical workshops, and expert-led sessions on female health in sport. By working with leading researchers and specialists, we provided evidence-based strategies to help athletes manage barriers and stay engaged in physical activity.

Quote from the day:

"[it was full of] very informative sessions, a range of sessions, great selections of speakers/practitioners... [I am going to have] more interaction with my athletes regarding their cycle - rather than leaving it up to them to manage it."



Enhancing body image in women and girls' football and fuelling strategies for long-term health and performance



Performance nutrition is key to athletic success, supporting development, reducing injury risks, and optimising performance. However, high energy demands can lead to under-fuelling, especially in adolescent athletes, which impacts growth, development, and health.

At the start of the 2023/24 season, the Football Association of Wales (FAW) Girls' Academy launched a project with Sport Wales. Research shows female footballers are particularly at risk of under-fuelling, with barriers like limited nutrition knowledge, time constraints, body image concerns, and aesthetic priorities identified through feedback from the FAW development group.

The initiative had two phases:

- **Phase 1: Building Positive Relationships with Nutrition**
Promoting a healthy relationship with food, addressing body image issues, and fostering trust through informal sessions and workshops. These explored body image, nutrition myths, and misconceptions about food groups like carbohydrates.
- **Phase 2: Nutrition Education for Fuelling and Recovery**
Equipping players with practical fuelling strategies for training and recovery, covering energy needs, macronutrients, meal planning, and food labels.

The project will continue until the end of the season, with a review to assess its impact and future improvements, including parental involvement and monitoring growth for **long-term** support.



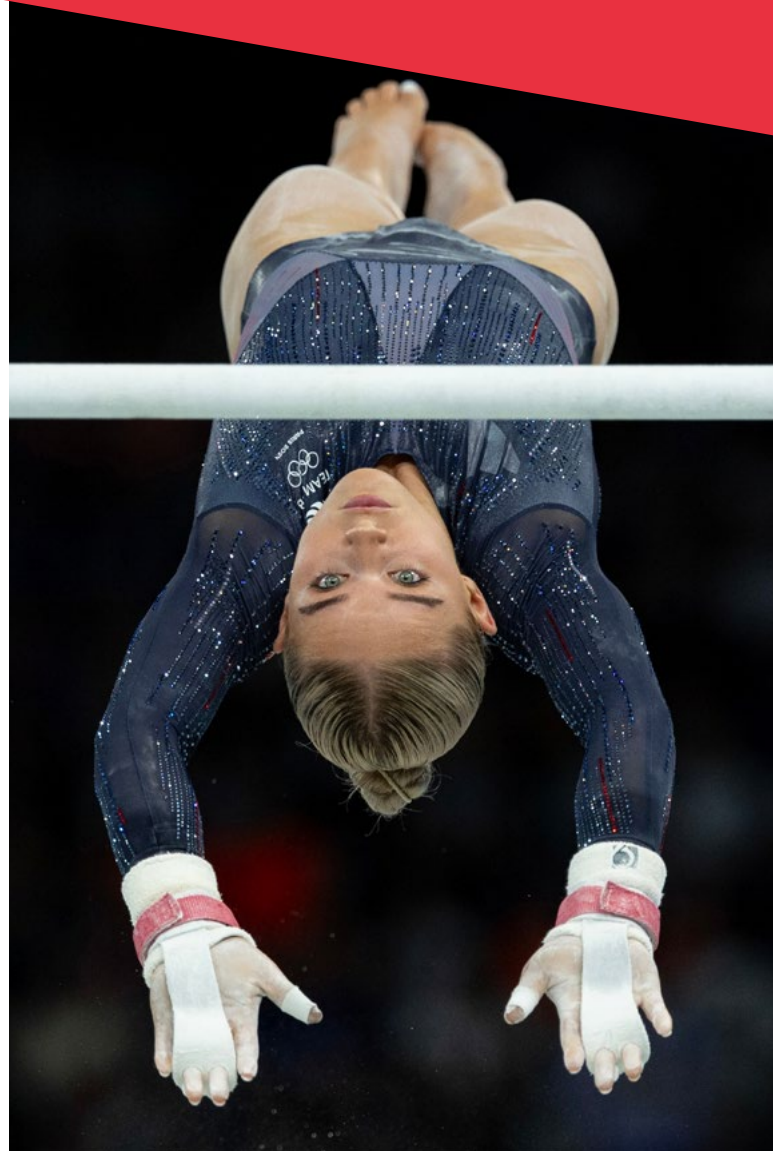
Supporting period dignity in sport through the Period Proud Action Plan



Achieving period dignity is central to the Welsh Government's goal for a gender-equal Wales. Understanding periods goes beyond menstruation, recognising the physical and psychological impacts throughout the entire cycle. As part of the Period Proud Action Plan, Sport Wales is mentioned within action 10:

"Assess the impact of periods on participation in sport and exercise and find ways to improve and maintain involvement for those who menstruate."

This initiative aims to normalise conversations around periods and improve sports participation. Over the past year, two two-day roundtable events were held, collaborating with partners from across Wales. The first focused on barriers and integrating successful strategies for improving period dignity in sport, while the second addressed how to create comfortable environments and enhance menstrual cycle education.

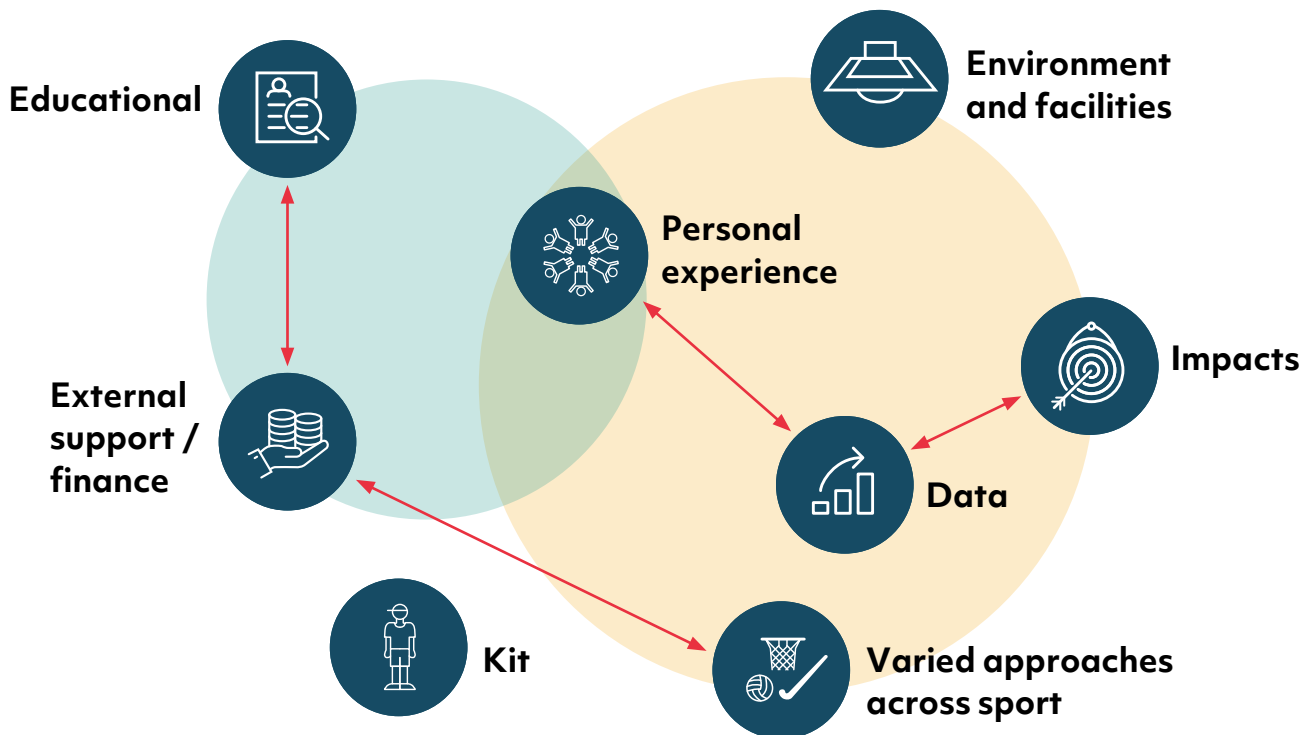


Key actions for the upcoming year include:

1. listening to young people's experiences
2. improving education, mapping target audiences, and centralising resources for partners, and
3. sharing case studies of successful period dignity initiatives to foster a learning community.

The following infographics were produced from the insight gathered during the first series of roundtable events.

Period Proud: **Themes**



Period Proud: **One Thing**



Case Study:

Dragon Chasers Darts Academy: Hitting bullseye with young people



In the small village of Cwmcarn near Caerphilly, the Dragon Chasers Darts Academy is thriving – inspired in part by darts sensation Luke Littler. Thanks to support from the National Lottery and Sport Wales, the academy is helping young people build confidence, improve numeracy skills and feel a sense of belonging.

Founded in 2024 by a group of local dads and junior rugby coaches, the academy was created to offer an inclusive sport that everyone could enjoy. As interest grew, so did the need for more equipment. A £1,000 grant helped with costs such as dartboards, surrounds, lighting and mats – allowing the club to double in size.

Based at Cwmcarn Working Men's Club, the academy offers a safe, alcohol-free space where children, including those who are neurodiverse or struggle with traditional team sports, can connect and thrive.

“Some of the children have learning and social needs and they struggle to concentrate at school. They find team sports too overwhelming but darts really suits them. Their parents can't believe that their child feels they are part of something and that they belong”, said co-founder **Nathan Dark**.

Alongside building confidence and friendships, players' maths skills have improved so much that the local authority now partners with the academy to support learning.



60 plus active leisure scheme



The Government's Healthy Weight Healthy Wales (HWHW) strategy and the 60+ Active Leisure Scheme (ALS) are closely connected through their shared objectives of improving public health and addressing health inequalities and therefore **prevention**. 60+ launched in 2021 and is now one of the key initiatives under the HWHW delivery plan, specifically targeting older adults, a demographic often at higher risk of health complications due to inactivity and obesity. The scheme takes place through group activities in leisure centres and community spaces.

Efforts are also made to target groups such as ethnic minority people and low-income communities who are traditionally underserved by interventions and are often at higher risk of poorer health outcomes, aiming to reduce disparities in access to healthy lifestyle options.

The 60+ Active Leisure Scheme (ALS) also plays a vital role in complementing the National Exercise Referral Scheme (NERS) by providing a **long-term**, ongoing pathway for older adults to maintain and expand their physical activity levels after completing NERS. This **collaborative** approach has led to **innovative** extensions of the scheme, with many partners adapting the model to include prehabilitation (prehab) and post-operative care programmes, further broadening the scope of support for older adults.

'Exercise sessions being delivered in the community are vital for our clients to maintain the fitness benefits they have gained over the course of their 16-48 weeks with us such as reduced blood pressure, reduced arthritic pain, increased confidence in walking and moving around and maintaining a strong healthy heart after surgery. These classes are also vital in helping to maintain client's independence by keeping them fit and active, reducing the need for GP appointments and medications to control symptoms or conditions. Finally, they would offer a much-needed opportunity to make new friends or spend time with old ones in a fun and active natural environment'

Michael Dalling Exercise Referral professional, Swansea





Pembrokeshire:

“Our instructors push us, I started at a basic level and now I’m really active with biceps to die for! The social aspect is a key benefit and meeting like-minded people and making friends, is a massive part which is really good. It is really helping with building muscle around the joints and for dealing with pain, and I’m now visiting the doctor less.”

Lynne, rheumatoid arthritis sufferer in Pembrokeshire.

- The total number of participants is **8,228**, up by around **1,000** since August 2023.
- There are **16** new minority ethnic participants; the total number of minority ethnic participants is now **58**.
- The gender split remains static with approximately **70% women** and **30% men**.
- The trend for the index of multiple deprivation also remains about steady, with the highest proportion of participants being in the least deprived bracket.

Mental health



We are working with Platform and Portsmouth University and our partners to transform sport and mental health in Wales, ensuring that everyone who participates feels a deep sense of belonging and worth.

This year we have continued to **innovate** and **collaborate** with partners to build an understanding around a relational approach to mental health. Our ambition is to create a sporting culture where mental health is prioritised and where all participants feel psychologically safe, connected, and supported at every level – from grassroots community teams to world-class athletes. We are actively working with NGBs and National Partners to embed this approach more broadly.

By embedding this approach, we not only improve individual performance but contribute to a healthier, more resilient society, and play our part in a **preventative** health approach.

Taking a person-centred approach



To help our partners increase their capability in collecting, interpreting, and using insight to shape person-centred practices, we wanted to work with NGBs to understand their data and insights. By taking a **long-term** view, our aim is to embed sustainable change across the sector, addressing both latent and unmet demand in sport.

All NGBs were invited to engage, with nine taking part in an initial survey to understand how they use data and insight. The survey helped each partner understand their strengths and areas for development, ensuring their programmes, services, and decision-making are based on a deeper understanding of the people they serve.

Seven NGBs progressed to take part in the project and were grouped based on their current practices to ensure **collaboration** while receiving tailored support.



Group one: RYA Cymru, Tennis Wales, and Welsh Triathlon – worked with appointed contractor Avalon Insights to develop practical frameworks that enhance their understanding of participants’ needs and behaviours:

- **RYA Cymru:** Engaging young sailors directly to capture their voices and to better understand motivations and barriers for female participation and retention.
- **Tennis Wales:** Exploring workforce development by understanding coaches’ motivations and needs to improve engagement, CPD, and upskilling.
- **Welsh Triathlon:** Researching how to reach beyond the triathlon community, understanding non-triathletes’ motivations and barriers to participation, and using these insights to develop a more inclusive membership offer.

Group two: Cricket Wales, Squash Wales, Table Tennis Wales, and Welsh Athletics - followed a hybrid model, blending shared learning with tailored support. Using **involvement** and **collaboration**, each NGB engaged in exploratory discussions and validation sessions, co-producing an approach that prioritises embedding person-centred thinking into their decision-making. This ensures that change is not just reactive but **preventative**, proactively addressing participation barriers.

While the project is ongoing, early outcomes indicate significant benefits across the sector, helping partners move towards a genuinely person-centred sport system.

“RYA Cymru Wales worked on a person-centred project looking to develop and retain more female coaches and volunteers in sailing, particularly in the Performance space. We ran focus groups with current, past and next generation coaches and with female parents in the Welsh Squads around volunteering. The support helped us shape the project, form the focus group questions, run the focus groups and then analyse the results with some short- and **long-term** goals and suggestions to help us support our female coaches and volunteers. The support has been hugely appreciated, and we now have some tangible data to use.”

**Sarah McGovern – RYA
Performance Manager for Wales.**

Wales Golf on course to thrive

In 2024, we **collaborated** with Wales Golf for a year-long project exploring young golfers' experiences of thriving within their junior and senior performance pathways. Thriving is a complex concept, where a person feels a high sense of well-being (physical, social, psychological, emotional) and a high level of subjective performance. When an athlete is thriving, they experience both development and success within their sporting environment, and potentially across multiple environments (e.g. school, family, work).

Members of the Sport Wales Environments Team attended golf camps, spoke to coaches and gathered insight using interviews with a range of golfers from across the Wales Golf performance pathway, based both in the UK and abroad.

Gareth Jenkins, Performance Director at Wales Golf, spoke about the importance of the project:

"...the project [is] extremely valuable. It will help us to clarify and confirm what's happening within the pathway and help us to build change around evidence quickly. Having just arrived from England Golf, I've not seen this level of support and engagement with NGBs before."

A 'thriving Welsh golfers' report was presented to the leadership group and coaching staff at the end of the project. The report highlighted the importance of positive coaching and trusting coach-athlete relationships to the golfers' experiences in the sport. The golfers also spoke about how special it was to represent their country in their sport and the motivation of seeing Welsh golfers doing well on the world stage.





Alongside the performance support, players spoke of the importance of the sport understanding their well-being needs and sport-life balance and providing good communication around key transitions made on/off the programme (e.g. deselection, joining the pro tour, retirement).

Ben Gorvett, the Pathway Manager for Wales Golf at the time, added:

“The thriving report has helped us understand exactly how the players feel. We need to make sure that we are getting the best of these athletes as people and as athletes moving forward because we can’t afford to lose them, it’s as simple as that. If any sports wanted to do it, they should, but only if they going to listen to what he said and take on board the feedback.”

Wales Golf have since used the report in a number of ways in the development of their new pathway, including:

- Getting more coaches at the camps across the year
- More touch points with the USA based players have been included
- Adding regular check-ins during the middle of the month between camps

The report was also used to inform selection of the Euro team, specifically that players were phoned, the captain supported the process, and any queries were followed up on.

The work does not stop here, with practitioners from the Sport Wales Institute due to shortly start a new project aiming to enhance nutrition awareness and behaviours in Welsh Golf, with phase 1 targeting competition early in the new financial year.

Analysis

Examples of work across Sport Wales indicate that user research is becoming more common in both major projects and more routine needs.

This year, 16 user research projects with the aim of understanding the user's need at their heart have taken place. There has been a growing appetite by colleagues in the organisation to be **involved** in such activities and to try to make sense of the insight produced. Confidence has grown in adopting these methodologies, including an understanding that it is stronger and more effective if user needs are mapped before a project starts.

Since Sport Wales is not a direct delivery organisation for sports participants in Wales, a crucial priority for this objective is advocating for and supporting a person-centred approach across the sports sector. By taking a **long-term** view, our aim is to embed sustainable change across the sector, addressing both latent and unmet demand in sport.

Additionally, through the Data and Insight Project we are investing in data infrastructure skill development and expert support to review how we collect, store and use data to make it more useful and accessible. By mapping user journeys, assessing organisational data maturity, and conducting a deep scoping audit, the project has exposed critical gaps in how data is captured, stored, and used. This isn't just about fixing systems though; it's about transforming culture.

There was a sense that we have made some significant steps forward in the adoption of a more user-centric focus in our work. There seems to have been good progress on how Sport Wales as a public body can support the sports sector to go further on its journey.

Things we need to consider and where we need to go further:

The review identified several themes for us to consider, including how do we empower those who understand user research and insight? Does further training play a key role and what training is needed? Our learning included: that being person-centred can be more than just asking people what they want; that our understanding of person centred will need to develop and become more sophisticated as we progress. Can we always be person-centred when sometimes there is a need to prioritise some needs over others?

Juxtaposing this alongside how being person-centred fits alongside complex sporting systems is also a challenge.

We should consider which partners apply person-centred principles well and make good use of participants' and non-participants' data to better understand those needs.

Case Study:

#2 Ensure every young person has a great start

Every young person has the skills, confidence and motivation to enable them to enjoy and progress through sport; giving them foundations to lead an active, healthy and enriched life.

Improving sports facilities across Wales to inspire a generation

Inspired by the Olympic Games, communities across Wales are benefitting from major investments in sports facilities, helping more people access and enjoy basketball, netball, tennis, football, rugby and hockey.

Over the past 12 months, Sport Wales has invested around £800,000 in court **collaboration** projects through Welsh Government funding. Working in partnership with Basketball Wales, Wales Netball and Tennis Wales, key locations were selected based on demand shown in the School Sport Survey 2022.

Courts across Torfaen, Bridgend, Wrexham, Gwynedd, Monmouthshire, Pembrokeshire, Flintshire and Neath Port Talbot have been refurbished with new surfaces, line markings and essential equipment. These upgrades are supporting both school use and community sport, with local clubs also benefiting.

In addition, more than £1 million has been invested in new and upgraded artificial pitches for rugby, football and hockey. Projects in Gwynedd, Carmarthenshire, Conwy and Rhondda Cynon Taf are improving access to high-quality 3G and hockey-specific pitches, supporting school and community participation.





Citbag/curriculum



We have continued to make improvements to the online Citbag platform to better support practitioners delivering Physical Education, School Sport and Physical Activity (PESSPA). Building on valuable feedback from teachers, we enhanced user experience, **integrating** the design and user journey, and ensured all resources are now mapped to the Progression Steps of the Curriculum for Wales ensuring teachers can confidently incorporate Citbag into their Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience curriculum for the long-term.

We also delivered a webinar on how to navigate Citbag effectively, providing practical guidance on how to use the platform's features, find relevant resources, and make the most of the tools available.



Following last year's marketing campaign, which helped raise awareness of Citbag's features and resources we continue to see an increase in platform subscriptions and usage across Wales.



Daily Active



We have continued working on our **collaboration** with Welsh Government, Public Health Wales, and Natural Resources Wales on the Daily Active Offer. However, progress this year has been slower than anticipated due to challenging financial constraints.

Despite this, we have supported the **innovation** of a physical activity assessment tool, which will help identify areas where schools need support to **integrate** daily activity for their pupils across the school day. This tool will provide schools with an action plan, guiding them towards becoming active school settings.

We remain committed to working in partnership to support schools in creating a whole-school approach to physical activity.



Pipyn Actif



As part of the Welsh Government's Healthy Weight Healthy Wales strategy to prevent obesity, we continue our **collaboration** in three areas across Wales to design and implement engaging, safe, and developmentally appropriate physical activity opportunities for families with children aged 0-7 years at risk of or experiencing obesity.

The Pipyn Actif project adopts a family-centred, community-driven approach to enhance immediate health outcomes while fostering **long-term** behavioural change to reduce obesity rates across Wales.

Aligned with the Pipyn (Healthy Children, Healthy Weight in Wales) initiative led by Public Health Wales, Pipyn Actif is being piloted in three key areas: Merthyr Tydfil, Anglesey, and Cardiff Southern Arc.



These locations were strategically selected to represent a diverse range of communities in Wales where childhood obesity and overweight prevalence are significant.

While the pilot areas share socio-economic challenges, they also exhibit unique characteristics, including:

- **Rural vs. urban settings** – influencing access to services and travel costs.
- **Ethnic diversity** – requiring culturally sensitive and inclusive approaches.
- **Welsh language accessibility** – ensuring equitable access to Welsh-medium activities.

Each pilot area is overseen by a designated project lead responsible for delivering initiatives tailored to families with young children at risk of obesity. The lead organisations include:

- **Anglesey** – Môn Actif
- **Cardiff** – Cardiff Met Sport
- **Merthyr Tydfil** – StreetGames

We are monitoring this two-year project (April 2023 – March 2025) in collaboration with an external evaluation team, UKRCS, which is assessing impact through qualitative and quantitative data, including direct feedback from families and project coordinators. The evaluation aims to establish a sustainable model that could scale up and be rolled out across Wales.



Project highlights to date

Happy Hands sessions – Merthyr Tydfil

The Happy Hands Club offers music, movement, and mindfulness sessions for parents and children from pre-birth (final trimester) to age seven. These sessions support parents in building confidence, managing stress and anxiety, and improving communication skills through play, music, and language. Additionally, the sessions foster peer support networks, reducing isolation among new parents.

Participant feedback:

"I suffer from mental health issues, which worsened after having my daughter. Attending the group has motivated me to get up, get dressed, and leave the house. It has provided a space where we can meet other people and learn new skills together."

Project development and next steps

We are currently formalising a set of project principles to ensure consistent outcomes for children, parents, and facilitators involved in Pipyn Actif. In addition, an 8-week intervention programme is being developed, providing facilitators with a structured session plan to enhance children's movement skills. This framework will be accessible to all Pipyn and Pipyn Actif programme deliverers.

The first two-year project evaluation report is scheduled for release in Spring 2025, and an additional year of funding has been secured, enabling continued delivery in the three pilot areas into 2025-26.

Active Gwent approach to addressing latent demand



Through the Active Gwent Foundation network, we have supported the five local authorities (LAs), Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen, to focus efforts on developing sporting opportunities for young people across the region.

Using School Sports Survey data, the Sport Development teams were aware that 58% of pupils had unmet demand for sport in Gwent. From this information, they were able to identify that basketball had high unmet demand (want to participate, but do not have the opportunity) as well as high latent demand (already participating but wanting to do more) across both boys and girls.

At the beginning of the project (April 2023) minimal basketball activity existed, with a limited number of extra-curricular clubs available and only one community club existed in the region, which was greatly over-subscribed.

Sport Wales facilitated **collaborative** discussions between the Sport Development teams and Basketball Wales, which enabled priorities to be integrated and blockers to be identified through the involvement of a range of partners, helping to shape the approach taken within the region.

The following areas were identified as key priorities:

1. Coach education for school staff
2. Coach education to support extra-curricular and community opportunities
3. Access to festivals/tournaments

Excited by the potential, the Sport Development teams created several opportunities with additional support from a newly appointed Participation and Inclusion Officer from Basketball Wales. There have been many examples of good practice, some of which include:

- **Basketball Wales** delivering training for young leaders, teacher training and coaching course, enabling participants to access training within their local region and upskilling 50 new leaders/coaches
- **Torfaen** Sports Development team supported the establishment of a new community club providing opportunities for junior boys and girls (42% want to try basketball) and upskilling five individuals to the level one coaching accreditation. The club have also benefited from a BAWF grant of £5,130
- **Monmouthshire** Sports Development team established a new community session in Caldicot and are working to mature this to the first affiliated Basketball club in Monmouthshire

- **Blaenau Gwent** trained 22 young leaders via Basketball Wales, who then supported the delivery of a primary school festival, engaging over 160 pupils from 14 schools
- **Caerphilly** operated a primary school festival reaching 60 pupils from seven schools and connected with a local club to establish a weekly community provision
- **Newport** established extra-curricular sessions in all eight secondary schools and maintain links with the pre-existing club to support development
- **Basketball Wales** 'Nothing but Nets' campaign provided new nets to all three leisure centres in Blaenau Gwent and have provided access to portable specialist equipment to be used to facilitate festivals/events
- **Sport Wales** Court Collaboration funding developed outdoor courts in Caldicot, Cwmbran, Blaenavon. A further grant has recently been granted to develop a court in Newport

There are still several areas of work being planned by the LAs with the support of Basketball Wales, further demonstrating the **long-term** approach and commitment to tackling unmet and latent demand and providing sustainable offers across all communities.



Pathway and Performance Conference



The first Pathway and Performance Wales (PPW) Conference was held at the Vale Resort on 20/21 of November. Over the two days, 70+ pathway and performance leaders and decision makers from 35 partner organisations came together as a collective pathway and performance system for the first time in Wales.

The purpose of the event was to give everyone in the pathway and performance sector the opportunity to connect, learn, **collaborate**, and innovate.



Throughout the two days, our partners learnt from talks on:

- The journey of athlete development and how environments in the system shape this journey.
- Insights from developing the PACE (Person, Athlete, Champion, Environment) programme to support young athletes in triathlon.
- Swim Wales and their approach to supporting athletes during key transition stages in the talent pathway.
- The skills needed to **collaborate** effectively as a system.

Different NGBs are already connecting, and Think Tanks are being developed to enhance the pathway and performance system in Wales. The first Think Tanks will be a collective and **collaborative** approach to systems change in pathway and performance programmes across Wales. The first four will focus on:

1. Sharing support foundations for pathways across sports (S&C, nutrition, etc)
2. Shared approach to workshops for parents, safeguarding, mental health, etc
3. Performance Pathways Open to All and Feels Achievable
4. Improving level of coaching in clubs and pathway

Foundations Framework Wales



The innovative Foundations Framework Wales is currently being implemented across the country to help give more children a positive experience of physical activity and sport. It is a good practice guide for everyone to follow when delivering, organising, or promoting physical activity and sport for children aged 3-11 years, in school extra-curricular, community and grassroots settings.

Developed through collaborative efforts of a range of partners in Wales, including; NGBs, LAs, Sport Partnerships, Play Wales, Early Years Wales, wider National Partners, and Sport Wales, the aim of the Framework is to support the improvement in children's physical activity levels.

The Framework has been established as a response to a call for action from the sport sector, at a grassroots level – to have a clear framework, supported by clear messaging, to be designed across the sector as a whole, which supports system change.

The Framework also aims to address some alarming statistics:

- Just 22% of 8–11-year-olds meet physical activity guidelines.
- 27.1% of children aged 4-5 in Wales are obese or overweight.
- 1 in 3 pupils (31%) in Wales are not confident trying new sports.
- The decline in physical activity levels begins as early as age 7.

The framework exemplifies:

- What 'child-centred provision' should look and feel like.
- How to develop children's motivation, confidence, physical skills, and knowledge and understanding – to enable them to be physically literate.
- How to create environments that support a child's stage of physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development.
- Multi-sport opportunities which are safe, enjoyable, and developmental.
- The importance of daily movement and key physical activity experiences that contribute to healthy development.
- Valuing child-led play as much as facilitated and adult-initiated opportunities.

It is divided into sections dealing with safety and inclusivity, enjoyment, and development, with each theme further considered from the perspective of places, people, and policies, to support the development of an **inclusive** approach.

Accompanying resources are now in development which will support clubs and coaches in particular. We will be monitoring and evaluating the usage and impact of the framework for the **long-term**.

Developing coaching leads through the Coaching Leaders Programme to ensure young people have a positive experience of sport



‘A Coaching Leader is someone who evaluates, develops, influences and leads the coach development opportunities and support structures within sports and sporting organisations. Coaching Leaders have a complex but crucial role within sports, partner organisations and the sector, ensuring coaching meets the need of participants and athletes but also has a positive impact on the inequalities in sport.’

Coaching Leaders programme overview

The Home Nations’ Coaching Leaders Programme was a 24-month pilot programme of progressive learning and development and on-going bespoke support for each participant and their associated organisation. The programme was delivered through a **collaboration** between the coaching teams of Sport Wales, Sport Northern Ireland and sport scotland and was designed to increase the Coaching Leaders’ expertise and ability to deliver an inclusive system of support and development for their respective coaches. The programme brought together 16 Coaching Leaders, from 16 national sports organisations, representing 12 different sports, from Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and was delivered through a number of three-day residentials, across all three nations.

The programme was well-received by the participants, with high reported levels of satisfaction and feedback; positive changes in behaviour as well as impact on professional growth. They reported changes in their working practices and left the Programme with a greater awareness of their roles within the coaching support systems, and a clearer understanding of how to lead and inspire change within their organisations.

Some key themes as reported by the Coaching Leaders include:

- A significant impact on personal and professional growth
- Exceptional value of networking and **collaboration**
- Appreciation for challenging content and exposure to diverse perspectives
- A further appreciation for Programme design and facilitation

All three Sport Councils have committed to another two-year programme from April 2025 – March 2027.

Quote from Participant:

“[The] programme has reinforced the importance (and power) of bringing people together, on a cross-sport, cross-country basis, making them feel valued, supported and an influential leader in shifting the dial within coaching and coach development.”



Growth and maturation



Research into adolescent sporting pathways clearly demonstrates that an athlete's ability to progress through a pathway can be influenced by factors relating to growth and maturation.

This can be due to differences in speed of maturity, which may mean some are more likely to progress; to injuries occurring during the adolescent growth spurt which leads to increased dropping out.

We formed a working group of Sport Wales Institute Practitioners to try and collaborate to remove these barriers to progression in the Welsh sporting system and prevent injuries. It is hoped that this will lead to more opportunities for those that have the desire to succeed. In practice, this will mean more Welsh athletes receiving the best possible support relative to their physical, cognitive and psychosocial development.

Recent examples of improvement include supporting Welsh Boxing with the collection and interpretation of growth data within their pathway and supporting a team working with Welsh Judo to review the UK guidelines around 'weight management' and 'weight cutting' practices within adolescent participants.

Through both projects, we have seen the impact that increased knowledge of growth and maturation can have across a range of environments, resulting in messages and practice being shared beyond the pathway to key influencers within an athlete's support network such as parents and club coaches.

School Sport Survey



We commissioned an external research company to undertake 'Cognitive Testing' of the 2022 School Sport Survey; to deepen our knowledge of what pupils truly understand when we ask about individual sports, the setting where they participated, and how frequently they did so. This will help us develop the survey further for the **long-term** and improve our ability further to understand how young people are engaging in sport and physical activity.

The study involved pupils from a range of demographics in order to reflect the voices of young people in Wales; sex, age, Welsh language, location, and socioeconomic background were accounted for within sampling.

Findings obtained so far are currently being used to inform the development of the 2026 School Sport Survey. This research project represents the first in a series of cognitive testing and user research stages scheduled to take place over the next year as we work towards the next survey. Additionally, this research looks to update findings obtained in previous rounds of cognitive testing that were used to underpin early versions of the School Sport Survey.



Analysis

A crucial initiative contributing to this objective is the Foundations Framework, which fully meets the well-being objective. The collaborative nature of its development has been a huge success, but how it is implemented, along with its monitoring and evaluation will be critical.

The Active Gwent Foundation's network demonstrated true insight-led **collaborative** working in a regional approach. The School Sport Survey's data has also been used as a basis for resource allocation by a regional Sports Partnership – the first example of this happening outside Sport Wales.



Things we need to consider and where we need to go further:

The Foundations Framework is a vital enabler to achieving this objective and without its success, progress would seem to be a much bigger challenge. The review identified a need for us to consider how to continue to make progress where funding constraints or other challenges for our partners impact delivery for projects such as the Daily Active. Further, given the current impacts of poverty and inequality/inequity of opportunity, there may be opportunities to do more at the household level.

School sport and curricular physical education play a key role in giving every young person a great start. The creation of partnerships with local sports organisations or community groups could enrich provision. Exploration of models like The Daily Active offer an opportunity to **integrate** movement in and around the school day. Developing a pupil leadership strand in physical education can contribute to a greater sense of ownership, confidence and belonging. A greater emphasis on the role of physical education to build motivation, confidence and understanding could also raise engagement.

#3 Ensure everyone has the opportunity to be active through sport

Sport is inclusive and provides a great experience for all.

Empowering older adults: Swansea's climbing initiative



In Swansea, the 60+ Active Leisure Scheme, funded by the Welsh Government and Sport Wales, offers climbing sessions to help individuals over 60 overcome fears and foster social connections.

Sarah McCoubrey, Health and Well-being Manager at Swansea Council, noted: "There's a certain stereotype about adventure activities such as climbing only being suitable for younger age groups, but 60 isn't old and climbing is a really fun activity that benefits both your physical and mental well-being."

Participants like Ron Jenkins have shared positive experiences: "I'm having a tremendous time on the 60+ Rock Climbing sessions. Climbing is a good form of exercise, and is improving my strength, balance, confidence and overall well-being."



The initiative also addresses social isolation. Alan Pritchard explained:

"I've really enjoyed the free indoor climbing sessions. It was good to meet other people and chat to them both before and during the sessions."

Another participant, Angela Howells, added: "I wasn't really expecting to enjoy it as I am scared of heights and my joints aren't good due to my age and arthritis, but I have loved the climbing sessions."

With funding secured until 2025, the scheme continues to provide accessible activities for older adults in Wales.

Investments



Capital funding

Last year we continued to invest in facilities across Wales as part of the capital funding we distribute. The funding, building on the learning and evidence of previous years, focused on ensuring inclusive, accessible and energy efficient sporting facilities in the communities that needed them most.

Across the various capital schemes, a total of 166 awards were made to the value of £8,668,247. Amongst these awards were 109 new investments to help decarbonise the sport sector through funding provided to not-for-profit community clubs as part of the Energy Savings Grant. Not only do these investments help the environmental sustainability of the sport sector, but they also help reduce energy bills for local sports organisations, in some cases making the difference between a thriving community facility and one that is in danger of having to close.

Storm fund

This year, in addition to the regular capital schemes, we responded to the emergency storms faced across Wales. Clubs who had seen their equipment and facilities damaged because of Storm Bert were able to access up to £5,000 in emergency support.

The fund was brought online within a matter of just weeks after the storm and was able to support a total of 231 projects to a value of £538,253. This funding helped clubs repair and replace vital equipment and ensured community sport facilities devastated by the wind and flooding were able to quickly get back to offering local opportunities to be active.

Be Active Wales

In addition to the capital funding that we distribute, there has been another fantastic year of success in National Lottery funding for community benefits. Since 1994, millions of pounds have been given to sports clubs, community groups and organisations across Wales. and fittingly, as the National Lottery celebrated its 30th Birthday, we awarded our 30,000th grant to Scarlets & Aberystwyth Wheelchair Rugby Club. The club received £37,589 to answer demand for more opportunities and access to disability sport in rural Mid Wales.

This award was one of 725 organisations which benefited from £4,191,065 in community investments over the past financial year.

During the past year we piloted a new approach to the fund, with windows of applications to allow better customer engagement and service. The success of this approach will be taken forward as a funding principle into the new financial year.

A Place for Sport: Crowdfunder

The 'A Place for Sport' fund, which is delivered in partnership with Crowdfunder UK has continued this year, investing in 12 projects, securing £47,035 from us and a further £92,687 in amplified funding from the public. This total funding of £139,722 for community clubs has resulted in an amplification rate of £3.02 for every £1 of public investment.

This fund is our mechanism for investing in all the areas that do not directly deliver sport but have a huge impact on the experience of participants.

This may include protecting or improving equipment or facilities or enhancing services to make clubs more financially or environmentally sustainable.

The fund works on a matched fund basis and so every successful application is demonstrating there is a genuine commitment from the local community.

Once we support any application pledge between 30%-50% of the total project costs, the remaining sums are drawn from individual supporters. The higher end of the pledge is specifically targeted towards areas of deprivation, as measured by the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, to ensure we best support those communities most in need.

Empowering girls through football: National Lottery funding gives club a kickstart



Coity Chiefs Girls Football Club in Bridgend has experienced remarkable growth and success, thanks in part to National Lottery funding administered by Sport Wales. Established to provide a welcoming environment for girls aged 7 to 15, the club has seen a 45% increase in participation since 2021, reflecting the broader surge in women's and girls' football across Wales.

In 2023, under new leadership, the club faced challenges due to a lack of equipment. A grant of £7,471 enabled the purchase of essential items such as footballs, goals, bibs, first aid kits and funding for coach development courses. Treasurer Leeann Bekker acknowledged: "We wouldn't have survived without the National Lottery funding awarded by Sport Wales."

The club's commitment to inclusivity is evident, with a leadership team predominantly composed of women, providing role models for the young players. Leeann noted: "It's amazing for the girls to see that women can do all roles in football, from coaching to refereeing, and also administrative roles like mine." This representation fosters a sense of belonging and aspiration among the participants.

The positive impact of the funding extends beyond equipment and role models. The club's enhanced resources have led to improved coaching and playing experiences, attracting over 130 girls weekly. Their efforts were recognised with the Community Club of the Year award at the FA Wales McDonald's Grassroots Football Awards.

This success story exemplifies how National Lottery funding, facilitated by Sport Wales, can transform grassroots sports, providing opportunities, fostering inclusivity and empowering the next generation of female athletes.

Leeann expressed:

“We were absolutely beyond thrilled to be recognised at this prestigious event.”

Midnight Ramadan sports



For the third year in a row, we have collaborated with Foundation 4 Sports Coaching CIC to design and deliver Midnight Ramadan Sports, offering a way for fasting Muslims to break their fast together and keep active during the holy month of Ramadan. This has ensured the activities innovate to meet the needs of the community.

We developed the programme offering, with dedicated Saturday sessions for women and girls, offering a safe, inclusive, and culturally respectful space to be active during Ramadan. Activities included badminton, basketball, and strength and conditioning, delivered in protected spaces by female coaches and volunteers and around 15 volunteers from across Sport Wales.

Over 200 women and girls attended, many for the first time. The sessions offered more than sport, creating a space where women and girls felt seen, supported, and empowered.

The success of Midnight Ramadan Sports in Cardiff has become a national model, inspiring other communities across Wales to adopt similar initiatives.

As a result:

- More sites across Wales have launched their own Midnight Ramadan projects, led by community groups and NGBs.
- Enhanced visibility through local media and social platforms has positioned Midnight Ramadan Sports as Wales' largest Ramadan sporting event.
- Increased Sport Wales staff volunteer engagement, strengthening ties between the organisation and the local community.



Progressing sport partnerships



Considerable progress has been made in the last 12 months to complete the establishment and support the operation of the five sport partnerships. The original premise of Sport Partnerships was to transform the way community sport is created, delivered, led, and funded across Wales.

These partnerships aim to address inequalities in sport participation and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy lifelong physical activity. It has been an exciting time for each of the partnerships as they evolve in their ability to collaborate in partnership, develop strategy, and understand the needs of their regions.

Across the regions...

West Wales: The West Wales Sports Partnership (WWSP), established in 2023, is working towards developing a strategic vision and governance framework and held a successful innovation day in February 2025.

North Wales: Actif North Wales, established in 2021-22, has continued to focus on innovative projects and partnerships to increase physical activity. This year Actif have accelerated their approach to [Place Based Working](#).

Mid Wales: The Mid Wales Sport Partnership has moved into live operations with a newly appointed Regional Director starting in post in January 2025.

Central South Wales: The Central South Active Partnership have made positive steps towards becoming operational in 2025, with the appointment of a board of trustees and independent chair.

Gwent: Positive steps forward have been taken in Gwent to bring the Sport Partnership to life through the agreement of a host organisation.

Sport and active lifestyles – results from the National Survey for Wales



Since 2016, the National Survey for Wales has been jointly commissioned by the Welsh Government and three bodies (Sport Wales, Arts Council of Wales, and Natural Resources Wales), providing high-quality evidence on a wide range of topics. Carried out to the highest standards, as official statistics, involving a randomly selected sample of people across Wales to ensure that the results are as representative as possible.

2024-25 fieldwork is underway, with results to be published in July 2025. While delivering this survey the Welsh Government has noted challenges in cost pressures and maintaining response rates, with a final response rate of 9,000 or lower anticipated. This may affect the extent to which data can be analysed geographically or for some population groups. However, measurement of key indicators or policy monitoring such as the Well-being of Future Generation National Indicators can still take place.

Due to this, 2025-26 fieldwork will not take place as planned, and there will be a re-design of the National Survey under a new contract.

We are continually reviewing and monitoring impacts to these statistics given the important role they play in understanding the nation's sporting participation and demand, as well as how they help us plan and direct our funding support.

Officials are exploring options to ensure that the survey continues to provide robust data to underpin decision-making. It is likely that the next survey will take place in 2026-27 and will be administered online, with a minimum of 12,000 responses expected.

This does offer an innovation opportunity for the questions to be adapted, and work on a revised Sport and Active Lifestyles section has already begun. Changes include a reduction, or refinement in the sport activities explicitly listed within the survey, their order and grouping, and reporting on weekly frequencies for participation. An additional 'duration' question will be asked to bring these questions closer in line with general guidance on physical activity, enabling the contribution of each individual sport activity to be demonstrated in relation to the overall physical activity levels of the nation. Questions about other forms of moderate physical activity (gardening, cleaning the house, vacuuming or washing the car) will be included.

Data map Wales



Working **collaboratively** with the Welsh Government, we helped to create a brand-new resource for the sport sector in Wales through [Data Map Wales](#).

Designed to support those seeking up to date information on artificial pitches in Wales. The aim of the **integration** is to bring together the existing data, and continue to ensure it remains live and active, to both better inform the public of their local facilities and help improve future investment decisions.

Anyone can now look up the location and availability of their nearest artificial sport pitch through Data Map Wales. It signposts people to many of the facilities the Welsh Government has invested in through Sport Wales and supports the provision of inclusive, accessible and sustainable opportunities for everyone across Wales to enjoy both the physical and mental health benefits of sport.

Working with key partners, we have invested significantly in the development of the nation's artificial pitch network. Ensuring that people are aware of where those facilities are to plan their use and maximise the benefits for community sport is an important consideration. This new resource is a positive step in connecting those dots.

Signing the Brighton Declaration



Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, our Chair and Brian Davies OBE, our CEO signed the Brighton plus Helsinki Declaration, committing Sport Wales formally to the ten principles of the international treaty on women and girl's sport, on Friday 21 February 2025, in the Sport Wales Board Meeting. The declaration has been signed by nearly 600 organisations around the world and aims to work towards a fairer system of sport and physical activity that is fully inclusive for women and girls.

Over the course of the International Working Group on Women and Girls' four-year residency in the UK, Sport Wales has worked closely with the Secretary General and her team to ensure we consider sport through the lens of gender and to try and ensure that the issues facing women and girls in sport in Wales are part of our core working and funding principles.



We have also committed to supporting the IWG's next Global Summit, which will take place in Birmingham in July 2026. This four-yearly conference sees delegates from all over the world sharing knowledge and best practice to enhance and **integrate** women's experiences in sport and physical activity into better systems which aim to close the gap in gender participation.

Analysis

We reviewed and refreshed our business plan groups at the start of 2024-25. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) business plan priority was reformed, recognising that an inclusive organisational culture creates an environment where inclusivity thrives. This also reflects the critical role culture plays in good governance.

In pursuit of the Vision for Sport we've pursued making the sport system more **inclusive**; and we reframed an 'inclusive sport system' as an overarching element that other business plan priorities contribute to rather than as a stand-alone business plan priority. The Inclusive Sports System business plan group was replaced by two groups:

1. Taking a Person-Centred Approach
2. Ensuring Young People Have a Positive Experience of Sport

This refined approach strengthens our commitment to inclusivity, embedding EDI considerations into all aspects of work across the organisation.

Funded partners are required to meet with their Relationship Manager on a quarterly basis to share learning and progress from their work.

The Partner Progress and Learning Review began in 2023-24, from which a report detailing notable practice or challenges and learning across all partners is produced. Well-received sessions showcasing this have been introduced as 'Lightning Learning' this year.

The reports highlighted increased **collaboration**. One example was the partnership of StreetGames and Wales Netball on the Blitz Netball Activator programme: young people's coach education. Wales Netball invested into StreetGames to support the development and delivery of the product. This is an example of a partnership based on who is best placed to deliver. The product has also been co-produced **involving** young people, which has provided an excellent opportunity for learning by all involved.

Pembrokeshire Sport and Physical Activity Poverty Advisory Group was another notable **collaboration**. A multi-agency group made up of members from the LA, NGBs (including Cricket Wales), StreetGames, Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services (Third Sector), Milford Youth Matters (charity) and Swansea City Foundation along with Public Health Wales and Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. They provide direction and leadership to support a year-round offer of inclusive sport and physical activity. Together, they have identified the 'Fit and Fed' programme (providing young people with physical activity and nutritious meals) as an area of work where they can all contribute collectively. This has avoided duplication to maximise the impact they can have supporting those children and families experiencing poverty.



Sport Wales' National Centre has committed funding and future budget to improving the accessibility of the facility as well as learning from a 'Belonging Audit' which highlighted the need to address barriers to feeling welcome from Black and Asian communities and people who are disabled. Following this, we replaced a lift and updated images throughout the centre to reflect the diverse communities we serve.

The Be Active Wales Fund evaluation (summer 2024) revealed a significant increase in the diversity of applications with a 61% increase in those from the most deprived communities.

Things we need to consider and where we need to go further:

A need was identified for us to consider if our narratives on inclusion are always relatable. We need to show people why they should want to tackle inequality not just tell them that they should.

Our colleagues have different experiences and entry points to learning and training. We need to ensure the language is as accessible as possible.

#4 Bring people together for the long-term

There is a **collaborative**, sustainable and successful sports sector, led by collective insight and learning.

Case Study:

Joe Calzaghe's boxing gym packs a punch energy saving grant



Sport Wales' Energy Saving Grant returned for a second year and for Joe Calzaghe's gym in Newbridge, the support has been a game-changer.

The Calzaghe Academy, a family-run gym, is one of 78 sports clubs to receive up to £25,000 through the grant scheme. The funding allowed the academy to install solar panels and upgrade insulation, significantly cutting long-term energy bills and securing financial stability to support the next generation of boxers.

Joe said: "We've trained many champions, but these days our focus is on supporting local amateurs and youngsters. Boxing was everything to me as a kid. I had a tough time at school, was bullied and was quite introverted. Coming to a gym gave me my self-worth and that's what we're all about – providing somewhere for kids to have fun, get fit and feel good about themselves."

The grant from Sport Wales will really help us reduce the cost of running the gym and give the kids a better environment to train in."

The grant helps clubs become more energy efficient by funding improvements such as LED lighting, better heating systems and sustainable water sourcing.

Brian Davies explained:

"Clubs who are successful with their applications will not only benefit from cheaper utility bills so that they can become more financially sustainable but, just as importantly, they'll also be doing their bit for the environment by reducing Welsh sport's carbon footprint."

Cabinet Secretary at the time, Lesley Griffiths, added:

"We have already seen how important Sport Wales' Energy Saving Grants have been in helping clubs to deal with the challenges of rising costs and I'm pleased Welsh Government funding will continue to support this initiative."



Sport Partnership Evaluation Framework



During the past year, a **collaborative** approach has been undertaken to develop a new Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the Sport Partnerships. The framework has been a co-constructed piece of work between Sport Wales, Social Change Ltd, and our Sport Partnership colleagues. The Framework sets out the tools and approaches that can help identify the system-based change that innovative Sport Partnerships are able to instigate as part of a cross-sector approach to unleashing the benefits of sport and physical activity.

The Framework moves away from a traditional 'metrics only' evaluation structure and combines data and analytic reporting, with qualitative and theoretical approaches that consider the cultural, societal and environmental changes that come from different organisations and partners across a regional footprint working together.

A range of tools are drawn upon, such as theory of change models, the '5 whys,' system mapping, Qualitative Comparative Analysis, ripple mapping and much more. The principle is to create a bespoke guide, which allows all partners to see what impact and change is being made and also allows a consistent evaluation. For example, the methods which work for Powys may not for Pwllheli. How the skillsets, capacity and resource is deployed to understand change in Cardiff may differ to Conwy. Each Sport Partnership region is also operating at a different level of maturity.

This type of evaluation approach could also be utilised across a wider range of partnerships, both beyond Sport Partnerships and even Sport Wales.

Sector resilience



Following feedback from NGBs, we began to explore opportunities around existing efficiencies, **collaboration** opportunities and to build capability and capacity within these partners. The work identified three key themes that were co-created with Chief Executives:

Stream 1 – Opportunities for shared services

This work area focuses on supporting more collaborative opportunities to share services leading to efficiencies and opportunities within the sector.

We commissioned financial analysis of the NGBs that wanted to participate in this project. The concluding report highlighted that there were opportunities for some NGBs to utilise shared services for areas such as payroll, accountancy, and insurance, some of these are existing packages offered through the Welsh Sport Association. It also highlighted that significant percentages of spend is salary related.

Stream 2 – Income generation activity

The income generation stream focuses on supporting organisations to become more financially sustainable, looking at opportunities to work **collaboratively**. Activity has included ways to diversify income, understanding and maximising assets and legal structures that may support income generation more easily.

This stream has supported NGBs through workshops such as understanding organisational assets and value proposition and understanding charitable organisation governance structures. Orchard Communications undertook in-depth analysis of NGB's current sponsorship landscape and provided information back to organisations for consideration. An exploration is currently underway for a collaborative sponsorship arrangement with Orchard that will consider a mutually agreed theme to initiate sponsorship potential.

Stream 3 – Potential new operating model

Instigated by, and commissioned on behalf of NGBs, this is an exploration into options that could support a more efficient and effective operating model/ infrastructure for sport in Wales. It recognised that the NGB landscape has operated in the same way for a number of years, while there have been significant societal, structure and policy shifts through that time period.

The aim of this work is to consider a more radical approach to what could be possible and viable, and exploring if there could be a different way of the sector operating in Wales. Human Engine, who were commissioned to undertake this work, produced a series of thought provoking options for partners and Sport Wales to consider. Work will continue into the 2025-26 financial year.

Powering the future of Welsh sport: Energy Saving Grant makes a lasting impact

In 2023, Sport Wales awarded almost £1.4 million in Energy Saving Grants to 79 sports clubs across Wales, helping them reduce energy costs and their environmental impact. These grants have allowed clubs to install a variety of energy-saving measures such as solar panels, LED lighting, battery storage and improved insulation, leading to significant financial savings and **long-term** sustainability.

St Asaph Cricket Club received a £7,323 grant to install battery storage for their solar panels. Gareth Williams said: "The project has already seen the club achieve a significant reduction in our monthly running costs in addition to also helping us to have a compensating reduction in our carbon footprint."

In Neath, Giants Grave Boys & Girls Club were awarded £22,902 to install solar panels. Chris McKenzie explained: "This Energy Saving Grant has protected the future of our club and now we can focus on the needs of young people again without worrying about increasing energy costs every year."

Mold Golf Club used a £13,666 grant to install 16 additional solar panels. Deborah Barton commented: "Accessing Sport Wales funding has taken the pressure off and enabled us to improve the way we operate in terms of our environment and also, in terms of cost savings and energy efficiency."

At Port Dinorwic Sailing Club, a £21,003 grant funded solar panels and energy-efficient lighting. Noel Bristow said:

"The solar panels have been a talking point at the club and have got people thinking about how they can reduce their carbon footprint themselves."

These testimonials highlight how the Energy Saving Grant helps sports clubs across Wales remain financially viable, while also contributing positively to the sustainability for future generations.



The Welsh Institute of Performance Science (WIPS)



WIPS is a three-way **collaborative** partnership between Sport Wales, Wales' leading academic sport scientists and relevant industry partners. WIPS' purpose is to conduct multi-disciplinary, world-leading applied performance science projects in line with Sport Wales strategies to enhance the performance of Welsh athletes and businesses, improve the performance pathway, and build capacity in these areas for the future. Additionally, WIPS aims to train future scientists, and increase strategic **collaboration** between Welsh sport, academia, and business for the **long-term**.

In 2024, WIPS has worked on projects with sports across Wales, such as:

- **'Examination of the Impact of a Digital Nutrition Platform on Nutritional Knowledge and Nutrition Behaviour in Athletes'** – Paying consideration to Sport Wales' athlete development principles, this project looks to address how we can **innovate** to provide effective nutrition support to a wider range of sports and athletes using digital technology to implement interventions in a time and cost-effective manner.
- **'An education intervention to improve female team sport athletes' knowledge of and behaviours around the menstrual cycle'** - Up to 78% of female athletes feel their menstrual cycle negatively impacts their performance in training and/or competition. This project found education might improve athletes' knowledge of the menstrual cycle but alone is not effective at changing behaviours. Other interventions, such as a focus on creating an open and supportive environment around the menstrual cycle, may need to accompany education for it to achieve **long-term** behaviour change.
- **Women and girls' talent development pathway: evaluating the girls' academy programme.** Positive performance outcomes, increases in physical development, and more autonomous, confident and resilient players were observed in the FAW's **innovative** female talent development programme. Regionally selected academy teams were **integrated** into age-appropriate male licensed academy competitions in order to increase the amount and level of competition that talented female players experience and to facilitate player progression into the senior levels of the game.

Pathways Coach Developer Programme



After a successful end to the **innovative** Sport Wales Pathway Coach Developer Programme; a two-year **collaboration** between us and Cardiff Metropolitan University, a group of seven coaches from across badminton, equestrian, gymnastics, rugby, tennis and triathlon will become the first Coach Developers in the UK to be Chartered. Chartered status is the highest professional recognition in sport and physical activity.

The role of a Coach Developer is an integral element of advancing coaching practices. We all know that delivering great coaching is a skill and is fundamental to how young people experience sport. In order to meet the needs of young people in performance pathways in Wales, our coaching skills, decisions and behaviours need to be finely honed. Their expertise in 'coaching coaches' will now be made available to other sports in Wales to help coaches create pathway and performance environments which enable young people to thrive.

Analysis

Significant **collaboration** with partners and external experts is bringing closer alignment, shared outcomes and funding being given for the biggest impact.

The review and development of the Capability Framework was engaged with positively by a wide range of stakeholders. Similarly, the Sport Sector Resilience Project explored joint sponsorship opportunities with a number of partners, to leverage collective resources for greater impact. However, capacity and capability constraints remain a challenge for many organisations in progressing this work at scale.

We now have four fully functioning Sport Partnerships. Whilst all are at various stages of development, the partnerships are engaging with stakeholders in their region, developing their strategies, developing a commissioning model and engaging new ways of working.

Actif North Wales, the most developed of these, secured funding from the UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) to test a place-based approach to physical activity, which will see them work with a wide range of local partners. The approach considers the barriers people face to physical activity, sport and movement in their local areas. By shifting power from services and organisations it places citizens at the heart of driving change.



There was positive progress on our advocacy and **collaborative** work on sport for **long-term preventative** health. Contact with Public Health Wales established a clearer direction for working together. The two leadership teams are **collaborating** to deliver a memorandum of understanding for this work, which includes a shared evidence paper and timeline for collective advocacy.

The learning from year one of the Energy Saving Grants saw early **collaboration** with NGBs and LAs and using the investment model and geographic and deprivation indicators, the scheme has supported 175 clubs over the last two years with £3.1m of funding.

Progress on this objective has accelerated in 2024-25 and there were more good examples with the potential for high impact over the **long-term**.

Things we need to consider and where we need to go further:

There is a challenge for us to show how we **collaborate** with other public sector partners and organisations, including how to be good role models for joint working.

We need to consider how we support partners to develop trust and not assume it exists, to ensure meaningful **collaboration**.

Sharing learning is a key focus of communication within Sport Wales and with partners. A range of different methods are in place, to support dissemination of learning. With this much expanded offer, a key next step is to consider how we enable those we work with to access their own most valuable learning.

As data sources build and information becomes better used and valued, we will need to consider how information in different media is safely retained and accessible or whether it is deleted based on an open and transparent policy.

#5 Showcase the benefits of sport

The impact of sport is evidenced, and sport's reach is fully understood, valued, showcased and celebrated throughout Wales.

Case Study:

Reel Minds CIC: Casting lines, catching peace



At Reel Minds CIC, fishing is far more than a sport – it's a lifeline. Thanks to support from National Lottery funding, this grassroots group is creating safe spaces across south Wales, where individuals can find healing, community and purpose through the simple, grounding act of casting a line.

This initiative is a powerful example of how sport and physical activity can be harnessed to support mental health. By offering an accessible, non-judgemental environment, Reel Minds helps participants reconnect – not only with nature, but with themselves and each other.

One participant, **Robert Murphy**, shared:

"Water helped keep me healing. It's amazing what simply walking out with a bunch of friends and an old rod can do and make a difference. That's what fishing for me is about. I only want to catch a piece of mind. I've achieved more in one year than my entire life before that."

Co-founder **Dave Williams** reflected:

"Fishing is just the tool we use to get people together. It's given them a purpose... something to look forward to."

James Powderhill, also a co-founder, added:

"It takes you away from everything. You actually see men come together and help each other as one community."

Participant **Shane Tucker** described the experience as

"Revitalising".



Economic value of sport



This year, working collaboratively alongside Sport England, Sport Northern Ireland, Sport Scotland, UK Sport and the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) we commissioned a brand-new Economic Value of Sport report. The study, undertaken by the Sport Industry Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University, captured the impact sport has directly, and indirectly on the economies of the UK.

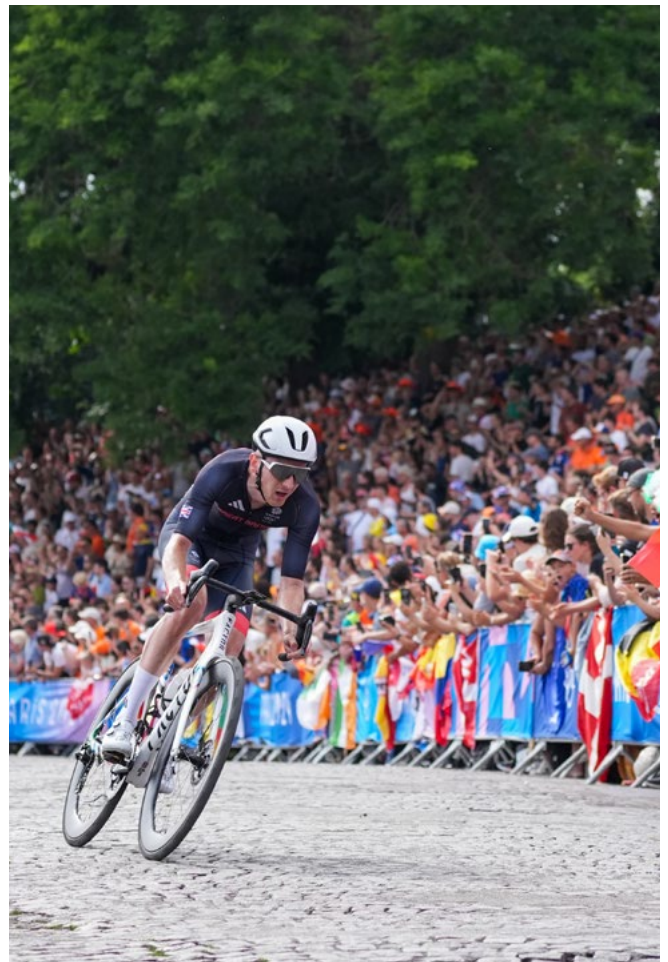
In Wales, the direct gross value added (GVA) contribution through sport amounts to **£1.9 billion** pounds. Including the effects in the upstream value chain (the indirect impact of sport on wider economic industries), this increases to **£2.9 billion** pounds. By comparison the previous figures available from past Sport Wales studies indicated that sport related GVA in Wales was approximately **£1.195 billion** pounds.

The sport related goods and services multiply effect (which captures how much the total effect exceeds the direct effect in terms of value) shows that every pound generated in sport triggers a further 61 pence in the rest of the Welsh economy, which has no direct links to sport. This shows the value that the sport economy has on the wider economy in the nation.

The report also highlighted that Wales has **38,345 FTE** individuals employed directly in sport. The prior figures in 2019 estimated that figure to be 31,100 FTE thus demonstrating important growth across the sector in recent years.

When indirect employment is also considered, i.e roles that are not directly sport related but rely on sport related activity, then there are a further **20,652** roles identified, showing the direct and indirect sport related employment figures in Wales are at **58,997**.

This work has built on past studies in Wales to give both a picture of the current economic value of sport and how that has emerged over time. The study also complements the Social Return on Investment study produced in 2023, establishing a compelling and complete picture of the integral role sport plays in Welsh life.



Wales Activity Tracker



The Wales Activity Tracker continues to provide valuable insight into sport and physical activity trends across the nation, helping us understand adult participation levels, motivations, and barriers. The 2024-25 results have shown encouraging progress alongside persistent challenges.

Positive Trends:

29% of adults are exercising five or more days a week – up from 24% in January 2024. The proportion doing no exercise has also dropped from 19% to 13%. The average number of active days per week has increased from 2.86 in January 2024 to 3.31 in January 2025.

Participation in gyms and fitness classes (28%) and running (23%) has risen, surpassing swimming (20%). The proportion of adults reporting no activity in the past three months is at 10%, the lowest figure recorded to date.

Increasing levels of motivation and confidence:

Confidence to be active has reached its highest level, with 74% of adults feeling capable of exercising. Health remains a major driver, with 62% citing physical benefits and 61% highlighting mental well-being.

Goal setting plays a key role at the start of 2025, with 37% focusing on weight management, 29% increasing daily steps, and 28% improving overall activity levels. This suggests an opportunity for the sector to support structured goal setting and accountability to sustain engagement.

Barriers to participation:

Fewer people now cite lack of time as a barrier, dropping from 34% in January 2024 to 27% in January 2025, with the most significant improvement among 16–34-year-olds (down from 51% to 36%). However, time pressures still impact younger adults and parents the most.

Financial constraints remain a concern, with 39% saying the cost-of-living crisis affects their ability to be active. Women, younger adults, and parents – particularly those in more deprived areas – are disproportionately affected.

Emerging considerations:

- **Severe weather events:** 41% reported reduced activity due to severe weather over the Winter months, though 34% say their routine remained unaffected.
- **Technology & Engagement:** 63% use fitness tech (wearables, apps and other devices), with 77% saying it boosts motivation. Usage is highest among younger adults, ethnic minority groups, and those from higher socioeconomic backgrounds.
- **Safety Concerns:** Exercising in darker hours remains a barrier, especially for women (28% vs. 8% of men). While 57% report no impact, 15% have reduced participation due to safety concerns.

Looking ahead:

The data highlights a positive shift in engagement and motivation, with fewer time-related barriers. However, financial constraints, safety concerns, and seasonal challenges persist.

Looking forward, the sector has an opportunity to build on these insights – leveraging technology, supporting affordable participation, and addressing safety concerns – to ensure everyone in Wales has the opportunity to be active.

By continuing to track these trends, we can work collaboratively to create an environment that supports a lifelong enjoyment of sport and physical activity for all.



Engaging with Senedd Cymru



We submitted responses to several consultations this year with inquiries ranging from the impact of funding cuts, the new Welsh Government Mental Health strategy, chronic conditions and more.

Responding to consultations gives us an opportunity as an organisation to feed into policy discussions where we can advocate for the sector and highlight where sport can make a difference via our strategic intents and policy aspirations developed using the Vision for Sport in Wales.

Some key highlights from this year:

Bathing Waters regulations: UK and Welsh Government

We worked closely with several funded partners ahead of submitting our response to the joint UK and Welsh Government consultation into 'Bathing Waters regulations'. We **collaborated** with partners with the relevant expertise and experience needed to input into this inquiry.

This is one of the first times we have managed to engage closely with relevant partners to submit an **integrated** response which reflects the sector's views and is something we would like to do more of in the future.

Obesity inquiry

During the last 12 months we have continued to develop relationships with Members of the Senedd's Health and Social Care Committee, and the clerks. We often see sport being only thought of in the simplest terms, rather than for the truly **preventative** and **integrated** policy solution it can be.

We were invited to give oral evidence at their inquiry into 'Health Inequalities: Obesity' following our evidence and engagement with the inquiry. On 29 January, we represented the sector at the evidence session alongside Disability Sport Wales.

Key discussions focused on the need for sport and physical activity to be at the heart of policy; making healthy choices more accessible, the power of language in promoting activity, insights from the Wales Activity Tracker, the whole-school approach, international models like New Zealand's school-led initiatives, and more.

By appearing before the Committee, Sport Wales and Disability Sport Wales aimed to ensure sport is recognised as a key solution to **preventative** health, influencing future policies and investment. We hope that a joined-up approach which ensures greater access to sport and physical activity for all will be a key recommendation of the inquiry.

Draft budget and impact of funding cuts

In 2024-25, we received a 10.5% budget cut during the very tough budget round. In Senedd committees, a significant amount of time was spent both scrutinising the Welsh Government's 2025-26 budget and evaluating the impact of the previous funding cuts.

We responded to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations committee's inquiry into the 'impact of funding cuts on the arts and sports' with our Chair and CEO giving oral evidence.

The Committee's report highlighted some key recommendations including a **preventative** budget line which would see culture and sport highlighted for the benefits we know it can bring to a healthier and happier nation for the **long-term**. They also measured cultural funding against other similar sized nations and found Wales seemed to be funded below these levels.

We also supplied evidence to the Finance Committee's scrutiny of the draft budget, which included taking part in stakeholder round table events and supplying a considered response to the consultation, highlighting the further impact any future funding cuts would have on the sector.

Senedd preventative health discussion

In October, Sport Wales ran a sector-wide event in the Senedd asking 'How can sport be utilised to be the nation's greatest preventative health tool?'





The event, sponsored by the Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee welcomed Senedd Members, funded Partners, investment beneficiaries, Health Boards, LAs, Sport Wales staff, the Third Sector and more.

The journalist, Rob Osborne chaired a panel including Professor Larissa Davies who highlighted her social return on investment work, Future Generations Commissioner Derek Walker who spoke to the need of **preventative** health ring-fenced budgeting, Claire Beynon from Cardiff and Vale University Health Board who advocated for the preventative agenda and our Chair Tanni Grey-Thompson who advocated for the sector, but also drew on her knowledge of the subject from her experiences in the House of Lords.

We have **collaborated** with the sector and other partners to review the outcomes of the discussions at the event and used the learning and desire for sport and physical activity to be at the heart of policy discussions in this area to shape our advocacy work looking ahead to the 2026 Senedd elections.

Member engagement

Throughout the year we continued to support Members of the Senedd and UK Parliament to visit clubs in their local constituency for them to see the impact our funding. Members such as the Welsh Liberal Democrat leader Jane Dodds (who visited Ystradgynlais Community Centre) were thrilled to see first-hand the benefits of our funding and were eager to advocate for sport ahead of the 2025-26 budget debate.

Westminster Labour MP and Chair of the Welsh Affairs Committee, Ruth Jones had the chance to see how funding for Newport West Netball Club had helped to both grow the numbers of young women participating and how they had targeted their offer to people living in areas of high deprivation.

As well as club visits, we also attended Spring party conferences and attended one-to-one meetings with MSs to increase their knowledge of Sport Wales and our role and responsibilities as a public body, to discuss specific topics such as **preventative** health or to follow up on specific queries.

Volunteering: The heart of Welsh athletics



At the 2025 Welsh U13, U15, U20 & Para Indoor Championships, hosted by Welsh Athletics, the spirit of volunteering was as inspiring as the performances on the track. Volunteers play a vital role in making events like these possible – dedicating their time, energy and passion to ensure every detail runs smoothly.

From building new skills to forging friendships and giving back to the community, the benefits of volunteering are wide-reaching.

For Gareth Robbins, officiating brings immense pride:

“These events don’t happen without volunteers. To be part of a Welsh team as a volunteer gives me just as much pride as any running achievements that I had when I was younger.”

Avi Madhav, a call room volunteer, reflected:

“I think it’s a kind of mindfulness. Giving back to the community and being with people. Very selfless kind of role.”

Zoe Holloway, Officials and Volunteer Coordinator, highlighted:

“Volunteers are vital to the event happening, in the lead up to the event, in the preparation... Volunteers are the lifeblood of athletics and without them, we wouldn’t be able to put on any events.”

David Hillier, who manages Live Field Results, added:

“It’s not just the athletes we’re helping... being here for me is incredibly important. I wouldn’t change it for the world.”

Their dedication continues to power the success of Welsh Athletics.

Analysis

We have made a high-level commitment to advocacy on the preventative benefits of sport to support the improvement of the health of the nation for the **long-term**. With a focus on working with bodies such as Welsh Government and Senedd Cymru, Public Health Wales, and the Future Generations Commissioner, initial engagement has been positive, but the real impact will emerge in the next 12 months through:

- Strengthening partnerships across sectors.
- Driving greater outcomes in sport’s contribution to preventative health strategies.
- Commitments to Sport Wales recommendations in Party manifestos leading up to the 2026 Senedd Cymru elections.

Sport Wales hosted a successful event for partners and key stakeholders at the Senedd on 1 October 2024, which examined 'how sport can be the nation's most effective preventative health tool.' This was followed up by building further relationships with organisations who can be advocates, and collaborators for preventative health messaging.

Our **innovative** delivery of Government commitments such as requirements on us in the 'Period Proud' plan was a roundtable series which we worked with the Government to promote. This extended the conversation beyond the sports sector into wider policy discussions. It highlights the strength of the partnership between Sport Wales and the Welsh Government, demonstrating how cross-sector **collaboration** can drive meaningful change.

The first phase of a new style of evaluation for the 60+ programme has been successful. Working with the Centre for Health, Activity and Well-being (Cardiff Metropolitan University), research has begun into system mapping and qualitative insight gathering. Partners have shown a commitment to testing new approaches and sharing learning.

A major **collaboration** exercise with all the Sports Councils in the UK and the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) resulted in a new Economic Value of Sport report built on the Social Return on Investment study produced in 2023. This established a compelling and complete picture of the integral role sport plays in Welsh life.

Through the review cycle we asked if there were examples of other organisations using Sport Wales messaging in their networks, thereby indicating that we've made the case that others value sport. Examples of this included Welsh Government's Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales plans identifying Sport Wales as a key delivery partner, the Foundations Framework being mentioned in the Welsh Government Ministerial Review on Play, multiple uses of Sport Wales insight in Senedd Cymru and the Executive Director of Public Health for Cardiff and Vale University Health Board promoting the Chief Medical Officers' view that 'if physical activity was a drug, it would be considered a wonder drug'.

Things we need to consider and where we need to go further:

Are our messages clear enough? We are working with our partners to enhance our messaging to seek to improve collective advocacy.

The Social and Economic Return on Investment reports focus mainly on adults' data. Sport Wales needs to consider whether more should be done to demonstrate what the return is for children and young people.

#6 Highly valued organisation

Sport Wales is a respected organisation, striving to overachieve by delivering a first class service through our valued staff.

Case Study:

Team GB's performance analysis hub returns to Cardiff

Last summer, the Taff Suite at the Sport Wales National Centre in Cardiff once again returned as the base for Team GB's Performance Analysis Hub during the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

From 26 July, six Cardiff-based performance analysts, including two from the Sport Wales Institute, Carys Jones and Jen Roach, provided live video feedback and technical support to athletes and coaches competing in Paris. This behind-the-scenes work plays a crucial role in helping Team GB perform at their peak on the world's biggest sporting stage.

It marks the second time Sport Wales has hosted the hub, following its debut during the Tokyo 2021 Games.

At the time, Carys explained:

"The last Games fell during a time when COVID restrictions were still in place. Mix that with the time difference and it could be very quiet at times!

It will be great to be able to have more people involved this year – we'll be able to work in closer proximity with each other and more closely with reps from sports, too. I'm really looking forward to a more social environment."

Jen was also involved in last year's Paralympics and said at the time:

"I'm really excited to be supporting with performance analysis during the Paralympics this year, too. I'll be heading to London to support our para-athletes in Paris later in August."

Delivering the hub takes extensive planning, equipment and teamwork. Carys added:

"I must say a big thank you to our colleagues in the catering team, everyone in Tech Solutions and the team in the National Centre. Without their hard work we wouldn't be able to host the Analysis Hub here, and it means a lot to everyone in the team to have their support."



Biodiversity at Sport Wales National Centre



The grounds team at Sport Wales are keen to increase the biodiversity of our site at Sophia Gardens and be role models in leading sport to play its part in tackling the nature emergency and **preventing** further loss to our natural environment.

Collaborating in partnership with environmental experts from the Cardiff City Council Parks Service and the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales, the grounds team have installed 10 new nestboxes in a number of locations on the site, suited for a range of species including swifts and woodpeckers.

To enhance the existing wildflower area, bug hotels will be sited and other improvements to the habitat and accessibility of the site such as woodpiles and small mammal access routes will be created.

We will also continue to promote how the sport sector can support nature and contribute to biodiversity. Plans are in place for an area close to Sport Wales National Centre reception to be a showcase of the great biodiversity work on the site and to inform those visiting the centre about how they and their clubs and national organisation can make small changes to give nature a boost. This practical area with public information boards will also link to a webpage with more information and support.

Develop a revised Capability Framework



Collaborating with all partners who receive yearly funding, we reviewed the Capability Framework. As an integral part of our Investment Approach, which provides annual funding of more than £20 million, the Framework aims to build on the previous version by:

- Ensuring we have confidence in organisations when investing public money.
- Supporting the continuous improvement of partners' governance, so they are sustainable and best prepared to achieve their potential; and
- Supporting the development of boards and leaders to create positive and inclusive cultures.

Over 25 partner organisations provided insightful feedback through workshops and discussions to assist with the development of a single and more streamlined framework for the sport sector in Wales. Valuable contributions were also made by subject matter experts and consultants who support the sector, and by utilising learning from organisations who have experienced high profile governance challenges in recent years.

The new and updated framework recognises the vitally important role of culture, behaviours, and leadership. Culture is an integral part of the framework and a cross-cutting theme promoting the benefits of 'good people doing good things.'

The Framework encourages partner organisations to demonstrate that they have values and behaviours embedded throughout the organisation, which, in turn, will drive a positive and inclusive culture which is evident in highly successful organisations.

The new framework contains five key principles, each with core areas of greatest risk, which every organisation should have in place, and good practice areas to support continual improvement so that organisations can aspire to be even better. Each of the core and developmental elements are underpinned by a 'Why', 'What' and 'How' to help clarify the understanding for each element. The five key principles cover the following:

1. Organisational & Legal Compliance
2. People & Cultures
3. Insight, Engagement & Strategy
4. An Effectively Run Organisation
5. Finance

We now look forward to continuing to work with partners in 2025-26 to implement the new framework and support their development and improvement.

Governance and people development: Elevating excellence



The innovative Governance and Leadership Expert Panel, which is made up of expert consultants and established to offer both proactive and reactive assistance to Sport Wales partners, is now offering significantly increased services. These include addressing various aspects of the Capability Framework, including article redrafting, strategy planning, and board observations and developments.

In 2024-25, expert consultants have successfully fulfilled 21 projects, each contributing to the advancement of individual organisations or the sector as a whole through best practices. This comprehensive support has reached 15 partners through one-on-one engagements and has impacted the entire sector on numerous group projects.

Case study: Board development initiatives

Four NGBs have greatly benefited from the personalised guidance of individual consultants working closely with their CEOs and Chairs to enhance their boards. Given that boards hold the ultimate decision-making authority within organisations, it is crucial to ensure they operate efficiently, are well-balanced, and embody diversity. These four bespoke projects were tailored to address the unique challenges of each organisation, providing insightful reflections on current board positions and functions, offering strategic recommendations for development, and delivering an independent perspective on growth opportunities.

Case study: Financial Forecasting

One notable example of our impactful support is the one-on-one assistance provided to a partner in the area of financial forecasting. Landsker, a financial expert from our panel offered 24 hours of dedicated support. The expert consultant empowered the partner with newfound confidence and proficiency by co-creating and utilising their bespoke financial planning tool, enabling them to plan more effectively for the future.

Positive impact and feedback

The support provided has gathered overwhelmingly positive feedback from all partners, uncovering valuable insights that might have otherwise been overlooked. As a result, Sport Wales partners are now thriving with clear development strategies aimed at continuous improvement.

Safeguarding support and assurance for partners



We work closely with, and commission, safeguarding specialists to ensure our partners have access to the right advice and support that is relevant to their sporting activity. We commission the Child Protection in Sports Unit (CPSU) and Ann Craft Trust (ACT) to help support and develop our partners' safeguarding standards and practices.

Both organisations also provide assurance to Sport Wales so we can invest public money with confidence in our partner organisations.

We fund the CPSU and ACT to co-facilitate a regular Lead Officer Support Forum (LOSF). The purpose of this forum is to offer Lead Safeguarding Officers from our partner organisations a safe space to share learning and best practice, discuss challenges and barriers as well as access training and CPD opportunities. The Forum offers the sector a more joined up approach in safeguarding both children and adults in sport.

The increased support and development of partner safeguarding has been a priority for us over the past 2-3 years. There has been a need to reduce risk across the sector and ensure everyone feels comfortable and safe to participate in sport and physical activity.

This need continues, and safeguarding remains a priority.

As a result, we have:

- ✓ Increased funding to our partnerships with the CPSU and ACT.
- ✓ Ensured more support has been made available to partners so they can manage and develop safeguarding to a higher standard.
- ✓ Prioritised a stringent assurance process to better understand partner capacity, capability and confidence.
- ✓ Worked with ACT to raise the profile and increase awareness of adult safeguarding, ensuring our partners are compliant with Welsh legislation.
- ✓ Observed an increase in the prioritisation of safeguarding within our partner organisations.
- ✓ Positively collaborated across the home country sports councils, especially England and UK Sport.

We want to ensure that everyone **involved** in sport has a safe and enjoyable experience. We know this is not always the case, and work is being considered at a UK level in the way safe sport is delivered across the home nations. We will continue to be involved and monitor this work.

We are currently in a scoping and development phase and will continue to explore the best ways we can support our partners to progress safeguarding practices.

This includes expanding our remit to work with our National Partners and Sport Partnerships. We are scrutinising the assurances needed to invest public money safely, and how we will work with the other home country sports councils so better alignment is adopted in our approach to safeguarding the sector.



Our aims are to:

- Ensure all funded partners are maintaining and/or developing essential levels of assurance that is proportionate to the capacity and capability of the organisation.
- Support partners in creating effective and robust safeguarding action plans that develop and improve their safeguarding provision.
- Work with partners ahead of any potential changes to safeguarding assurance and development in response to the recent consultation in England and Wales, and the UK Safe Sport work, to ensure that safeguarding remains a priority.



Moving to Inclusion framework



Moving to Inclusion is a **collaborative** initiative by the UK Sports Councils to provide resources and support for sport and physical activity organisations. The aim of the Moving to Inclusion Framework is to support these organisations to move toward a more diverse, inclusive and socially responsible sector. The Framework includes 5 pillars (Culture, Leadership, Communication, Experience, Relationship) and a diagnostic tool that supports organisations to self-reflect and continually improve.

The UK Sports Councils launched the Moving to Inclusion Framework in the summer of 2023 and as part of the support provided through the framework, organisations can access mentoring over a 12-month period from an EDI specialist.

In Wales, our first cohort of 7 partners¹ received inductions into the framework and were allocated mentors in February 2024. Some were placed in groups and some received 1:1 mentoring support to trial different approaches. Organisations really benefitted from working with their peers and that has shaped the way we work with our partners and mentors going forward.

The Framework also hosts 'Celebrating Inclusion' – a way for partners to showcase all the great Equality, Diversity and Inclusion practice they are embedding in their organisation. Their initiatives are captured and presented to sport and physical activity organisations and shared across the UK sports sector. The Urdd will be featured in the second Celebrating Inclusion piece in April 2025 under the Leadership pillar and organisations across the UK are invited to attend and learn about all the great practice they have embedded.

Sport Wales has delivered workshops on how to engage with the framework from a self-directed approach and how to create and utilise EQIAs to ensure organisations are considering inclusion in all areas of their work. This is being turned into a resource that will be shared and added to the [Moving to Inclusion website](#).

The website hosts the framework, as well as other shared initiatives such as TRARIIS and the Transgender Inclusion in Sport Guidance. The website will become a hub for EDI resource and support for the sector as the Sports Councils continue to develop its content and functionality which is guided by data, insight and feedback from the sector.

12 organisations in Wales have completed the self-reflection diagnostic so far, including Sport Wales as an organisation. We are also going through the framework alongside our partners. We will start to use this data to create further resource and support for our partners and the sector, as well as consider ways we can encourage more **collaboration**.

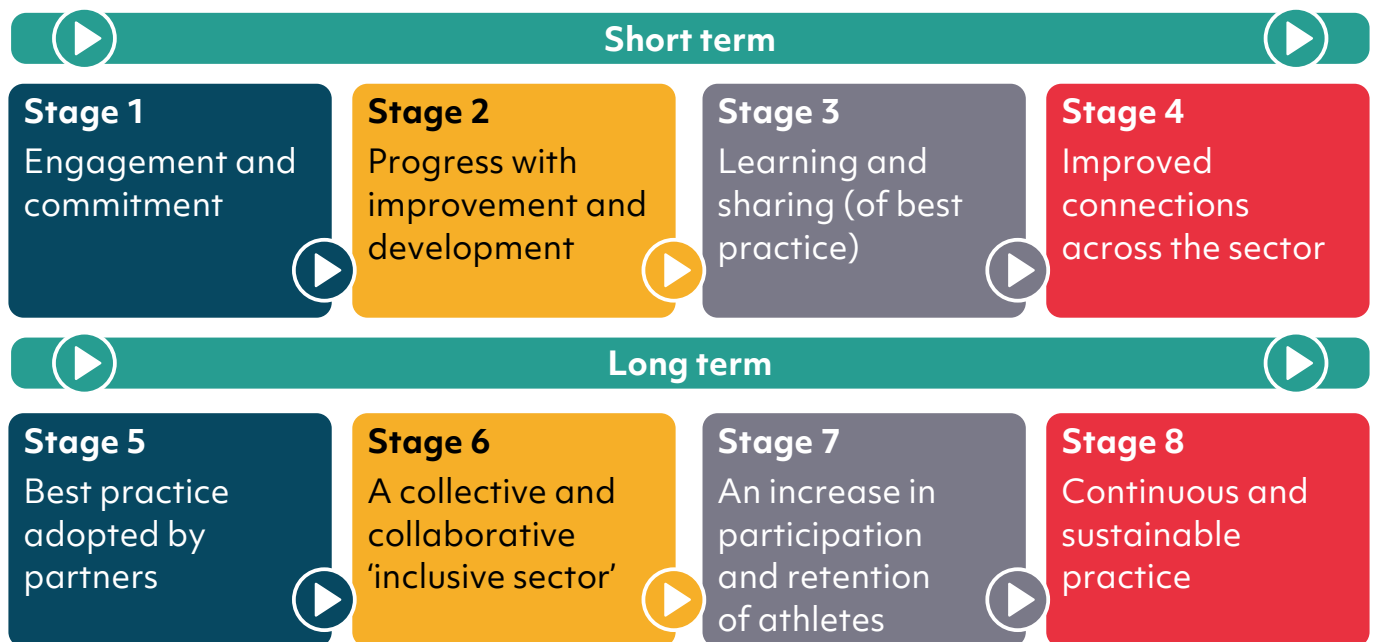
¹ Welsh Athletics, Tennis Wales, Welsh Boxing, Urdd, Disability Sport Wales, Swim Wales, Cricket Wales

Our next cohort of 12 partners² will work in pairs and were allocated their mentors in January 2025.

Referring to the Model for Measuring Impact and Success, we and our partners are still currently operating in the short-term stages,

with some still yet to engage and demonstrate genuine commitment to EDI, whilst others who have accessed the mentoring support have started to improve their connections across the sector.

Model for Measuring Impact and Success



Key Findings from the Diagnostic Tool

To complete the diagnostic tool, we established a volunteer working group across the organisation. The results of the diagnostic highlighted several areas of progress:

- **Leadership:** Board membership and recruitment are fair, open, and somewhat representative, with some lived experience. Leadership recruitment is less representative, with fewer examples of lived experience.

Strategic decisions use evidence and community consultation, but engagement with underrepresented groups and earlier impact assessments need improvement. EDI outcomes are embedded in planning, but clearer accountability, better leadership communication, and more tangible results are needed.

² Badminton Wales, Wales Golf, Paddle Cymru, Wales Rugby League, Squash Wales, The Outdoor Partnership, Wales Netball, Welsh Gymnastics, Welsh Cycling / Beicio Cymru, Basketball Wales, Commonwealth Games, Table Tennis Wales.

- **Culture:** We foster inclusion through surveys, feedback, and staff-led initiatives like Reflect and Connect. Policies support a safe environment, but some staff hesitate to report incidents. Improving confidence in raising issues and demonstrating action taken is needed. EDI is embedded in our values, but deeper integration into daily practices would enhance visibility. Recruitment has diversified our workforce, though disability representation remains a gap. We continuously improve using insights but could focus on specific EDI areas for greater impact.
- **Experience:** Surveys and community engagement help identify access barriers and inform decisions. Positive action programs and initiatives focus on addressing inequalities. While efforts ensure accessibility and inclusivity in delivery environments, more can be done to understand diverse needs of our population. Our learning culture drives inclusivity improvements, but deeper engagement with underrepresented groups is needed.
- **Relationships:** We work strategically with partners to drive EDI change, using investment as a catalyst. While we challenge poor practices, our role in providing learning opportunities needs clarity. We champion EDI, remove barriers, and promote successful partnerships through shared learning. Increasing stakeholder network awareness and broadening learning across staff would enhance impact.
- **Communication:** Our corporate communications align with Sport Wales' strategy and EDI approach, ensuring messaging is tailored to audiences and platforms. We have multiple stakeholders and audiences it is important that we understand the audiences that we are looking to target with our specific projects and areas of work and the different roles that different groups play to ensure our core communications are as effective as possible. We've increased imagery from supported projects to enhance EDI-focused communication. Our inclusive language guide exists but needs wider communication and updates as language evolves.

Future actions and next steps

Completing the Moving to Inclusion Diagnostic Tool has been a valuable exercise for Sport Wales, reinforcing our commitment to building a truly inclusive sporting landscape. The insights gained will drive meaningful action, ensuring that sport in Wales is welcoming, accessible, and representative of all communities. This commitment will be reflected in future policies, investments, and partnerships, as Sport Wales continues to champion inclusion across the sector.

Reflect and Connect Café



The innovative Reflect and Connect Café was relaunched in January 2025, realigning with its original goal – to provide a space for colleagues to engage in meaningful discussions on topics impacting both their professional and personal lives.

While initial sign-ups were promising, actual attendance was lower than anticipated, with the majority of participants coming from those already engaged in work around organisational culture. Feedback highlighted key barriers:

- **Uncertainty about relevance:** Some colleagues were unsure if the sessions were beneficial to them.
- **Scheduling conflicts:** Operational staff struggled to attend due to shift patterns.
- **Perceived additional workload:** Some saw it as “another thing to do” rather than an opportunity for development.

To address this, future sessions will focus on powerful, relevant topics and communicate clear benefits to colleagues. Leadership engagement is also key, as seen in other initiatives. Invitations will be sent out at least eight weeks in advance to improve scheduling and attendance.

Human Library



Launched in February 2025, the Human Library has been a transformative initiative, fostering empathy, connection, and understanding among colleagues. It allows individuals to share personal stories while others participate as ‘readers’ in a safe, conversational space.

Over 20 participants came to the first session, with feedback highlighting its emotional impact:

“I never knew that about you, and I have known you for a long time.”

“I didn’t know you went through so much; you are inspiring and so strong.”

A key success factor was aligning the session with a strategic planning day, showing that leadership **involvement** significantly boosts participation. However, time management was a challenge, and some colleagues were hesitant to attend due to concerns about sharing personal experiences. Future sessions will feature a more structured format, and messaging will emphasise that sharing is optional.

Going forward, the Human Library will run bi-monthly, alternating with Reflect and Connect. Plans are also underway to explore an online version to enhance accessibility, although a hybrid format presents technical challenges.

The system wide approach to performance



In 2024, the SWI has sharpened its focus, redefining its purpose to drive a step-change in how sport science and medicine (SSSM) services impact pathway and performance sport in Wales. We are not just providing support to athletes – we are tackling the systematic challenges that repeatedly prevent them from fulfilling their potential.

Our ambition is simple but bold: to create the most science-informed sporting system in the world, enabling all athletes in Wales to thrive and making 'winning well' more likely. This means evolving from a model that primarily delivers one-to-one athlete support to one that addresses recurring issues in performance sport – challenges that, if solved, could transform the training environments for hundreds of athletes across multiple sports.

This shift in approach is already making an impact. We are **collaborating** more closely with national partners, focusing on projects that improve coaching knowledge, athlete support structures, and system-wide performance strategies. We are also challenging outdated norms, pushing for a sporting culture where injuries are not simply accepted as part of the process, where athlete voices are not just heard but acted upon, and where performance support is proactive, not reactive. Our work is not about maintaining the status quo but about driving meaningful, **long-term** change.

As we continue this journey, our confidence is growing. By stepping into this space, we are not only refining how we work but also defining what a world-class performance system should look like. This work is laying the foundation for a system that is smarter, more inclusive, and more effective – one where every athlete in Wales has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

National Centre booking system



We set about improving the customer service and experience with our national centre booking system, with the additional aim of achieving Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation, which was necessary to meet Welsh Government requirements and ensure the system was **integrated** for the future needs of internal and external customers for the **long-term**.

New and existing users will be able to set up memberships, book facilities and manage their account online. Once fully configured and tested, a "go live" date will be agreed and will provide immediate value. These new online features are mobile friendly, bilingual and fully customisable. The next phase will include setting up a mobile app.

The accommodation booking system is now live, resulting in a smoother and more efficient process. Connections with online third-party channels, such as Booking.com, Expedia and Hotels.com are available and will be a consideration for the next phase of this project.



The upgrades, decommissioning and acquisition of the centre booking systems were not the only prerequisites to successful Cyber Essential Plus accreditation. The technical solutions team needed to make wholesale changes to infrastructure, decommissioning servers, upgrading services, migrating legacy platforms and orchestrate around 150 laptop exchanges, all whilst minimising disruption to services.

Efforts to achieve Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation reflect a commitment to strong security and infrastructure improvements, ensuring a secure and resilient digital estate.

Branding refresh



We want our brand to be as accessible as possible to everyone. In 2023, we conducted a brand review which highlighted some opportunities for making adjustments to the current brand to ensure everyone has a positive and inclusive experience when engaging with our organisation. In 2025, we **innovated** to make changes to our typography by decapitalising and removing italics for better readability, expanding our colour palette with improved contrast options to better meet accessibility standards, and adopting a single colour logo for clarity and simplicity.

To support the rollout of these changes, we developed an **integrated**, centralised branding suite for staff where they can access updated brand guidelines, templates and tools. We have been engaging closely with staff to support them in understanding what's available, where they can find it and how to use it in their daily work.

Sustainability at the Sport Wales National Centre



One of our key initiatives in our catering offering has been introducing Leanpath®, a system that helps us track and reduce food waste. In addition, the Navitas temperature monitoring system was installed in all refrigerators and freezers. The combination of these tools has already led to a noticeable decrease in the amount of food we throw away.

We've also taken steps to reduce waste in other areas. At the Hwb cafe, we've replaced disposable cups with china ones, which cuts down on waste.

Working closely with our food suppliers, we've managed to significantly reduce the number of deliveries each week. This change helps reduce our carbon footprint by lowering the emissions from transportation. Additionally, we've strengthened our commitment to local sourcing. By partnering with a key food supplier, we're now able to buy all our vegetables from Welsh farmers and source 80% of our meat products from within Wales, cutting our emissions.

In our accommodation facilities, we've also swapped single-use toiletries for refillable options and removed disposable cups.



National Lottery 30th birthday



Since 1994, The National Lottery has played a key role in enabling sport in Wales to thrive. Over the last three decades, more than £353m of lottery funding has been invested by Sport Wales into 30,264 projects, improving lives for so many people through sport.

The National Lottery directly funds elite Welsh athletes, supports the grassroots clubs through which they emerge, and has also been invested into creating world-class sporting facilities.

In November 2024, Welsh sport come together to celebrate the National Lottery's 30th birthday. A group of staff worked together to increase awareness and understanding of the role of the National Lottery throughout the organisation and worked **collaboratively** with our partners to look at how to use the 30th birthday celebrations to develop an internal approach to acknowledging and promoting the National Lottery that is sustainable beyond November 2024 for the **long-term**.



Activity to mark the birthday included:

- Over 120 staff and partners attending a National Lottery themed celebratory event at the Sport Wales National Centre.
- A range of social media and website content highlighting the National Lottery's positive impact on Welsh sport including a video featuring boxer Lauren Price visiting two National Lottery-funded clubs near her hometown of Caerphilly, an article containing Tanni Grey-Thompson's reflections on the importance of lottery funding, and an article which listed 30 ways that Welsh sport has benefited from National Lottery funding.
- More partners sharing key National Lottery messages and displaying the lottery logo on their materials throughout the year.
- Using the Paris 2024 Games to highlight how National Lottery funding supports Welsh athletes, from the grassroots to the highest level.
- Supporting a **collaborative** 30th birthday event at the Senedd and organising visits for Members of the Senedd to National Lottery funded projects, highlighting the spend and impact at a constituency level.
- A significant piece of work was carried out to cleanse historic funding data.
- Staff visits to National Lottery funded projects throughout Wales to see the difference funding is making.

To build on the success of the celebrations, each area of the organisation has committed to continuing a range of activities. These have been designed to ensure the significant progress made over the last 12 months is the start of a more proactive, planned approach to recognising the National Lottery across the organisation and with our funded partners. It will also help ensure Welsh sport is well placed to capitalise on the platform the new operator Allwyn is expected to provide designed to tell a compelling story about the impact of National Lottery funding.

Analysis

We continue to seek external and independent perspectives on our services to ensure continuous improvement and high governance standards. A notable example is the independent review of our recruitment process, commissioned to assess inclusivity and accessibility. This work reflects our commitment to improvement based on data and feedback and embedding EDI principles in all aspects of organisational development.

The conclusion of the review was that there was a "solid foundation but ... several areas that require strategic improvements." The majority of recommendations have been accepted and planned for implementation either in the short or medium term. Oversight is provided by the EDI Committee, a formal sub-committee of the Board.

The National Lottery Community Fund audit of Senedd members provided positive feedback on Sport Wales' role as a trusted National Lottery distributor, with increased awareness of its funding impact.

Through seeking and using relevant information and insight, our catering team has made significant progress in improving sustainability. This was achieved through reducing waste by implementing the Leanpath system and by engaging with suppliers to better understand their food miles and transport emissions.

Sport Wales National Centre has continued to use an external company to give feedback based on mystery shopper visits. The 2024-25 average scores were 90% a little lower than the previous year's at 95% and a couple of the individual visit scores were just below 85%. The team conducted a service improvement plan and actioned refurbishments to the accommodation rooms based on the feedback.

We want to better understand the perception of Sport Wales by our partners in 2025-26. A trial has begun to share the information we hold with each partner, with the aim of improving our partnership working and relationships.

In 2024, we completed the Welsh Language Commissioner's ('WLC') Compliance Questionnaire. The feedback from WLC was positive with only minor recommendations and noted that Sport Wales is continually working with WLC to maintain and increase our Welsh language services.

A project has started to map all our services. Currently most service improvements are based on compliance requirements or because something is broken. This exercise will help to consider strategic needs in service improvements.

The Head of Internal Audit has provided a positive annual opinion, maintaining this trend since 2015-16.

Through the review cycle there have been more examples seen of systematic approaches to seeking and using independent views on service delivery than in 2023-24.

Things we need to consider and where we need to go further:

We need to consider when services have been scrutinised, how we will know if the changes made are successful.

Having an external assessment of a service such as Welsh Language Standards is useful, but it would also help to understand the confidence levels of staff in applying those standards.

What processes are needed to track progress over time?



Equality objectives

The review cycle also considered the progress that Sport Wales has made toward our four equality objectives.

1. Embed equality values into the organisational culture at Sport Wales

We have continued to embed EDI at the core of our organisational culture. The launch of the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) 2024–28 has set out a refreshed set of priorities, including sector-wide commitments such as the End-to-End Recruitment Review. This review has already informed plans to strengthen inclusive recruitment practices across Sport Wales and to share good practice on inclusive recruitment with the wider sports sector.

A key development this year has been the development and delivery of Anti-Racism training, rooted in the principles and actions contained within the Anti-Racism Wales Action Plan ('ARWAP').

We have adopted a 'train the trainer' approach, enabling staff to facilitate sessions in-house and helping ensure the training is sustainable, accessible, grounded in our context and the training skills and knowledge are retained in house. These sessions have received positive feedback from participants.

We also undertook a self-assessment using the Moving to Inclusion Framework, helping identify both existing strengths and areas for further development. In addition, we've engaged in benchmarking visits to other Home Countries, including a valuable visit to Inverclyde, which highlighted approaches to inclusive and accessible provision – especially in purpose-built facilities.

We have made progress in aligning with the Social Model of Disability, through both physical accessibility audits and a broader Belonging Audit.

This included a review of our website and digital communications, where digital accessibility has become a key focus.

Positive indicators of progress:

- Promoting career experiences for children and young people from historically disadvantaged communities.
- Collaborating with Welsh Government to improve diversity in board recruitment.
- Continuing to monitor workforce and recruitment diversity to identify positive trends and areas of underrepresentation.

Things we need to consider and where we need to go further:

Ensuring that equality values are fully integrated into decision-making across all areas of the organisation.

- Encouraging high engagement with EDI training and awareness initiatives.
- Extending inclusive practice beyond internal teams to influence partners and stakeholders in the sector.
- Considering the potential benefit of a dedicated lead for organisational culture, to help drive and coordinate this work while it embeds across the organisation.

2. Eliminate pay gaps

We remain committed to addressing pay disparities and ensuring a fair and equitable pay structure across all protected characteristics. The March 2025 gender pay gap report identified a median pay gap of 8.7%, and a mean gap of 8.3%, both of which represent slight increases from the previous year (8.0% median, 7.4% mean).

While our gap remains below the UK national average, this shift underlines the importance of sustained, targeted action.

Positive indicators of progress:

- Flexible working options have been enhanced across the organisation, supporting better work-life balance and helping to retain and attract diverse talent – particularly women and carers.
- Graduate and early-career programmes, such as the Sport Science Graduate Scheme, are providing structured entry points into roles where some groups have been historically underrepresented.
- Targeted leadership development, including mentoring, for women colleagues is supporting progression and helping to build a more representative leadership pipeline.

Things we need to consider and where we need to go further:

- Addressing the persistent underrepresentation of diverse talent in senior leadership roles.
- Developing and embedding long-term strategies that support both equitable progression and sustainable improvement in pay parity.
- Recognising that meaningful change in this area is complex and will require consistent and collective effort across the organisation.

3. Embed socially responsible procurement at Sport Wales

We have taken significant steps towards embedding social value, sustainability, and inclusion within our procurement processes. The development of a new Procurement Strategy, aligned with the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 and the Procurement Act (2023), has reinforced a commitment to environmental, social, economic, and cultural well-being.

Positive indicators of progress:

- A Sustainable Procurement Maturity Review (SPMR), conducted with WRAP Cymru, which helped identify strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- A review of barriers faced by small and diverse businesses in engaging with Sport Wales procurement processes.
- Development of new procurement guidelines requiring suppliers to demonstrate alignment with principles of equality, diversity, inclusion, and sustainability.
- A planned short-term secondment to strengthen internal procurement expertise and support the implementation of these new approaches.
- Initial user testing, which has provided valuable feedback for refining processes and documentation.

- These steps form the foundation for embedding socially responsible procurement more deeply into our organisation. Once the new documentation is finalised with input from the secondees, a staff awareness and training programme will be rolled out to support consistent application across the organisation.

Things we need to consider and where we need to go further:

- Ensuring access to procurement opportunities for small, local, and diverse suppliers.
- Embedding meaningful social value criteria consistently across all procurement activities.
- Balancing innovation with compliance and transparency in procurement practice.

4. Cultivate a culture of continuous improvement within Sport Wales and with partner organisations

We have continued to strengthen a culture of continuous improvement, both within the organisation and across the wider Welsh sports sector. This is reflected in our ongoing use of the Moving to Inclusion Framework, which helps guide our practice, alongside the completion of the ARWAP monitoring report, which continues to inform our work on anti-racism and engagement.

This year, we have co-created a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for Sport Partnerships in collaboration with Actif North Wales, offering a suite of tools for regional partnerships to tailor to their specific contexts. This reflects our aim to support shared learning and flexible, localised delivery.

We've also embedded improvement processes through internal structures, including business planning cycles that support cross-team collaboration, continuous feedback loops, and learning logs, enabling teams to reflect and iterate regularly on their work. These approaches are helping us refine both delivery and decision-making across the organisation.

Positive indicators of progress:

- User testing and accessibility improvements to the School Sport Survey, ensuring more inclusive and representative data collection from young people.
- Publication and promotion of the Good Practice Guide for Inclusive Recruitment, produced to support sector-wide learning and improvement.
- Ongoing development of the Community Investment Advisor role, now expanded to two roles, helping under-represented communities better access Sport Wales funding – including advice on both programme and capital funding opportunities. Organisations and communities have been supported in all regions of Wales and for national diversity organisations with a number of successful applications achieved by those the advisors have worked with.

- Growth of the Midnight Ramadan initiative, which evolved based on participant voice to offer women-only sessions at additional locations beyond Sport Wales National Centre. This also led to improved **collaboration** with NGBs in delivering tailored women's activities.
- We are also developing our internal practice through work such as the development of the Capability Framework, co-designed with partners to ensure it reflects real-world needs. This is helping us role model inclusive and reflective practice, and we are increasingly sharing our learning with the sector including what we've done well and where further work is needed.

Things we need to consider and where we need to go further:

- Supporting the embedding of good practice consistently across the broader sports sector in Wales.
- Maintaining **long-term** partner engagement with diversity and inclusion work.
- Balancing improvement culture with delivery demands across teams and partners.

Welsh language standards reporting

The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 established a legal framework to impose duties on public bodies to comply with statutory standards relating to the Welsh language. The Standards approach replaced the requirement of the Welsh Language Act 1993. Welsh Language Standards came into place for Sport Wales on 25 January 2017.

This report assesses our performance against our Welsh Language Standards and provides details of the partnership work we have completed over the last 12 months. We are committed to ensuring we meet the duties placed upon us and recognise the important role that sport can play in supporting the development of the Welsh language in the community.

The Welsh language in sport

We have continued our partnership with the Welsh Language Commissioner (WLC) to support and encourage national organisations in the sports sector to extend their Welsh language offers. Sport Wales sees this work as an important part of our Welsh language duties through encouraging the development and promotion of more opportunities to use the Welsh language to play sport.

The first Welsh NGBs of sport achieved the Welsh Language Commissioner's Cynnig Cymraeg recognition in 2023. Welsh Triathlon and the Welsh Rugby Union both achieved the award to mark their commitment to the Welsh language and to extending their Welsh services.

Six NGBs and National Partners are working towards this accreditation with support from the WLC's Hybu team. Sport Wales staff use the What Matters process with our partners to track readiness and to support work in partnership with WLC colleagues.

The Urdd:

As a key strand of our Welsh language commitment Sport Wales works in partnership with and invests in the Urdd's extensive programmes to deliver Welsh language opportunities in sport and recreation. A summary of some of the Urdd's achievements in 2024-25:

- After School introductory provision: Opening provision into new schools as volunteer pools grow.
- Community Clubs and Holiday provision: expanding on the offer of specific community provision through including summer sport activities; Continued focus to targeted sports and outcomes such as women and girls.

- Volunteers and coaches: continued training and the development of new coaches and volunteers; A new apprentice role has started to support events.
- Work with the secondary schools and further education ('FE') colleges in specific areas to create a young workforce of volunteers that can support the growth of inclusion projects. Welsh lessons have now commenced for the new volunteers before they are signposted into supporting community provision.
- Collaboration with the FE sector in delivering national and regional events.
- Regional Competitions and National events: Continue to hold several regional competitions with participation levels continuing to be very high. Schools and colleges continue to have a huge appetite for participating in inclusive, well-run competitions. Events are planned to link with high profile major sporting events.
- Partnership working to enable a programme of 1-to-1 pool support that then makes swimming teaching programmes fully inclusive. Training has now also been provided to staff to enable delivery of 1-to-1 pool support.
- Staff Development: Continue to ensure staff have relevant qualifications to deliver high standards of provision; provide coaching/leaders courses to staff in-house.

Grant funding

We work proactively to develop sport for people bilingually through our investment schemes.

Cronfa Cymru Actif / Be Active Wales Fund

Of the 725 Be Active Wales Fund awards that have been made in 2024-25, 57 are to organisations that are addressing Sport Wales priority area for investment in the Welsh Language. These awards were for a combined £394,397 out of the total Be Active Wales funding of £4.19m.

The basis of the above awards against the priority areas for investment was changed towards the end of the 2023-24 financial year. To increase the accessibility of our community awards and make them more applicant friendly our investment team now determines the priority areas that an award addresses on the basis of scrutiny of the application and contact with the applicant.

Our Welsh language duties

The potential impacts on Welsh Language speakers are considered and summarised as a standard section of Sport Wales Impact Assessment and Board paper templates. This means that these impacts need to be considered as part of every new, or significant change in policy and as part of the writing of every board paper.

Though the Welsh language is not a protected characteristic, our work in this area is considered by our EDI Committee. Welsh language is a diversity characteristic and there are many synergies between the positive actions on Sport Wales equality objectives and Welsh language duties. The Sport Wales Audit and Risk Assurance Committee ('ARAC') also reviews our compliance in this area.



Welsh Language standards compliance

For the purpose of this report, we will provide a summary of actions taken to adhere to 'Class of Standards' such as Service Delivery, Policy Making and Operational. This report is by no means exhaustive and does not provide an update of our adherence to every standard applicable to us but aims to provide both the public and the Commissioner with insight into the actions taken to comply with the standards.

Service delivery

We have delayed the implementation of the Sport Wales National Centre booking system until the Welsh language capability is fully functional, due to technical challenges outside of our control.

Our revised branding is highly visible in new signage that is fully compliant with our standards with the Welsh language text located above or to the left of the English.

We have maintained our commitment that any reception vacancies will be Welsh language essential appointments.

In addition, other posts in our customer services team have also been given this status to increase the coverage of our Welsh language offer in person and by phone. In the last year one Receptionist and one Customer Services post were advertised on this basis and both were successfully appointed with Welsh speakers.

We have developed a process for all staff on how to operate with Welsh language enquiries and this process is detailed on the Welsh Language pages of our corporate intranet.

Policy making

The Insight, Policy and Public Affairs team ensure written responses to Government and Senedd consultations are submitted in Welsh and English at the same time.

Amendments to our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) template were made in 2024-25 primarily to meet the implications of the recent Language Tribunal decision on the policy making standards. The text of the Welsh language Impact Assessment section was substantially revised to ensure the required 'conscientious effort' is considered and actioned as part of all IIA's.

In order to implement this change we notified all staff of the changes and conducted two briefing sessions with relevant staff who will produce IIA's. A training video was also produced for future use.

In order to improve the process and culture of impact assessments at Sport Wales, a fundamental review of our current approach took place in 2024-25. This has become a digital and service design project to ensure the process is more user-friendly and effective. The changes made in the wording of the template to meet the policy making standard will be retained and the project and its follow up staff awareness and training will be evaluated.

Operational:

During 2024-25, all 26 vacancies but three had bilingual/multi-lingual skills listed as a desirable criteria on job descriptions and Welsh language skills were essential for two roles. A total of 17 new starters joined Sport Wales during 2024-25 on permanent or fixed term contracts and of these new starters nine described their Welsh language skills as fluent, partial or beginner levels. In 2024-25, all new staff were asked whether they wished to receive written correspondence regarding their employment in Welsh.

All our job adverts are bilingual and all supporting materials for vacancies such as application forms and job specifications are bilingual. All applicants are given the option to interview in either English or Welsh.

Our staff handbook which details our corporate policies covering everything from health and safety to performance and absence management and workplace benefits is available bilingually. All staff are aware of the opportunity to make complaints through the medium of Welsh and that the whole complaint process will be completed through the language of choice.

All staff can receive Welsh language training during working hours, if that is how they choose to learn. During 2024-25, eight people have attended Welsh language courses.

All email signatures are managed centrally by our Technology Team and are bilingual.

Record keeping:

We keep a record of the Welsh speakers within the Sport Wales workforce. In 2024-25, data showed the following:

Level of Welsh	
Fluent	 11% (18)
Partial	 7% (11)
Beginner	 18% (31)
Non-Welsh speaker	 45% (76)
Not declared	 19% (32)

The above data shows there has been an increase in staff members with Welsh language skills from 33% in 2023-24 to 36% in 2024-25. There has been a slight decline in declarations from staff from 83% in 2023/24 to 81% in 2024-25.

Complaints:

We keep a record each year of complaints relating to our adherence to the Welsh Language Standards. During 2024-25 we received no new complaints on our Welsh language services.

The formal complaint that commenced in 2022-23 about the operation of Plas Menai and the impact assessment process used during the commissioned partnership tender process concluded in December 2023. The Welsh Language Commissioner upheld the complaint. The majority of the required actions have now been completed within the specified action plan period to April 2025. There are two requirements that, despite best efforts, have not been able to be implemented, one of which is outside the control of Sport Wales and Parkwood Leisure, and both have been the subject of actions to seek to achieve compliance.

Supplementary standards: service delivery / policy making / operational / record-keeping

Our 'Welsh Language Scheme' document includes all our Welsh Language standards and can be found on our website. This document is in the process of being improved and updated. This has involved discussions with colleagues from the Welsh Language Commissioner's office to ensure compliance with Standards and good practice, with members of staff who speak Welsh and our contracted in-house translator. The extensive work on the Compliance Questionnaire has delayed the final stage, the consultation process with external partner organisations.

The improved understanding of Sport Wales's compliance levels across all standards through the completion of the Compliance Questionnaire has helped to draft a better policy document. It will also result in improvements in the staff guidance documents, the awareness raising and staff training that will follow. The revised policy will be published in 2025-26.

Details on how we would manage a complaint related to the Welsh language are included within the Welsh Language Scheme mentioned above.

While we have made significant progress in developing and promoting the Welsh language, we are ambitious and there are many areas we want to continue to take forward. We will work proactively on these in our planning and report on progress regularly.

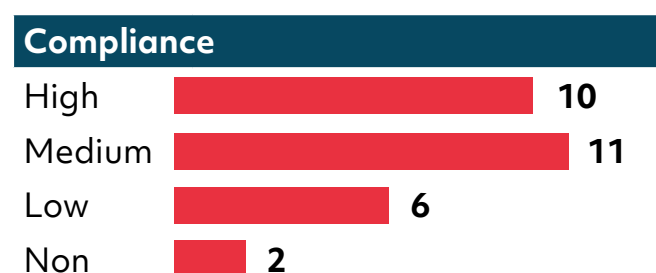
Compliance assessment

During 2024-25, the Welsh Language Commission has progressed its aim of shifting its approach to one of co-regulation with the public bodies it regulates. It has engaged with Sport Wales and relevant public bodies on the approach to doing this and a set of Regulatory Outcomes have been consulted on and implemented as the principles for this change.

In respect of the WLC's work on compliance, all public bodies were required to complete a Compliance Questionnaire in the second half of 2024.

This required Sport Wales to self-assess, with evidence, all the 156 Welsh language standards that apply to the organisation and to set actions for any standards that were not assessed as high compliance. The exercise involved engaging with all parts of Sport Wales and the input of many staff. It was a valuable exercise in giving a clearer assurance picture on our current compliance levels, it was a significant piece of work.

Sport Wales's 156 standards were arranged in 29 groups of related standards by WLC. The self-assessment summary of our compliance levels across those 29 groups was:



An action plan has been drafted with 22 actions.

The response from WLC compliance staff, who also conduct their own assessments by using our Welsh language services, was positive with only minor recommendations raised. We were pleased to note the feedback that we are continually working with WLC to maintain and improve our Welsh language services.

The action plan will be reviewed and implemented in 2025-26 and will be a key document in the continuous improvement of our Welsh language offer and services.

Plas Menai

In 2023, Sport Wales commissioned Parkwood Leisure as our partner operating Plas Menai, the National Outdoor Centre for Wales.

Plas Menai has continued to increase the number of Welsh speaking staff to improve the resilience of its Welsh offer across the programme of participation and instructor courses for different sports and qualification levels.

The Parkwood Leisure team have used several different approaches to increase the Welsh language skills in their workforce. A former Plas Menai instructor who speaks Welsh has been upskilled to deliver the RYA's instructor courses. A first language Welsh speaker has been recruited to join the kayak instructor pool.

To increase the number of opportunities to recruit to the pool of Welsh speaking instructors Plas Menai has also advertised for instructors who are in the process of achieving their qualifications. Other instructor vacancies have been advertised as Welsh speaking essential roles to maximise the opportunity to increase language skills. Plas Menai is also contacting its pool of freelance instructors to support them to learn Welsh to be able to instruct in the language in future years. This also applies to the contracted staff at site.

Parkwood have also had a successful year in the development of their apprenticeship (Instructor Development) programme working with the Urdd to deliver. They have been successful in recruiting three Welsh speakers from Gwynedd to join the 15-month programme. One of last year's graduates, who is a local Welsh speaker from the Trainee Instructor Course forms part of this cohort. This shows the development in recruiting Welsh speakers with no previous qualifications in the outdoors and seeing them embark on a journey into the Outdoor Industry, supporting them with CPD from the start.

Case Study:

Communications and digital – promoting our Welsh language offer and helping more people to use Welsh!

Our Communications and Digital team have put Sport Wales' person-centred objective at the heart of their work on the Welsh language. This has also had great alignment with the Welsh Language Commissioner's aim for public bodies to focus on the promotion and uptake of our Welsh language services to enable more people to use the Welsh language.

Website review

In April 2024, we began a project to review our website, focusing on website analytics, user behaviour and benchmarking against similar organisations in UK sport and the Welsh public sector.

The review highlighted that the Welsh-language version of the website was underperforming in comparison to Welsh language user figures and the English language version. To address this, we commissioned research specialists to conduct an in-depth study throughout 2024-25.

To ensure future improvements meet the needs of Welsh-speaking users, usability testing was carried out, including sessions in Welsh, along with surveys and treejack tests available in Welsh (treejack tests evaluate the effectiveness of a website's information architecture and navigation).

This research will inform major updates to our website, including enhanced Welsh-language functionality, set to launch in 2025-26.

Welsh language integration on social media

Our approach to social media has continued to evolve, embedding Welsh language content across both our English and Welsh channels. Rather than limiting Welsh content to our dedicated @Chwaraeon_Cymru accounts, we have actively incorporated Welsh phrases and bilingual content into our mainstream channels. This bridges the gap between our audiences on both platforms and also makes the language front and centre for our audience in Wales, thereby expanding the reach of the language and encouraging its everyday use. During the Paris 2024 Olympics and Paralympics we reached over 2.25m people with our bilingual approach to content, with our Welsh first post around Elinor Barker's success "Mam Ysbrydoledig" topping our engagement with 3,350 likes across Facebook and Instagram.

Examples include:

Olympics & Paralympics 2024 – We embedded Welsh into all celebratory posts around the Paris 2024 Games, even on our English channels, to maximise exposure and engagement with our Welsh audience. This resulted in some of our highest-performing posts of the year.

Dydd Miwsig Cymru (Welsh Music Day) & St David's Day – We celebrated these cultural moments with dedicated bilingual content, ensuring sport and language were at the heart of national celebrations.

Encouraging Welsh in Sport – Through campaigns such as International Volunteer Day and the Lottery's 30th birthday, we encouraged clubs, organisations, and individuals to integrate simple Welsh phrases like 'Diolch' and 'Penblwydd Hapus' into their messaging.

Showcasing Welsh speakers in sport

Where possible, we have actively featured first-language Welsh speakers in our video content to highlight the presence of the language across Wales' sporting community. Some key examples include:

- **Emma Finucane's visit to Towy Riders** – Capturing the impact of her success in her local community.
- **Swansea Mosque's community sport project** – Featuring a first-language Welsh speaker sharing their experience.
- **Welsh Athletics Volunteers** – Showcasing the value of the Welsh language in grassroots sport.

We continue to offer CLIP (Communications, Learning and Insight Programme) as a bilingual service, ensuring there is an equal experience for participants from the sports sector in Wales whether they prefer to engage in Welsh or English. Following last year's improvements to our Welsh Language offer within the programme, our newsletters and website content continue to be bilingual as standard.



We make the most of opportunities to encourage the sector to use the Welsh Language in their work and highlight good examples from within the sector. We find highlighting upcoming Welsh Language awareness days or campaigns has been well-received and sharing resources to support the inclusion of Welsh into communication and marketing plans are usually popular.

Similarly, we continue to offer our Public and Community newsletter in both Welsh and English. With the Welsh featuring first within the mailer, we have noticed that non-Welsh speakers occasionally browse the Welsh content, something which we feel supports our ambition to encourage the use of the Welsh language and to increase exposure to non-Welsh speakers. We also encourage them to use more Welsh in a club setting and at grassroots coaching level. We promote good resources from the sector such as Disability Sport Wales' trilingual speaking workshop.

Our internal communications for Sport Wales colleagues have also featured Welsh through Welsh language learning opportunities and Diwrnod Shwmae.



Child poverty objectives

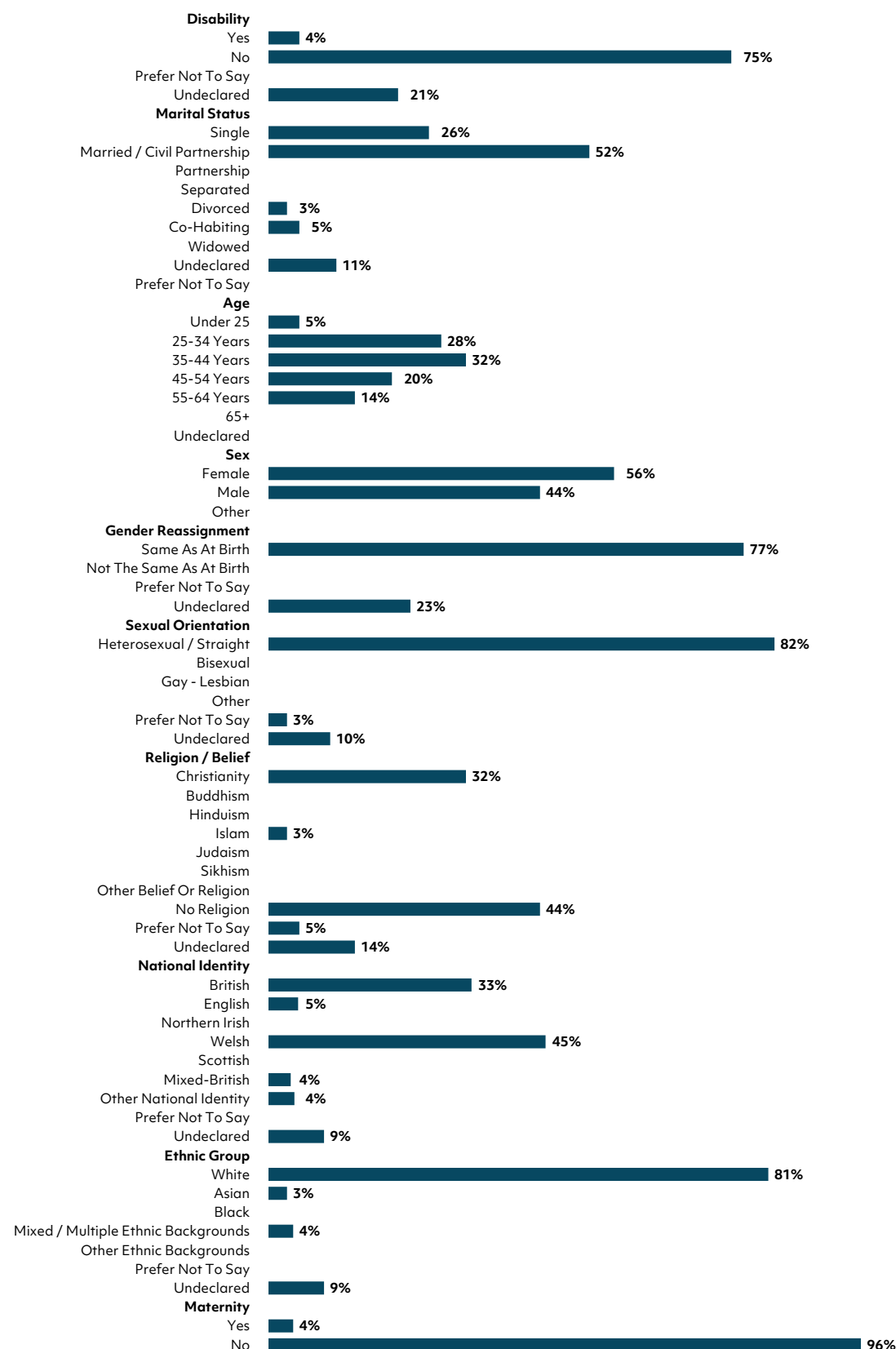
Sport Wales is committed to our responsibilities on Child Poverty. We recognise the need to consider our previously established Child Poverty Objectives.

This work has commenced within Sport Wales and needs to **involve** and draw on partner organisations and their experiences across the sports sector.

Sport Wales will continue to engage with partners through 2025-26 in order to set out our Child Poverty Objectives in the 2025-26 Annual Report.

Current equality statistics - Sport Wales workforce

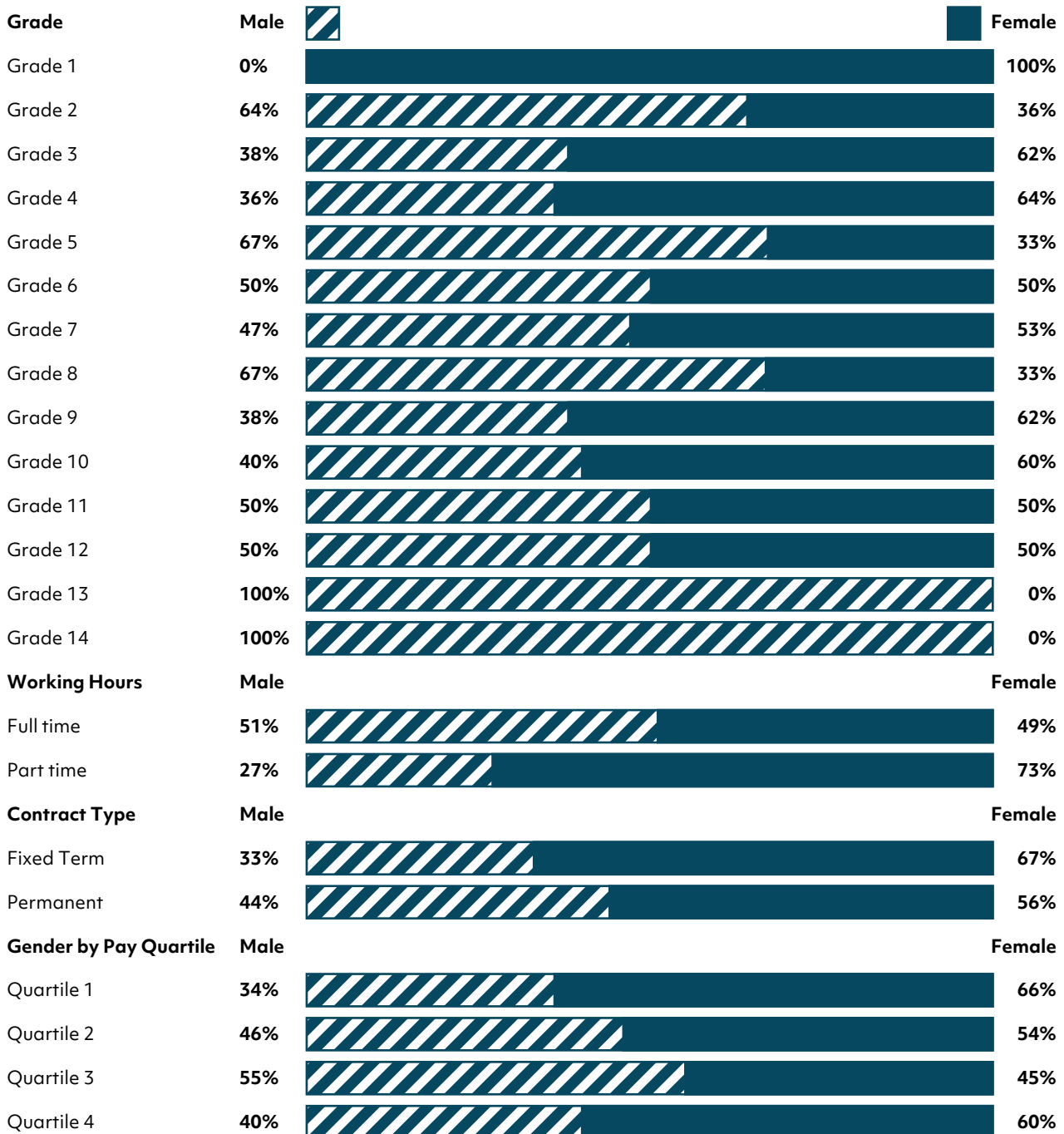
As at 31 March 2025, Sport Wales employed 168 people in permanent and fixed term roles.



* Data labels have not been included where there are fewer than five responses to ensure we protect confidentiality and anonymity.

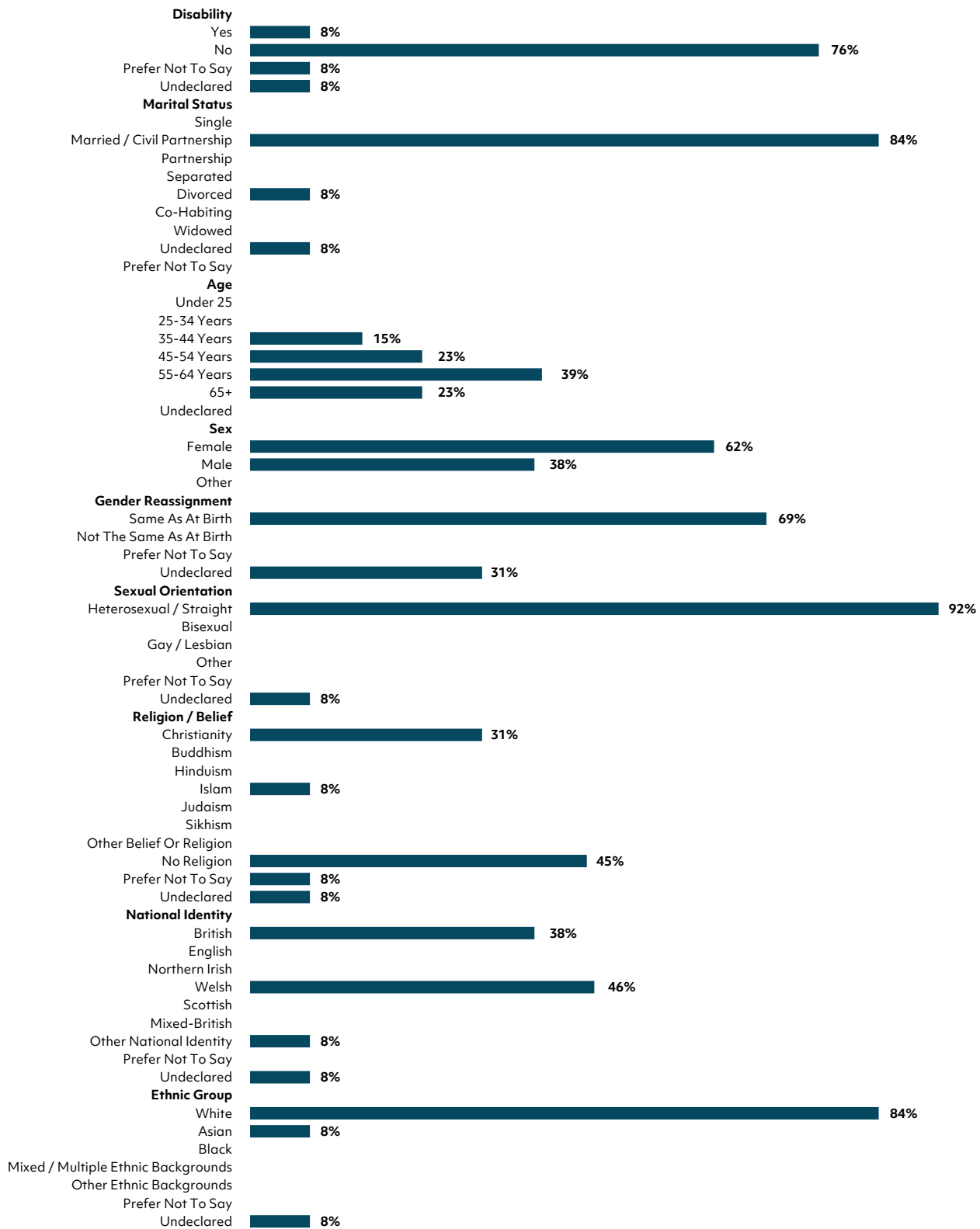
Men and women employed by grade, working hours and contract type

The gender pay gap in Sport Wales as at 31 March 2025 is 8.3% (Mean) or 8.7% (Median). This is an increase from 7.4% Mean and an increase from 8% Median as at 31 March 2024.



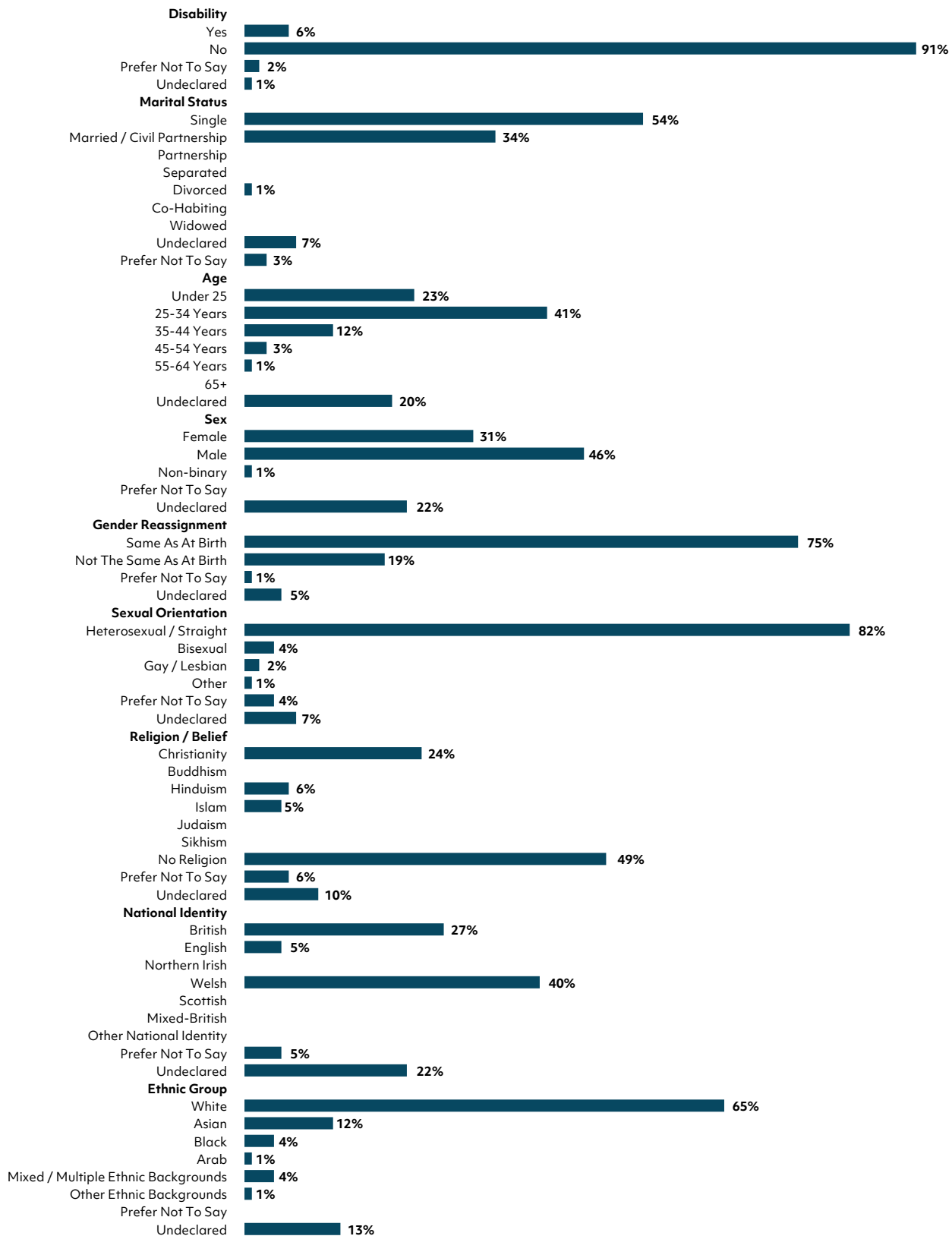
Equality Statistics – Board Members

Equality Statistics for Sport Wales Board 2024-25.



Recruitment

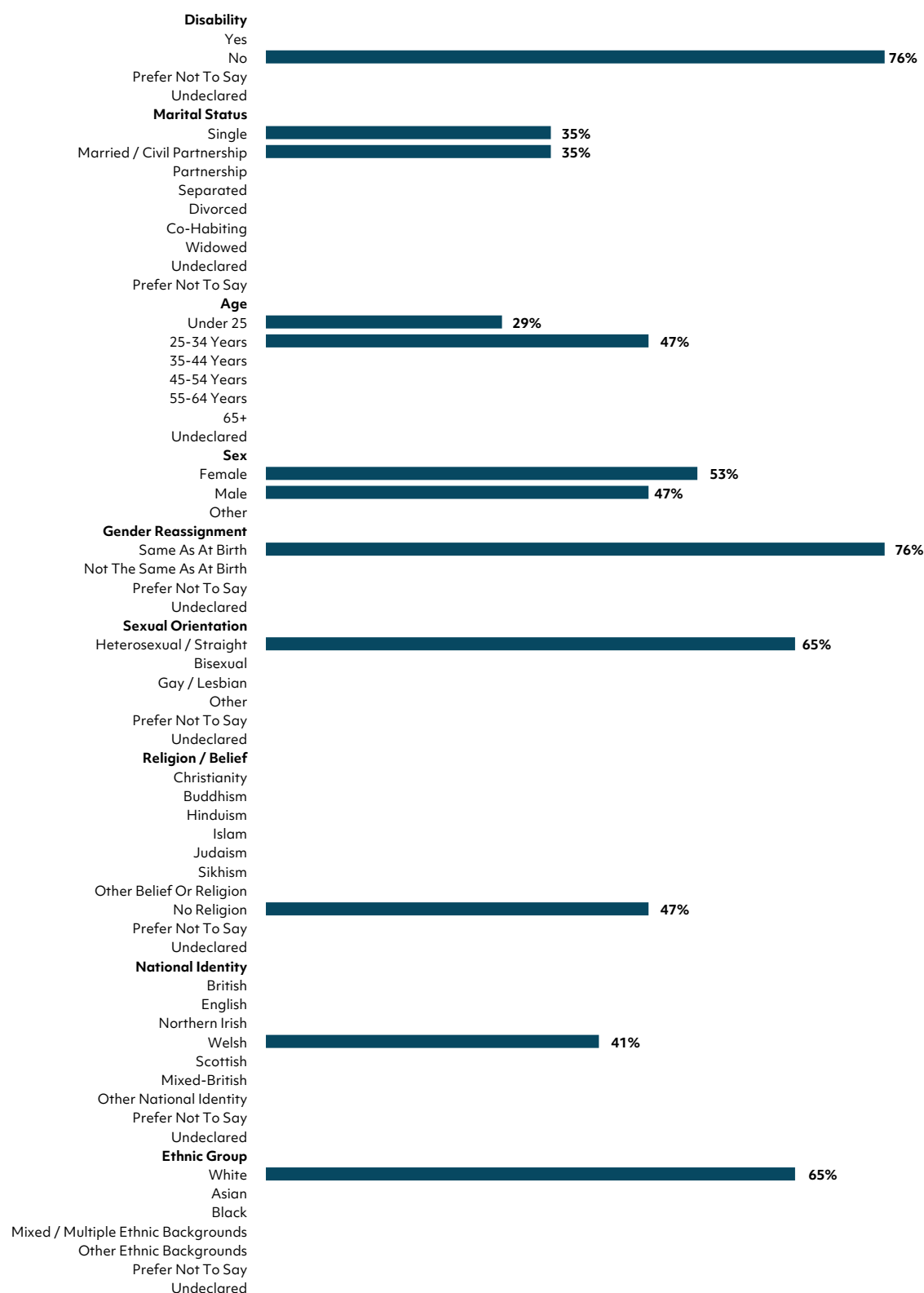
In 2024-2025 Sport Wales received 758 applications from individuals applying for jobs with Sport Wales.



* Data labels have not been included where there are fewer than five responses to ensure we protect confidentiality and anonymity.

New Starters

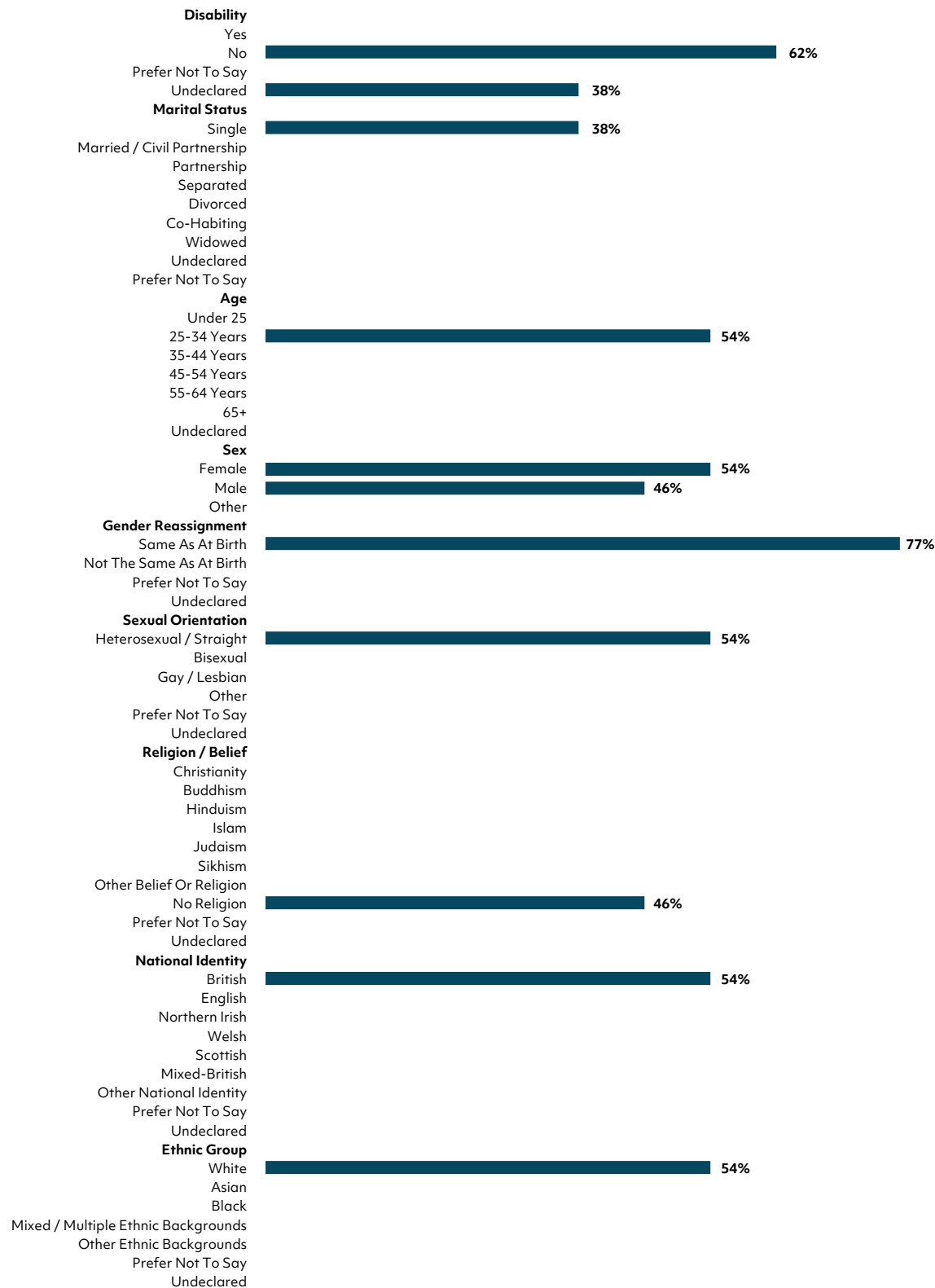
There were 17 new starters (on a fixed term, or permanent contract) during the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025.



* Data labels have not been included where there are fewer than five responses to ensure we protect confidentiality and anonymity.

Leavers

There were 13 leavers (on a fixed term or permanent contract) during the period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025.



*Data labels have not been included where there are fewer than five responses to ensure we protect confidentiality and anonymity.

Complaints, grievances, disciplinarys

Sport Wales has an Anti-Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination and Victimisation policy which clearly sets out standards of behaviour, detailing those that are deemed unacceptable by the organisation and the likely consequences if any breach of these behaviours is founded. Processes are also available for complaints made by the general public. During the reporting year there was one grievance and two disciplinarys.

Specific equality training

All new starters undertake equality and diversity online training. An induction session is provided for new starters on equality, diversity and inclusion. We have continued our wide-ranging programme of EDI training, and support has been offered to all staff and delivered in 2024-25. We have delegates on our own Inclusive Leadership Programme and are delivering Anti-Racism Training for all staff and Board members.

Sport Participation Report

Characteristic	Children: School Sport Survey 2022	Adults: National Survey for Wales 2022/23	Notes:
	Participation in sport three or more times a week		The School Sport Survey only includes the Extracurricular or Community Club settings in this definition of participation.
Overall (all)	39.5%	39.1%	
Girls; Women	36.4%	35.2%	
Boys; Men	43.2%	43.0%	
Other genders	28.1%	-	We hold data on children who do not identify with the gender of 'boy' or 'girl'.
Ethnic Minority People	35.9%	47.4%	The ability to explore ethnicity is contingent on sample size. We can provide much more detail for children due to the larger sample size (approx. 115,000 people). Further adult analysis is limited due to the maximum achievable sample size (12,000 people).
Asian / Asian Welsh / Asian British	30.1%	-	
Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups	42.8%	-	
Black / Black Welsh / Black British	38.3%	-	
Other Ethnic Group	33.1%	-	
White (Welsh, English, Scottish, Northern Irish, British)	41.1%	38.5%	
White Other (includes Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Irish, Roma, and any other White background)	36.0%	41.7%	

Characteristic	Children: School Sport Survey 2022	Adults: National Survey for Wales 2022/23	Notes:
Socioeconomic deprivation	32.3%	-	Children who attend schools with the highest levels of eligibility for free school meals are considered 'deprived'; a different measure is used for adults termed material deprivation.
Material deprivation	-	30.6%	
Disability or impairment	34.9%	26.3%	Adult question: 'Does your health condition or illness reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities either a little or a lot?'.
Welsh Speakers	46.3%	45.5%	

Investment report

Be Active Wales funding (BAWF) scheme:

In 2024-25 Sport Wales made 725 Be Active Wales Fund awards for a total investment of £4,191,065.00

The breakdown of awards and investment to priority areas in 2024-25 is set out below:

Priority area	Number of awards	Total funding awarded (£)
Women and girls	310	2,309,363
Ethnic Minority People	52	399,180
People with a disability	83	614,847
Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual	8	34,255
Transgender	6	26,674
Socio Economic Deprivation	180	1,232,199
Welsh Language	57	394,397
Creating Long-term Sustainability	602	3,387,497

Basis for the above figures:

Sport Wales investment team determines the priority areas that awards address on the basis of scrutiny of the application and contact with the applicant. Projects can address more than one priority area, so the sum total of awards and investment for all priority area will not equal the total number of awards and total investment.

Data analysis

Workforce:

Sport Wales workforce diversity statistics have seen very few changes in 2024-25. The increases in diversity of ethnic minority people of the previous three years appear to have stabilised at the same level, one that is above the Welsh population averages, though below the average for the Cardiff area. Sexual orientation diversity appears to be at the same level as last year which is at or slightly above the Welsh population average. The figure for the percentage of employees with a disability is unchanged and is well below the Welsh population average.

Sport Wales encourages staff to make a diversity declaration to help us to better understand our workforce. The recent very positive trends towards the full declaration of protected characteristics by our workforce haven't continued in 2024-25. Undeclared rates have increased for six of the characteristics, though in most cases just by 1%, with the other characteristics seeing no change.

Sport Wales gender pay gaps have both worsened slightly in 2024-25 with the mean increasing from 7.4% to 8.3% and the median rising from 8% to 8.7%.

To provide some context the average figure for the entire workforce in the UK at April 2024 was 13.1% for all employees, it was 7.0% for full time employees only and -3.0% for part-time employees only (Source: [Office for National Statistics – Gender pay gap in the UK: 2024](#)).

Sports participation:

It is important to note that neither the School Sport Survey or the National Survey for Wales released results about sport between April 2024 and March 2025. The results in this section are therefore the same as those outlined in the 2023-24 Annual Report and presented as a reminder of the previous results and the enduring issues found in sport and society.

The School Sport Survey 2022 showed an alarming drop in the overall figure of those participating at least three times a week – dropping by 8.1 percentage points (pp) to 39.5% of young people.

This change in behaviour is likely to have been heavily impacted by events linked to the Covid-19 pandemic. The previous survey was in 2018.

Groups whose data show the greatest levels of disadvantage include:

Ethnicity

- Asian / Asian Welsh / Asian British pupils (9.4 pp below overall average and a drop of 9.5 pp on the previous data in 2018).
- Black / Black Welsh / Black British pupils (12.2 pp drop on the previous data in 2018. This has shifted the group from one that was previously 2.9 pp above the overall average to now being 1.2 pp below).

- Other Ethnic groups (as defined in the 2021 Census)(6.4 pp below overall average and a drop of 12.6 pp on 2018).

Disability

- Those with a disability or impairment (4.6 pp below overall average and a drop of 11.7 pp on 2018).

Socio-economic deprivation

- Those children attending schools with highest free school meal eligibility. (7.2 pp below overall average and a drop of 9.9 pp on 2018).

Gender identity

- Girls' participation (3.1 percentage points below overall average and a drop of 9.3 pp on 2018).

Around one-third of all pupils in Wales completed the survey, and so small changes since 2018 could be explained by statistical variation, as not all pupils in Wales participated. However, larger changes are likely to reflect genuine differences in population behaviour.

National Survey for Wales ('NSW'):

The NSW 2022-23 results are the latest to be released. There was no NSW in 2023-24 and the 2024-25 results are due Summer 2025.

As a reminder, the 2022-23 results demonstrated that the greatest levels of participation disadvantage were found to be:

- In relation to disability and impairment (12.8 pp below overall national average, a gap that has increased since 2021- 22) and socio-economic deprivation (8.5 pp below the overall average, the gap has closed since 2021-22).

- The figures for female participation are also a concern at 3.9 pp below the overall average (a difference unchanged since 2021-22).
- On a more positive note, Welsh speaking continued to be positively correlated with participation for both adults and children (School Sport Survey: 6.8 pp above average and NSW: 6.4 pp above average).

A series of work packages were setup at Sport Wales to explore these findings further and determine how best we and partners can work together to make a difference based on these findings.

Identifying and collecting relevant information

The steps the authority has taken to identify and collect relevant information.

Sport Wales is committed to using high quality research to inform policy and strategy and wherever possible strives to use insight to advise the sports sector, partners, stakeholders at the Welsh Government, the National Lottery, and others across the public sector and beyond.

Social surveys:

Each time we conduct the School Sport Survey (SSS) an extensive cycle of review and broad consultation is undertaken. This process has already started in preparation for the School Sport Survey 2026. Through seeking views and working with multiple stakeholders and experts the survey is continuously improved and kept relevant.

Not all changes can be made within each survey cycle, but we strive to make stepwise changes in the right direction to implement good practice over the **long-term**. Changing the survey to become 'easy read' is a positive example of how the survey has previously been improved. A careful balance always needs to be struck between ensuring the compatibility and comparability of key indicators over time alongside ensuring questions represent the latest knowledge about society and how survey questions should be asked.

The development of the next SSS will include a formal consultation process and piloting of the survey to understand the type of information we need to collect, and in which ways. Moreover, the design of the next School Sport Survey content will also have been through a rigorous process of extensive cognitive testing. Building on previous research this update will help assess young people's understanding and interpretation – of certain constructs, questions, and response options within the survey. The ultimate goal of this work will be to further strengthen the survey's ability to provide accurate and pertinent evidence to better understand young people, improve sector-wide decision-making, and target investment.

To remain well informed about topical issues that impact the participation behaviours of adults, there have been fifteen rounds of the 'Wales Activity Tracker' (WAT) since May 2020. This is an adult population tracking survey of 1,000 adults in Wales, conducted in partnership with Savanta ComRes. Questions are asked at different points of the year, providing snapshots on physical activity and sport, as well as the attitude of people in Wales towards exercise.

The data collected is representative of the nation according to sex, age, disability, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. As postcode information is collected, the findings can also be linked to measures of rurality and the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD).

The Wales Activity Tracker enabled national trends and inequalities in adult attitudes and behaviours to be monitored throughout the course of the Covid-19 pandemic (when regular face to face surveys were halted) and has continued to track these headline trends ever since.

The National Survey for Wales (NSW) is a nationally representative household survey of 12,000 adults in Wales. It currently involves over twelve times more people than the WAT which enables a deeper dive into topics by protected characteristics, however, it is also ten times smaller than the School Sport Survey and so the depth of analysis is limited for certain characteristics and topics.

The NSW 2022-23 results remain the latest to be released from the national survey. There was no NSW 2023-24 due to the Welsh Government changing survey contract providers. As a result, the next NSW results are not due until Summer 2025.

The next NSW will have a significantly reduced sample size, and this will impact the types of factors that can be reported on with confidence. Welsh Government are moving to an online survey approach, which is expected to return an achieved sample of 12,000 or more.

The Sport and Active Lifestyles section of the survey contains statistically robust overall findings on adult participation in sport and physical recreation, sport volunteering, sport facilities, and attitudes towards physical activity and future participation in sport activities. The Welsh Government manages the core set of survey questions and the inclusion of any additional topic specific modules included each year the survey is conducted (e.g. Environment, Health, Well-being, Social Care Culture and Sport).

Core questions include age; sex; ethnicity; physical or mental health conditions or illnesses; material deprivation; and use of Welsh language. The survey often contains findings by household composition, marital/ civil partnership status, nationality, religion, sexual orientation and much more. A full set of topics can be found on the [NSW webpage](#).

The survey results are available for a variety of geographic areas (including for each local authority in Wales) and for small area-based classifications such as the WIMD, and urban/rural classification.

The survey is used to inform the Future Generations Indicator 38 – ‘Percentage of people participating in sporting activities three or more times a week’. Statistics from national surveys and performance data, are specifically used by Sport Wales to allocate investment to NGBs and Sport Partnerships. This enables a transparent and objective approach to investment and reduces the bureaucratic burden on partners to provide data and evidence to us.

For example, funding criteria are split into participation and performance elements, with an overall funding score for each National Governing Body established when the two sections are brought together. Sport participation and demand results for age, gender, ethnicity, disability, and deprivation are used and contribute to an overall score for each sport.

Separate criteria are used to determine the funding for Sport Partnerships, based on population, socio-economic factors and rurality. A full breakdown of the data that is used is shown in the Resources section on our website.

Any reasons for not collecting relevant information.

The School Sport Survey needs to be sampled and weighted based on national data sources (such as the Pupil Level Annual School Census PLASC which counts pupil characteristics by school). Not all characteristics are contained in these secondary data sources so they may not be fully representative. The approach to sampling is ultimately constrained by the terminology used in these secondary sources.

Certain questions also need careful design to ensure that they work for all children and for new questions additional time is required to consult, test and pilot. Some questions are not appropriate to ask to all people.

Sample size also places a limit on what can be reported on with statistical confidence, even if the information is collected as part of the survey.

A statement on the effectiveness of the authority's arrangements for identifying and collecting relevant information.

As an organisation, we collect essential demographic information for key equality strands with a particular focus upon gender, disability, age, ethnicity and deprivation. This data is primarily captured through our national survey instruments (School Sport Survey; National Survey for Wales; Wales Activity Tracker) all of which run on a periodic basis. These data collection tools provide us with important data for monitoring participation and attitudinal trends and collectively cover residents of Wales who are aged seven and above.

Where survey sample sizes are not sufficient, we aim to conduct qualitative research with specific groups on in-depth topics to gain further insight. We collect and hold limited data for the following: marriage or civil partnership (a protected characteristic in employment only); pregnancy and maternity; religion or belief; sexual orientation. However, further exploration is possible through the National Survey for Wales.

It is not currently deemed appropriate to collect some of this sensitive information through our School Sport Survey. Sample size also limits what can be represented within smaller tracking surveys. The seasonal nature of sport also requires data coverage over the course of the year to fully represent all types of activity and behaviour. In this sense findings are limited by the survey method and the respondent's ability to recall information.

We are limited in some respects by the work of the Welsh Government and other organisations.

For example, the ability to change questions in multistakeholder surveys. Nevertheless, the Welsh Government ensures that survey questions are harmonised and transformed based on the latest available evidence of good practice wherever possible and promote liaison and consultation on data and statistical issues between public sector organisations in Wales.

We collect a wider range of information through smaller surveys and some bespoke reports. The level of detail that can be provided is contingent on the sample size (which in turn is contingent on budget) or is focused on specific thematic issues in depth, making some results explorative rather than representative. Margins of error within survey-based approaches often make comparisons difficult, with data needing to be unpacked for multiple dimensions of analysis. This can limit theme-based analysis and further intersectionality of these themes. Sub-national analysis of this information can also be difficult for smaller geographies.

We do strive to iterate and improve on our approaches wherever possible. In addition, a project is underway to establish a complete data pipeline that includes data connections, ingestion, data storage and management and the production of useful and accessible outputs.

The Insight Team has developed a dashboard approach that would help to provide this type of overview using Power BI software. This has undergone user testing and was launched for staff to use at Sport Wales in 2024.

Survey questions will be reviewed in detail in preparation for the next School Sport Survey and will be accompanied by an updated statistical dashboard, enabling detailed findings on intersectional topics to be further explored.

List of Sport Wales funded partners

National Governing Bodies

- Welsh Athletics
- Badminton Wales
- Basketball Wales
- Bowls Wales
- Paddle Cymru
- Cricket Wales
- Beicio Cymru
- Football Association of Wales
- Wales Golf
- Welsh Gymnastics
- Hockey Wales
- Wales Netball
- Welsh Rowing
- Welsh Rugby Union
- Royal Yachting Association (RYA)
- Squash Wales
- Swim Wales
- Table Tennis Wales
- Tennis Wales
- Welsh Triathlon
- Welsh Judo Association
- Wales Rugby League
- Welsh Target Shooting Federation
- Weightlifting Wales
- Angling Cymru
- Wales Archery
- Welsh Curling Association
- Welsh Fencing
- Wales Lacrosse
- Welsh Orienteering Association
- Welsh Snooker
- Snowsport Cymru Wales
- (SLSA) The Surf Life Saving Association of Wales
- Welsh Wrestling

National Partners

- Commonwealth Games Council for Wales
- SportsAid
- Welsh Institute of Performance Science Swansea University (Dec 2024)
- Black Swim Association
- Disability Sport Wales
- Welsh Sports Association
- Girl Guides
- Leadership Skills Foundation
- U Do It
- WCVA
- Youth Sport Trust
- Colegau Cymru
- StreetGames
- Outdoor Partnership
- The Urdd

Sport Partnerships

- Actif North Wales

Local Authorities

- Powys
- Ceredigion
- Vale of Glamorgan
- Bridgend
- Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Merthyr
- Cardiff
- Monmouth
- Caerphilly
- Blaenau Gwent
- Newport
- Torfaen
- Neath Port Talbot
- Swansea
- Carmarthenshire
- Pembrokeshire

Lottery Funding and Additionality

All Lottery distributors are required to report on their policy and practice.

Lottery funding is distinct from Government funding and should not replace Exchequer spending. Where appropriate, it can complement Government and other programmes, policies and funding.

When we assess applications for funding, we ensure additionality is considered. We work closely with leading organisations to ensure that our funding programmes add value to Government and other funding but do not replace it.

Review of National Lottery Distribution Activities

During 2024/25 Sport Wales distributed awards under a number of Lottery Funded grant programmes.

Capital grants

The fund's principal activities are aimed at increasing participation and improving performance in sport and physical recreation. Sport Wales introduced its plans for the distribution of lottery funds to capital projects in September 1994. A two stage process is used for all capital applications.

The first stage of the application enables the initial focus to be more on the added benefits to sport and the aims, objectives and proposed management of the project.

Applicants seek provisional approval of a scheme prior to undertaking the investment necessary to present the full application which is the second stage of the process.

Capital grant offers of £4,392,000 (2023/24 £2,871,000) were met during the year. The amount provided in the accounts for signed contracts relating to capital grants increased by £1,521,000 in 2024/25 (2023/24 increase of £141,000).

Revenue grants

Revenue grant offers of £12,467,000 (2023/24 £15,007,000) were met during the year. The amount provided in the accounts for signed contracts relating to revenue grants decreased by £2,540,000 in 2024/25 (2023/24 increase of £3,878,000).

Movement on Lottery balance to 31 March 2025

The following table shows the movements of the balances held with the National Lottery Distribution Fund in the year:

Balance at 1 April 2024	Unrealised Loss	Income Received (Net)	Money Drawn Down From National Lottery Distribution Fund	Balance at 31 March 2025
(£000)	(£000)	(£000)	(£000)	(£000)
10,852	-	16,915	(20,850)	6,917

The table shows a decrease in the balance held of £3.935 million, compared to a decrease of £3.734 million in the previous financial year.

Financial Results

Sport Wales's Lottery Distribution results are set out in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure. Total net comprehensive expenditure for the financial year amounted to £830,000 (2023/24 total comprehensive expenditure of £7,077,000). The year-on-year variance is primarily attributable to two key factors. Firstly, there was a notable increase in the volume of successful Be Active Wales applications during 2023–24, resulting in higher associated expenditure. Secondly, several partner organisations received offer letters for 2024–25 within the 2023–24 financial year. In line with accounting principles, these have been recognised as commitments in the 2023–24 accounts.

The statement of financial position for 2024/25 shows a total net asset figure of £4,463,000 (2023/24 £5,293,000).

The Directors continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements which assumes that Sport Wales will continue in operation for the foreseeable future.

Sustainability (incorporating the biodiversity report)

Energy Saving Grants (ESG)

The ESG programme continued after its successful first year in 2023–24. 108 awards were made in 2024–25 providing funding of just over £2m. This takes the total support over the two years to £3.4m with 186 clubs and sites supported. The programme is making a real impact on the de-carbonisation of the sports sector in Wales and has been over-subscribed in both years of operation.

The breakdown of sustainability projects within the 108 awards in 2024–25 is outlined below (some projects comprise more than 1 element):

No.	Description
84	Solar panels (incl. battery storage)
33	More efficient heating/hot water
1	De-stratification fans (to balance temperatures in larger spaces)
15	Insulation projects
26	LED lighting
3	Rainwater harvesting systems
1	Bore hole
7	UPVC windows/doors

With some of the ESG projects having been in place for over a year there are now clear indications of the benefits and impacts of the programme. Rhyl RFC were awarded a £20,473 Energy Saving Grant from Sport Wales in October 2023, so that they could install solar panels to ease the strain of the cost-of-living crisis while also doing their bit for the environment. Their monthly energy bills had risen from roughly £1,800 to £4,500 each month, but the club estimate that the solar panels will save them an estimated £20,000 per year.

The savings generated by the switch to solar energy are an excellent indirect benefit of the programme as they are being used to fund several improvements and upgrades around their ground to make their sport more enjoyable and sustainable. New rugby posts were installed as well as a new spectator fence. Crucially, in terms of additional sustainability and biodiversity impact, the project cost savings have also supported the provision of a gardening allotment for local students to learn how to garden and a new recycling compound to further reduce the club's carbon footprint.

Club steward Lee Blackmore was very positive about the scheme. "It's massively reduced not only our monthly outgoings but also our carbon footprint. If it wasn't for the Energy Saving Grant, we wouldn't be able to do what we do." From October 2023 until the summer of 2024 the solar panels have made a significant decrease in the club's carbon footprint, having saved 2,948kg of CO2 Emissions – which is the equivalent of planting 178 trees.

Partnership investment

Sport Wales investment in our partners is underpinned by the Capability Framework. This governance framework aims to ensure that we have confidence in organisations when investing public money. It supports the continuous improvement of partner's governance, so they are sustainable and well-placed to achieve their potential. After co-creating engagement with over 25 partner organisations, it's been agreed that environmental sustainability requirements will be included in the Capability Framework for the first time in 2025-26.

Sport Wales National Centre

Sport Wales is building the case for a new national facility. Our vision is to create an 'environmentally sustainable beacon for Welsh sport, connecting individuals and organisations together in a sporting hub designed to foster a culture of excellence, innovation, learning, development and well-being.' Our ambitions for environmental sustainability are equally as high as our sporting ambitions. We want to develop a national centre that will set the standard in the UK and beyond, making a positive contribution to the environment and biodiversity for years to come. We will continue to develop the business case for this facility in 2025-26.

Sport Wales National Centre has reduced its food waste noticeably through the introduction of the Leanpath® system to track and reduce food waste. In addition, the Navitas temperature monitoring system was installed in all refrigerators and freezers to further reduce the risk of waste.

We've also taken steps to reduce waste in other areas. At the Hwb café, we've replaced disposable cups with china, to further cut waste.

Working closely with our food suppliers, we've significantly reduced the number of deliveries each week. This change helps reduce our carbon footprint by lowering the emissions from transportation. Additionally, we've strengthened our commitment to local sourcing. By partnering with a key food supplier, we're now able to buy all our vegetables from Welsh farmers and source 80% of our meat products from within Wales. This supports local agriculture, the circular economy and reduces the environmental impact of transporting food over long distances.

In our accommodation facilities, we've swapped single-use toiletries for refillable options and removed disposable cups. These changes have significantly reduced our plastic waste.

The grounds team are currently trialling battery power tools with a view to replacing petrol versions.

Communications

The Sport Wales communications team has played an important role in sharing the good news stories about how the sports sector is increasing its sustainability. During 2024-25, seven articles that solely focussed on environmental topics were communicated externally through different methods, many other communications included some content on sustainability. We continue to link to the Sport Environment and Climate Coalition (SECC) [Resource Hub](#) to provide comprehensive materials to support the sector.

Sport Wales has enabled shared learning through other methods, with short format Lightning Learning webinars for our partner organisations beginning in 2024-25 and presentations including sustainability aspects.

Procurement

Sport Wales has produced a draft Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy in 2024-25 and is revising its Procurement Policy and supporting documents to strengthen sustainability and equity. Sport Wales recognises the value of specialist procurement expertise in this work and has agreed a short-term secondment with another Welsh public body for a key staff member to finalise the documentation and lead the staff training. These elements are planned for early in 2025-26.

Plas Menai

The renewable heating for the main buildings by ground source heat pump (with additional air source for extreme cold weather) is fully operational and testing has shown that its coefficient of performance is 3.3. This is a metric that measures a heat pump's efficiency by comparing the heat output to the electricity input required to produce that heat. A COP of 3.3 means the heat pump produces 3.3 units of heat for every 1 unit of electricity used. In 2024-25, five of the accommodation houses on site have been refurbished and fully de-carbonised for heat and hot water with air source heat pumps. There is a proposed programme to convert the remaining houses over the next couple of years. The centre now has electric vehicle (EV) chargers installed, which have been well received by visitors.

Plas Menai is operated by Parkwood Leisure as a commissioned partner. The Plas Menai team maintains a close working relationship with the North Wales Rivers Trust. The Trust regularly utilise the facilities, including classrooms and the swimming pool, for volunteer training in waterway management and weekly staff training sessions.

Business plan

Sport Wales has retained Environmental Sustainability as a Business Plan priority with key actions as follows:

- Embed sustainability into our procurement process in partnership with WRAP Cymru.
- Work with some of our top suppliers by value to identify carbon saving opportunities.
- Share progress and stories from innovators in this area to illustrate what can be achieved and spread good practice in the sector.
- Continue to pursue collaboration opportunities with others, particularly via the Sport Environment and Climate Coalition (SECC).
- Implement the findings of a review of the food pathway.
- Improve Carbon data collection.
- To promote and encourage active travel.

Biodiversity Report

Biodiversity developments at Sport Wales National Centre

Sport Wales' grounds team have been working in partnership with environmental experts from the Cardiff City Council Parks Service and the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales to increase our biodiversity. The grounds team have installed 10 new nestboxes in several locations on the site, suited for a range of species including swifts and woodpeckers. To enhance the existing wildflower area, bug hotels will be sited and other improvements to the habitat and accessibility of the site such as woodpiles and small mammal access route will be created.

The same collaborative working will also boost Sport Wales' important role to build awareness and provide information about how the sport sector can support nature and contribute to biodiversity. Plans are in progress for an area close to Sport Wales National Centre reception to be a showcase of the great biodiversity work on the site and to inform those visiting the centre about how they and their clubs and national organisations can make small changes to support nature. This practical area with public information boards will also link to a web page with more information and support.

Communications and Clarboston Road FC

Clarboston Road AFC are making an important contribution to local biodiversity after successfully planting a wildflower meadow. The project was supported by Sport Wales in 2022-23 as a pilot approach for the Energy Saving Grant scheme in partnership with the Football Association of Wales. Sport Wales followed up on the project for a communications article in 2024-25.

The Pembrokeshire club have created a busy wildlife habitat between their football pitches. By allowing nature to thrive, the meadows play a role in supporting the eco system by providing shelter and food for pollinators such as bees and butterflies.

Steve Brown, Clarboston Road AFC chairman shared:

“We believe that our football club can play an important role in helping to educate and influence not only our club members but also the wider community about the importance of positive environmental actions.

We’ve already seen increased insect and bird activity in the seeded area and we’re hopeful that we are making a small but important contribution to local biodiversity.

There have also been practical benefits for us in that we are saving volunteer time as well as the fuel costs of regular strimming of the embankment”.

Sport Wales communications team featured biodiversity in two articles and referred to it in a number of other pieces.

Plas Menai

The Plas Menai team actively participate in water quality testing on the Menai Strait. Additionally, Parkwood Leisure were honoured to be shortlisted for Business of the Year at the 2024 North Wales River Trust awards. Although Plas Menai didn’t win, the nomination acknowledged the significant contributions to environmental education, water-based activities promotion, and local sustainability efforts.

Accounting Officer:

B Davies

9 October 2025

Accountability Report

Corporate Governance Report

Directors Report

Board

During 2024-25, Sport Wales comprised the following Board members;

	Term	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee	Remuneration Committee
Chair Baroness Tanni Grey Thompson DBE DL	1 July 2022 – 30 June 2028	-	-	Yes
Vice Chair Ian Bancroft	1 October 2023 – 30 September 2026	-	-	Yes
Rajma Begum	1 September 2022 – 30 September 2026	-	Yes	-
Hannah Bruce (nee Murphy)	1 September 2022 – 30 September 2026	-	-	-
Dafydd Trystan Davies **	1 September 2022 – 31 August 2025	-	-	-
Delyth Evans	1 September 2022 – 31 August 2025	Yes	-	-
Rhian Gibson	1 October 2023 – 30 September 2026	-	Yes	-
Chris Jenkins OBE***	1 October 2023 – 30 September 2026	Yes	-	-
Nicola Mead-Batten	1 September 2022 – 30 September 2026	Yes	-	-

	Term	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee	Remuneration Committee
Judi Rhys MBE *	1 September 2021 – 30 September 2025	-	Yes	-
Professor Leigh Robinson	1 September 2021 – 31 August 2024	-	Yes	-
Phil Tilley *	1 September 2021 – 30 September 2025	-	-	-
Martin Veale JP *	1 September 2021 – 30 September 2025	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nuria Zolle	1 October 2023 – 30 September 2026	Yes	Yes	-

* During the year, the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip announced that three Board members (Judi Rhys MBE, Phil Tilley and Martin Veale) would be re-appointed for the period 1 September 2024 to 30 September 2025. At the same time, Professor Leigh Robinson stood down at the end of her second term to pursue other opportunities.

** Dafydd Trystan Davies took a leave of absence from the Sport Wales Board from February 2024 until July 2024.

***Chris Jenkins resigned effective 28th April 2025.

All Board members are appointed on an initial three-year term and can serve a maximum of two terms.

Declarations of interest

All Board Members and senior staff of Sport Wales have completed a comprehensive declaration of interest, including details of any interest in organisations which provide, or may seek to provide, commercial services to Sport Wales for 2024-25.

Information provided that requires disclosure in accordance with International Accounting Standard 24 ('Related Party Disclosures') is disclosed in Note 17 of these financial statements.

Personal data related incidents

Sport Wales has controls and policies in place to ensure data integrity. Information Technology systems ensure that the physical security of data is tightly controlled.

Sport Wales also has appropriate cyber security arrangements in place to prevent unauthorised remote access to data. As far as we are aware, no loss of data occurred during the period under review.

Risk identification and management

Detail on Risk Management is contained in the Risk Management section of the Annual Governance Statement on page 130.

Supplier payment policy and performance achieved

Under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 and in line with the Better Payment Practice Code (which can be located on www.payontime.co.uk) Sport Wales is required to pay suppliers' invoices not in dispute within 30 days of receipt of goods or services or valid invoice, whichever is the latter.

Sport Wales aims to pay 100% of invoices, including disputed invoices once the dispute has been settled, in line with these terms. During the year ended 31 March 2025 Sport Wales paid 100% (2023-24: 100%) of all invoices within the terms of its payment policy. No interest was incurred during the year as a result of late payments. Sport Wales also aims to pay suppliers wherever possible within 10 days in accordance with the Managing Welsh Public Money guidance issued in January 2016. During 2024-25, 95% (2023-24: 93%) of transactions were paid within this timescale.

Financial instruments

Details of financial instruments can be found in note 16 to the financial statements.

Remuneration of auditors

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee oversees the nature and amount of non-audit work undertaken by Audit Wales and National Audit Office, our external auditors. During 2024-25, there was no non-audit work undertaken by auditors. The audit fee is disclosed in note 8 to the financial statements.

Statement on Disclosure of Relevant Audit Information.

1. As far as the Accounting Officer is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware, and
2. The Accounting Officer has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

Statement of council's and Chief Executive's responsibilities

Under the Royal Charter, dated 4 February 1972 (amended 14 June 2017), The Sports Council for Wales (Sport Wales) is required to prepare for each financial year statements of accounts in the form and on the basis determined by the Welsh Government, with the consent of HM Treasury. The financial statements are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of Sport Wales's state of affairs at the year end, including its net expenditure, changes in equity and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, Sport Wales is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular:

- Observe the accounts direction issued by Welsh Ministers and Department for Culture, Media and Sport, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- Make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departure in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the entity will continue in operation; and
- Ensure that the annual report and accounts are fair, balanced and understandable.

The Principal Accounting Officer for the Welsh Ministers has appointed the Chief Executive as the Accounting Officer for Sport Wales. Responsibilities as Accounting Officer, including the responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable and for the keeping of proper records, and for safeguarding Sport Wales's assets, are set out in the Accounting Officers' Memorandum issued by HM Treasury.

Accounting Officer:

B Davies

9 October 2025

Annual Governance Statement 2024-25

Introduction

The Governance Statement brings together all disclosures relating to an organisation's governance, risk and control. As Accounting Officer, I am personally responsible for the Governance Statement which outlines how I have discharged my responsibility to manage and control the resources of Sport Wales during the course of the year.

As Accounting Officer, I have reviewed the Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice 2017 and believe that Sport Wales has fully complied with the relevant elements of the code in respect of both its Exchequer and Lottery functions.

Corporate Governance

The Board

Corporate Governance is the system by which organisations are directed and controlled. The Board of Sport Wales is responsible for the governance of Sport Wales and the Sports Council for Wales Trust. The Board's role is to satisfy itself that an appropriate governance structure is in place and to scrutinise the performance of the Executive and the organisation's delivery of the Sport Wales Strategy.

The Sport Wales Board is comprised of a Chair, a Vice Chair and up to twelve other members all of whom are appointed by Welsh Government.

The Board's composition includes representation from a range of different professions and members with expertise and experience relevant to both community and elite sport, as well as wider skillsets needed for a role of this nature. A Board skills matrix is maintained to ensure the Board has the right blend of skills and experience.

During the year, the Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip announced that three Board members (Judi Rhys MBE, Phil Tilley and Martin Veale) would be re-appointed for the period 1 September 2024 to 30 September 2025. At the same time, Professor Leigh Robinson stood down at the end of her second term to pursue other opportunities. Sport Wales would like to place on record it's thanks to Professor Leigh Robinson for her dedicated service and contribution to delivering the Vision for Sport in Wales.

To discharge its responsibilities and to obtain the assurance required that demonstrate good governance practices are in place, three permanent committees have been established; the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, the Remuneration Committee and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, each of which is chaired by a Board member. The terms of reference for each committee were reviewed during the year.

Attendances for both the Board and its permanent committees are shown in the table on the next page.

Board Member	Board Meeting (Number of meetings attended of up to 6)	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (Number of meetings attended of up to 4)	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (Number of meetings attended of up to 3)	Remuneration Committee (Number of meetings attended of up to 2)
Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, DBE, DL (Chair)	6 / 6	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	2 / 2
Ian Bancroft (Vice Chair)	6 / 6	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	2 / 2
Rajma Begum	5 / 6	Not Applicable	2 / 3	Not Applicable
Hannah Bruce (nee Murphy)	4 / 6	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Delyth Evans	6 / 6	3 / 4	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Rhian Gibson	6 / 6	Not Applicable	1 / 1	Not Applicable
Chris Jenkins OBE	6 / 6	4 / 4	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Nicola Mead-Batten	6 / 6	3 / 4	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Judi Rhys MBE	5 / 6	Not Applicable	2 / 3	Not Applicable
Professor Leigh Robinson	3 / 3	Not Applicable	3 / 3	Not Applicable
Phil Tilley	6 / 6	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Dafydd Trystan Davies	4 / 4	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Martin Veale JP	6 / 6	4 / 4	3 / 3	2 / 2
Nuria Zolle	6 / 6	4 / 4	1 / 1	Not Applicable
Independent members				
Hywel Tudor (ARAC)	Not Applicable	3 / 4	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Andy Butler (ARAC) ***	Not Applicable	1 / 3	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Board Member	Board Meeting (Number of meetings attended of up to 6)	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (Number of meetings attended of up to 4)	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (Number of meetings attended of up to 3)	Remuneration Committee (Number of meetings attended of up to 2)
Ethylle Baring (EDIC) ***	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	1 / 1	Not Applicable
Polly Lord (EDIC) ***	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	1 / 1	Not Applicable
Overall Percentage Attendance rate	95%	81%	95%	100%

*** During the year, Andy Butler was appointed as an independent member of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. Ethylle Baring and Polly Lord were appointed as independent members of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

The Terms of Reference for the EDI Committee note that there is an opportunity to co-opt additional members. The Committee identified an opportunity to appoint individuals to bring different perspectives to the scrutiny arrangements. The Terms of Reference for the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee outline that up to two independent members can be appointed and one must be in post.

Whistleblowing policy

Sport Wales has an established and a Board approved Whistleblowing Policy, which is brought to the attention of staff and members at induction and is detailed in the Staff Handbook. During 2024-25 there were no reported incidents. We believe that the Policy is effective, and staff have full access to it. The Policy is reviewed periodically in line with the Staff Handbook.

External whistleblowing is dealt with through our Complaints Policy, which is available on our website. There were no reported incidents during the year.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

The Board has established an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee to support it in discharging its responsibilities specifically in the areas of risk, internal control and governance through:

- Reviewing the comprehensiveness of assurances in meeting the Board's and Accounting Officer's assurance needs.
- Reviewing the reliability and integrity of the assurances.
- Providing an opinion on how well the Board and Accounting Officer are supported in decision making and in discharging their accountability obligations (particularly in respect of Financial Reporting).

- Ensuring that risks identified are assigned to members of the Leadership Team and appropriate mitigating actions are detailed in the Corporate Risk Register.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee consists of up to seven members, two of whom can be independent members, with a minimum of one independent member required. During the year, Sport Wales was pleased to welcome Andy Butler as a new independent member of the Committee.

The Committee met four times during the year and there was an overall members' attendance rate of 81%.

Over the year the Committee's areas of focus included (but was not limited to):

- The operation and effectiveness of the risk management arrangements in place at Sport Wales, including regular consideration of the Corporate Risk Register.
- Review of arrangements in place for GDPR and cyber security.
- Consideration of the anti-fraud arrangements in place at Sport Wales.
- Agreement of the Internal Strategy, Plan and Charter.
- Internal audit reports covering specific business areas and the Internal Audit Annual Report.
- The External Audit Plans and delivery thereof, including consideration of the ISA 260 reports.
- Performance monitoring of internal and external audit.
- The Annual Report and Financial Statements and their format.

- Regulatory compliance matters, including consideration of the Sport Wales public duties.
- Review of Board member expenses.
- Review of the Gifts and Hospitality Register.
- Review of any departure from standard procurement procedures and review of all contracts awarded during the year greater than £25,000 in value.
- Review of any regulatory complaints. (There were no new regulatory complaints during 2024-25).

IT systems ensure that the physical security of data is controlled. In 2024-25 no information risk issues, or significant control weaknesses were identified, and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee was satisfied that the level of risk was acceptable and managed in an appropriate manner. This was further supported by the internal audit review of IT Security and Data Governance, which provided reasonable assurance that the controls were suitably designed, consistently applied and effective.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee undertook an annual review of the Counter Fraud Strategy and Action Plan during the year. This outlined progress on the key actions underway following a review of the Government Functional Standard for Fraud (13) undertaken in 2022-23. The update outlined arrangements in place including the Anti Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy, requirements for declarations of interest, segregation of duties, the use of technology and software to identify fraud (including cyber security arrangements), the hospitality register, training and participation in the National Fraud Initiative.

The Committee noted the arrangements in place and members have also provided input into the development of a revised Anti Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy, which was finalised during 2024-25.

The Board receive a summary of matters considered by the Committee and details of matters to bring to the Board's attention. The Committee Chair also presents a formal annual report on the Committee's work to the Board.

Remuneration Committee

The Remuneration Committee meet to review and recommend for approval to Welsh Government the Chief Executive's salary and the annual pay award for all staff via the Welsh Government's pay remit process. Further details can be found within the Remuneration and Staff Report on page 132. The Committee also met to consider a voluntary redundancy request. The Committee met twice during the year and the attendance rate was 100%.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee was established to challenge, support and oversee the work of Sport Wales in delivering against its Strategic Equality Plan both internally and in its support to the sector. The committee met three times during the year and the attendance rate was 95%.

During the year, the Committee's Chair, Professor Leigh Robinson reached the end of her second term at Sport Wales. Sport Wales is grateful to Professor Robinson for her unwavering dedication to championing equality, diversity and inclusion and for paving the way for the set up and establishment of the Committee.

Nuria Zolle has commenced as the new Chair of the Committee. The Committee also appointed Ethylle Baring and Polly Lord as independent members, bringing invaluable experience to the work of the Committee.

The Committee's core focus during the year was scrutiny of progress on the implementation of the Sport Wales Strategic Equality Plan. In particular, the Committee has constructively challenged advancements in key areas such as learning from Midnight Ramadan, reviewing progress in relation to the integrated impact assessment, the Capability Framework and Moving to Inclusion. The Committee also welcomed the findings of an independent review into the Sport Wales recruitment process, which found good evidence of diversity and inclusion in our practice and a commitment to embedding this as well as the strides made in relation to action taken on the Anti Racism Wales Action Plan.

The Executive Senior Management Team

The Executive, under the leadership of the Chief Executive, is responsible to the Board for the development and implementation of strategy and policies, and the reporting thereof. The Executive is comprised of the Director of Finance and Business Services, the Director of Sport Intelligence and Service Development and the Director of Sport Systems.

The Executive meets weekly to consider matters of an operational nature and monthly to consider matters of strategic importance. Progress against the Business Plan is reported and monitored throughout the year and at meetings of the Board.

Board and committee effectiveness

Board meetings continue to be conducted in a hybrid manner. Board members were regularly asked for their reflections on how the structure of these meetings could be improved and practical changes were incorporated to allow meetings to run more effectively. This will be periodically reviewed as part of the Board's Schedule of Business.

A comprehensive review of Board effectiveness was undertaken during the year across the following areas: -

- Building a Board
- Developing a Board
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Operating a Board
- Evaluating a Board

The review was informed by the Board Effectiveness – A Good Practice Guide produced by the Northern Ireland Audit Office in 2022 and other relevant tools and publications. Overall, the review concluded that the Board is operating effectively with some improvement areas identified. These improvements were incorporated into an Action Plan, progress on which will be reported to the Board in July 2025. Key areas of improvement included using the Board skills matrix to shape the requirement for Board recruitment in 2025, working with Welsh Government to support programmes that focus on enhancing Board diversity as well as considering how recruitment campaigns can be shaped to better recruit diverse candidates.

Board member feedback also outlined opportunities to share learning across the Board through mentorship and noted the benefits of exploring some topics in greater depth at focused sessions.

In addition, the Chair has considered Board effectiveness during the year by undertaking the following: -

- Commissioning a review of Governance arrangements by the RSM internal audit team, which provided 'reasonable assurance' that the controls are suitably designed, consistently applied and effective.
- Completion of a comprehensive Board skills matrix to aid personal development and succession planning.
- A detailed Board member appraisal process giving due consideration to personal development and Board effectiveness.
- A review of the Corporate Governance Manual setting out the arrangements in place at Sport Wales, including expected behaviours of Board members.
- A revision and refresh of the Terms of Reference for all committees of the Board.

In response to Board member feedback, the Sport Wales Executive Team developed a programme of focus sessions to explore key areas in more depth. During 2024-25, these Board development sessions focused on the Vision for Sport in Wales and the Sport Wales Strategy. This programme is due to continue in 2025-26 and will provide an opportunity to consider priority areas of work and impact.

Members of the Board have also provided support to the Executive Team by championing key areas of work such as Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Anti Doping. This has provided the Executive Team with challenge and scrutiny in key areas of work.

Decisions taken by Board and its committees are informed by advice provided by Sport Wales staff. Papers and reports produced by officers are expected to show clearly all relevant information needed to enable informed decisions to be taken. Papers are circulated in advance of each board and committee meeting; tabled items and verbal reports are only accepted in exceptional circumstances. The Board was content during the year with the timeliness and quality of information provided for its use.

Effectiveness reviews were undertaken for the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee during 2024-25. Both reviews identified that arrangements were effective and noted some minor areas for improvement.

Risk management

The purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is designed to manage and limit risk but can never eliminate it. It can therefore only provide reasonable rather than absolute assurance. The system of internal control is based upon an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks of achieving Sport Wales's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should this happen, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The system of internal control has been in place at Sport Wales throughout the year ended 31 March 2025 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts and accords with HM Treasury guidance and Managing Welsh Public Money.

Finally, the system of internal control provides reasonable assurance that Sport Wales has complied with the National Lottery financial directions, and that adequate processes are in place for the detection of conflicts of interest and to minimise losses of National Lottery grants.

Capacity to handle risk

As Accounting Officer, I am personally responsible for ensuring that Sport Wales has an effective risk management process. This is overseen by the Board, through the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. As an organisation, the key risks are monitored through appropriate use of the Corporate Risk Register. There is a documented Risk Appetite and a Risk Management Strategy and Policy that contains definitions relating to risk management and sets out how risks should be identified, recorded, analysed and managed.

Corporate risks, and the control measures implemented to mitigate them, are assigned to and managed by the appropriate manager, member of the Executive or in some cases by the Accounting Officer. Operating risks are the responsibility of the relevant heads of department while day to day risk management may be delegated to the staff they manage.

New risks are identified by officers of Sport Wales, Audit and Risk Assurance Committee scrutiny or the Board itself.

When a new risk has been identified, it is inserted into the appropriate Risk Register, assessed and scored and assigned to a member of the Executive team and/or appropriate manager.

The risk and control framework

Risk management is embedded within the management structure of Sport Wales. The majority of identified risks are derived from the organisational objectives and the business planning process of Sport Wales.

The Risk Register is accessible to all Sport Wales employees via an online portal, with editing rights limited to relevant managers. Sport Wales's risk management arrangements are subject to regular internal audit and presented to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The Risk Register records significant corporate risks including risks to information, an overall assessment of likely impact and probability, control measures and where required, a list of future action measures. The Corporate Risk Register is reviewed at regular intervals by Senior Management, the Risk Management and Assurance Group and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. In addition, managers can present by rotation to the Risk Management and Assurance Group on their specific areas of risk and how they control or mitigate those risks.

During the year, the Risk Management and Assurance Group also undertook a scenario exercise to better understand and test how Sport Wales would respond to an emerging risk/issue. This provided a helpful learning opportunity.

Key risks

Risks to key strategic and operational activities are identified, evaluated and considered by the Risk Management and Assurance Group, with appropriate action taken to mitigate them.

Corporate Risks and mitigating actions are reviewed at regular intervals. The internal audit programme is informed by risks recorded in the Risk Register and, where appropriate, the auditors make recommendations to address any risk or identify new ones. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee review these recommendations at each committee meeting, including progress made in implementing the recommendations. The items are discussed, and feedback provided to the Executive Team.

At the outset of 2024-25, a significant risk relating to a poor Welsh Government funding settlement had materialised, becoming an active issue to manage. Following confirmation that the Sport Wales Exchequer budget for 2024-25 would be cut by 10.5%, the Executive Team met with Board to discuss a range of possible actions to manage this position. This issue also prompted Sport Wales to develop a Medium Term Financial Outlook to facilitate scenario modelling around future funding settlements, ensuring that the organisation is better placed to make longer term decisions and/or consider the impact of changes to future funding. An Audit Wales review of financial sustainability at Sport Wales identified that Sport Wales 'has a clear understanding of its financial position and addressed the 2024-25 pressures in a way that mitigated the impact on sports partners in the short term.

It recently developed a medium-term financial plan but expanding this to cover wider factors would support future decisions.'

The nature of risk at Sport Wales changed significantly during the year. Following an increased Welsh Government budget settlement for 2025-26, the risk relating to funding settlements has reduced to a medium level risk. This recognises that there is ongoing economic uncertainty. Other risks such as the impact of cost of living have been archived following downward trends in inflation.

The ongoing financial sustainability / resilience of partners remains a medium risk. Significant mitigating actions are underway as Sport Wales has worked to support the sector with financial sustainability, including identifying potential efficiencies and alternative operating models. This work will continue in 2025-26.

Cyber security is also noted as a medium level risk. Sport Wales took significant action in respect of cyber security during 2024-25, culminating in the achievement of the Cyber Essentials Plus certification.

Sport Wales has an overarching informed and measured appetite for taking risk to achieve its priorities. Risk appetite is owned by the Board and is reviewed annually. Where significant risk arises Sport Wales will take effective control action to reduce and manage these risks to an appropriate level. The Executive and Board are aware of the need to innovate further and faster in the future and to this end are actively exploring different delivery mechanisms and partners. This will create new and different risks and potentially increase the level of risk taken by Sport Wales.

The Sport Wales risk appetite may therefore rise but only within an informed and managed risk environment.

Internal Audit conducted an advisory review of risk management arrangements during 2024-25 with areas for improvement around reporting and assurance identified.

It is encouraging to note that arising out of the internal audit work, there were no actions classified as being a "high" priority. In total 18 recommendations were made, of which 11 were classified as "medium priority" and the remaining 7 were classified as "low priority", together with 7 development points from the advisory report relating to Risk Management.

The follow up review undertaken by Internal Audit identified that 'good progress' had been made on implementing 7 of the 8 agreed actions.

All recommendations made by our internal and external auditors are monitored by our Audit and Risk Assurance Committee to ensure that they are implemented on a timely basis.

Grants monitoring

The majority of Sport Wales's funding is expended in the award of grants. Grant awards are made based upon clear investment criteria into key sporting outputs and outcomes. Sport Wales takes appropriate steps to monitor the application of such awards by requiring formal reporting from recipients, as well as maintaining an on-going dialogue with key partners to gather informal intelligence. In addition, there are specific reconciliation criteria and where expenditure may vary from the level of grant award, Sport Wales exercises its right to claw back such amounts.

Grant-making and monitoring processes are reviewed annually by our internal auditors. External audit also examine our Exchequer and National Lottery grant-making activities annually.

Internal control

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of Sport Wales's policies, aims, and objectives. I also have personal responsibility for safeguarding the proceeds from the National Lottery distributed to Sport Wales and Sport Wales's assets, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in Managing Welsh Public Money.

I am responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. This is overseen by the Board, through the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. It is informed by the work of both the internal and external auditors and the staff presentations to the Risk Management and Assurance Group of Sport Wales who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework. I plan to address identified weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of these systems.

The internal audit service for Sport Wales during 2024-25 was provided by RSM, who operated to standards defined in the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and Global Internal Audit Standards.

Internal audit submit regular reports which inform an independent annual opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of Sport Wales's systems of internal control and risk management, together with recommendations for improvement.

Every year the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee produces an Annual Report of their work to the Board of Sport Wales.

On-going developments

Whilst the current system of internal control is strong, we are not complacent, and as part of our ethos of continual improvement, review areas that we believe could be improved and take steps to bring about changes.

Areas of focus in 2025-26 will include: -

- Further enhancement of cyber security arrangements, including actions to achieve the IASME Level 2 accreditation.
- Business Continuity simulation exercises to test the organisation's response to business critical disruptions.

Accounting Officer:

B Davies

9 October 2025

Remuneration and Staff Report

Sport Wales has an extensive range of policies which reflect current legislation and aim to secure retention and motivation. These policies are reviewed regularly with staff involvement via a recognition agreement with our recognised Trade Union, the Public and Commercial Services (PCS) Union. A full equality impact assessment is carried out on all policies as part of this process. Sport Wales is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity in its employment practices. In particular, Sport Wales aims to ensure that no potential or actual employee receives more or less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital or parental status, nationality, political belief, race, religion, or sexual orientation. We are a Level 2 Disability Confident Employer and have also signed the Business in the Community Race at Work Charter.

We continue to be a Real Living Wage employer with a starting salary of at least £12.64 per hour. All staff were awarded a pay award of 5% during the year to help with the rising cost of living.

Staff turnover for 2024/25 was 8.38% (2023/24 was 9.38%, 2022/23 was 34.96%). There was one redundancy during the year.

Sickness absence data

The sickness data for employees of the whole organisation for 2024/25 (2023/2024) is as follows:

Total Days Lost	Total Number of Employees (FTE)	Total Sick Days Lost Per Person
1004.65 (828.00)	150.05 (145.85)	6.69 (5.68)

The overall absence rate for 2024/25 is 3.16%. This is a slight increase from the 2023/24 rate of 2.47%, but still remains well below the ONS reported rate of 3.6% for public sector workers.

Of the 3.16%, 2.17% were classed as long term and 0.99% as short term.

Sport Wales has continued to place high priority on the mental health and wellbeing of its employees and has carried out a number of initiatives to support the workforce in this regard.

Pension scheme

Sport Wales operates two pension schemes for its staff. Most staff are admitted members of the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The Fund is a defined benefit scheme based on Career Average Re-Valued Earnings (CARE). The Fund’s assets are held separately from those of Sport Wales. Any pension built up before April 2008 is calculated at a rate of 1/80th with a lump sum of three times pension. In line with LGPS regulations, pension built up from 1 April 2008 is calculated at the rate of 1/60th and there is an option to take an extra lump sum in exchange for pension. Pension built up from 1 April 2014 is calculated at the rate of 1/49th with an option to take an extra lump sum in exchange for pension.

The contributions of employees are set at 5.5% to 10.5% based on salary range or 2.75% to 5.25% if the employee opts for the 50/50 pension scheme. Further details can be found in note 1.5 and note 18 to the financial statements. In addition, Sport Wales operates a Defined Contribution pension scheme, with Scottish Widows, in which Sport Wales contributes 6.5%, with employees contributing 1.5%.

Remuneration policy

In accordance with Chapter 5 of the Financial Reporting Manual, Sport Wales is required to disclose the following concerning remuneration during the year of Board Members and senior staff with responsibility for running policy making departments. Treasury guidance requires the financial statements to disclose the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions for Sport Wales' Members and senior staff.

The Chair, Vice Chair and Members of Sport Wales are paid in accordance with the Welsh Government "Remuneration and expenses of Chairs and Members of Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies (WGSBs) and NHS Bodies" policy.

The Remuneration Committee which consists of Sport Wales' Chair, Vice Chair and Chair of the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee supported by Sport Wales' employees, meets to agree the pay award for all staff via the Welsh Government's pay remit process. All changes of pay for the CEO are approved by the Remuneration Committee, and similarly to any pay increase for staff, have to be approved by Welsh Government.

Service contracts

The senior staff of Sport Wales are employed on terms and conditions broadly analogous to the Welsh Government terms and conditions.

Sport Wales' Members are appointed by Welsh Ministers for a three year contracted period and may be reappointed normally for a further three year period. The Chair is entitled to be remunerated at a daily rate of £337 and is contracted to work around two days per week. The Vice Chair is remunerated at a daily rate of £311 and is contracted to work around three days a month.

Notice period

The Chief Executive is entitled to four months' notice of termination of contract by Sport Wales and the remaining senior staff are entitled to twelve weeks' notice of termination of contract.

Trade union facility time

Sport Wales allow members of the PCS union Branch Executive Committee to work on union matters, when needed, during working hours for which the employee receives their full salary entitlement.

Chief Executive Officer Salary

Remuneration (subject to audit)

"Salary" includes gross salary, allowances and performance bonuses where applicable. During the year, the Chief Executive received a gross salary of £119,000 (2023/24 £115,000). No members of staff are eligible for a bonus payment.

A proportion of the Senior Management salary costs are allocated to lottery.

Benefits in kind

There are no benefits in kind.

Salary and pension entitlements

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interest of the senior managers of Sport Wales. Details on start/leave dates can be found in the Pension Benefits table on page 139. This information is audited.

Staff costs (subject to audit)

The staff costs figure shown in the Net Income Account is an apportionment of costs incurred by Sport Wales and is arrived at as follows:

Board Member	Average No. of full time equivalent staff involved 2024/25	Average No. of full time equivalent staff involved 2023/24	2024/25 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Gross salary costs				
Chair T Grey-Thompson ¹	0.20	0.20	18	18
Chief Executive	0.25	0.25	30	29
Other Staff	57.68	56.00	3,242	3,163
			3,290	3,210
Salaries and wages			2,661	2,543
Social Security costs			294	272
Other Pension costs			357	560
IAS19 Adjustments			(22)	(165)
			3,290	3,210

Staff costs are further analysed as follows:	2024/25 £'000	2023/24 £'000
Administration	1,682	1,626
Sport Science support to Athletes	1,608	1,584
	3,290	3,210

¹ The average number of staff employed are all permanent contract staff.

The Chair is appointed to work 2 days per week and spends 50 per cent of that time on lottery activities.

Remuneration (subject to audit)

Name	Title	% Apportioned to Lottery 2024/25 (2023/24)	Salary £000 2024/25 (2023/24)	Pension Benefit to nearest £1,000 2024/25 (2023/24)	Total £000 2024/25 (2023/24)
Baroness Tanni Grey- Thompson DBE, DL	Chair	50% (50%)	35 - 40 (35 - 40)	- -	35 - 40 (35 - 40)
Mr Ian Bancroft ²	Vice Chair	50% (50%)	10 - 15 (5 - 10)	- -	10 - 15 (5 - 10)
Mr Brian Davies OBE	CEO	25% (25%)	115 - 120 (110 - 115)	38,000 (35,000)	155 - 160 (145 - 150)
Ms Emma Wilkins	Director - Finance and Business Services	25% (25%)	80 - 85 (75 - 80)	26,000 (30,000)	105 - 110 (110 - 115)
Mr Graham Williams	Director - Sport Intelligence & Service Development	25% (25%)	90 - 95 (85 - 90)	40,000 (53,000)	130 - 135 (140 - 145)
Mr Craig Nowell	Assistant Director - National Sport Facilities, Infrastructure & Capital	0% (0%)	70 - 75 (65 - 70)	27,000 (64,000)	95 - 100 (130 - 135)
Mr Owen Lewis	Director - Sport Systems Strategy and Services	75% (100%)	80 - 85 (75 - 80)	36,000 (52,000)	115 - 120 (125 - 130)
Ms Judi Rhys MBE	Council Member	50% (50%)	5 - 10 (5 - 10)	- -	5 - 10 (5 - 10)
Prof Leigh Robinson ³	Council Member	50% (50%)	0 - 5 (5 - 10)	- -	0 - 5 (5 - 10)

² Vice Chair from 1st October 2023³ Term ended 31 August 2024

Name	Title	% Apportioned to Lottery 2024/25 (2023/24)	Salary £000 2024/25 (2023/24)	Pension Benefit to nearest £1,000 2024/25 (2023/24)	Total £000 2024/25 (2023/24)
Mr Phil Tilley	Council Member	50% (50%)	5 - 10 (5 - 10)	- -	5 - 10 (5 - 10)
Mr Martin Veale JP	Council Member	50% (50%)	5 - 10 (5 - 10)	- -	5 - 10 (5 - 10)
Ms Rajma Begum	Council Member	50% (50%)	5 - 10 (5 - 10)	- -	5 - 10 (5 - 10)
Mr Dafydd T Davies ⁴	Council Member	50% (50%)	0 - 5 (5 - 10)	- -	0 - 5 (5 - 10)
Ms Delyth Evans	Council Member	50% (50%)	5 - 10 (5 - 10)	- -	5 - 10 (5 - 10)
Ms Nicola Mead-Batten	Council Member	50% (50%)	5 - 10 (5 - 10)	- -	5 - 10 (5 - 10)
Ms Hannah Bruce	Council Member	50% (50%)	5 - 10 (5 - 10)	- -	5 - 10 (5 - 10)
Ms Rhian Gibson ⁵	Council Member	50% (50%)	5 - 10 (0 - 5)	- -	5 - 10 (0 - 5)
Mr Chris Jenkins ⁶ OBE	Council Member	50% (50%)	5 - 10 (0 - 5)	- -	5 - 10 (0 - 5)
Ms Nuria Zolle ⁷	Council Member	50% (50%)	5 - 10 (0 - 5)	- -	5 - 10 (0 - 5)

The Remuneration Report requires that a Single Total Figure of Remuneration is shown. The above table is similar to that used previously, and still shows the salary paid in bandings. The pension benefit figure which contributes to the single total figure is calculated as follows:

$(\text{real increase in pension}^* \times 20) + (\text{real increase in lump sum}^*) - (\text{contributions made by employee})$

*excluding increases due to inflation or any increase/decrease due to a transfer of pension rights

The pension benefit figure is not an amount that has been paid to the employee by Sport Wales during the year. It is a future benefit for the employee which is influenced by many factors including but not limited to, salary changes and any additional contributions made by the employee.

⁴ Sabbatical/zero pay ended 8th July 2024

⁵ Appointed 1st October 2023

⁶ Appointed 1st October 2023

⁷ Appointed 1st October 2023

Pension Benefits of Senior Managers (subject to audit)

Name	Real increase in Pension (and lump sum) at state pension age for 2024/25 £000	Total accrued Pension (and lump sum) at state pension age at 31 March 2025 £000	CETV at 31 March 2025 £000	CETV at 31 March 2024 £000	Real Increase/ (Decrease) CETV in Year £000
Mr Brian Davies OBE CEO	2.5 – 5.0 (0.0 – 2.5)	40 – 45 (25 – 30)	771	693	65
Mr Graham Williams Director – Sport Intelligence & Service Development	2.0 – 2.5 (0.0 – 2.5)	45 – 50 (50 – 55)	900	824	67
Ms Emma Wilkins Director – Finance and Business Services	0.0 – 2.5 (0.0 – 2.5)	10 – 15 (0 – 5)	148	123	19
Mr Craig Nowell Assistant Director – National Sport Facilities, Infrastructure & Capital	0.0 – 2.5 (0.0 – 2.5)	25 – 30 (10 – 15)	380	344	30
Mr Owen Lewis Director – Sport Systems Strategy and Services	2.0 – 2.5 (0.0 – 2.5)	25 – 30 (15 – 20)	441	394	40

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to Sport Wales' pension scheme. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional pension benefits at their own cost.

CETVs are calculated within the guidelines and framework prescribed by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are drawn.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

McCloud

The Public Services Remedy applies to individuals that were members, or eligible to be members, of a public service pension scheme on 31 March 2012 and were members of a scheme between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022.

The Sports Council for Wales is a member of the Cardiff and Vale Local Government Pension Scheme, and, per the rules of that scheme, members do not have to be rolled back into the relevant legacy scheme for the remedy period. In LGPS, the McCloud remedy involves the application of an underpin and benefits of eligible members are tested when they elect to retire. At this point, the scheme will compare the career average pension built up in the remedy period with the pension that would have been built up in the final salary scheme. If the final salary pension is higher, the difference will be added to the pension paid.

The pension figures shown don't take the impact into account. The final CETV values and pensions paid at retirement may be different depending on whether the underpin is required or not, but there are other factors to be taken into account, such as actual retirement age.

Fair pay disclosures (subject to audit)

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in their organisation and the 25th percentile, median and 75th percentile remuneration of the organisation's workforce.

Percentile Pay Ratio	2024/25 Chief Executive (Highest paid Director) £000	2024/25 Employee £000	2024/25 Ratio	2023/24 Chief Executive (Highest paid Director) £000	2023/24 Employee £000	2023/24 Ratio
25th	117.5	29.3	4.0	112.5	28.7	3.9
Median	117.5	42.9	2.7	112.5	38.2	2.9
75th	117.5	48.8	2.4	112.5	45.5	2.5

Employees don't receive benefits in kind or performance pay.

The ratio was calculated using the following assumptions:

1. Salaries for staff paid through the payroll and agency staff have been used.
2. Figures have not been adjusted to reflect any apportionment to the Lottery Distribution accounts i.e. costs reflect all staff employed by The Sports Council for Wales processed through the payroll.

Total remuneration includes salary and allowances but excludes severance payments. It does not include employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

Remuneration ranged from £24,420 to £118,774 (2023/24 remuneration ranged from £23,258 to £113,118). The small movement in the 25th median ratio is attributable to the pay parity increase of lowest grades. The slight decrease in the 50th median ratio is due to a reduction in the use of agency staff. The median pay ratio is consistent with the pay and award policies for Sport Wales employees taken as a whole.

The percentage change from the previous financial year in respect of the highest paid director was 5%.

The average percentage change from the previous financial year in respect of the employees of Sport Wales taken as a whole was 5%.

Tax policy for off-payroll appointees earning £245 per day or greater

As at 31 March 2025, there were 8 arrangements that had existed (2023/24, 8 arrangements) and have been in place for 4 years or more. All arrangements have been reassessed during the year and continue to be classed as operating outside of IR35. Sport Wales are content that assurance has been sought to confirm that individuals have made appropriate arrangements to pay tax. None of the individuals are a Board member or is a senior official with significant financial responsibility.

Staff composition

Current staff composition of corporate directors are 75% male and 25% female. Of the remaining permanent employees 43% are male and 57% female.

Accounting Officer:

B Davies
9 October 2025

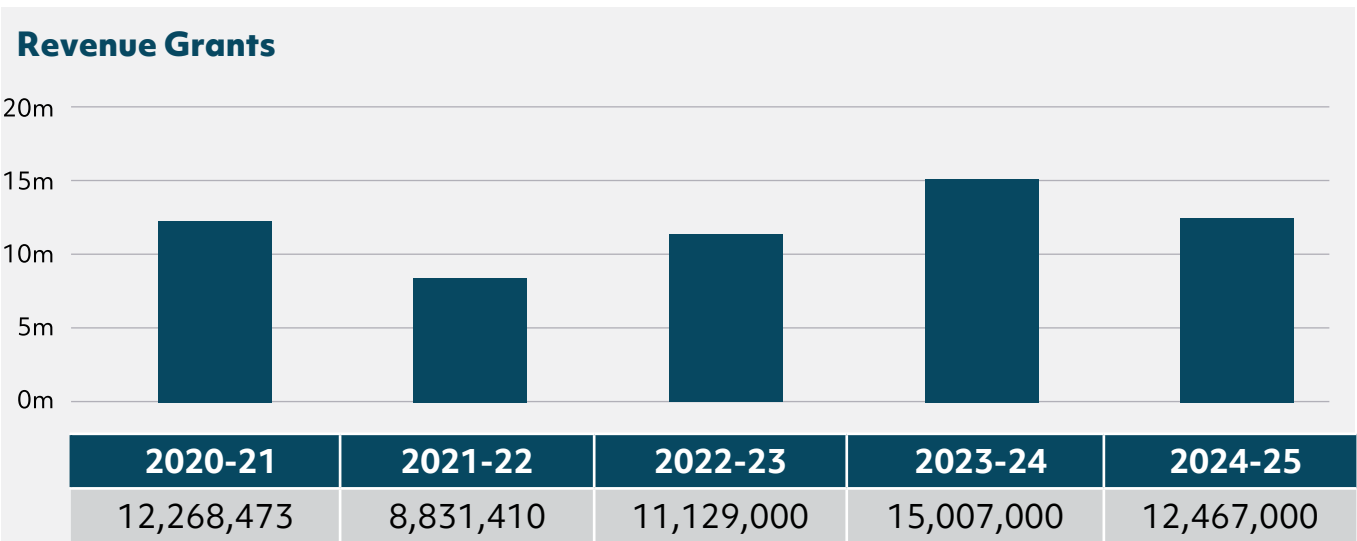
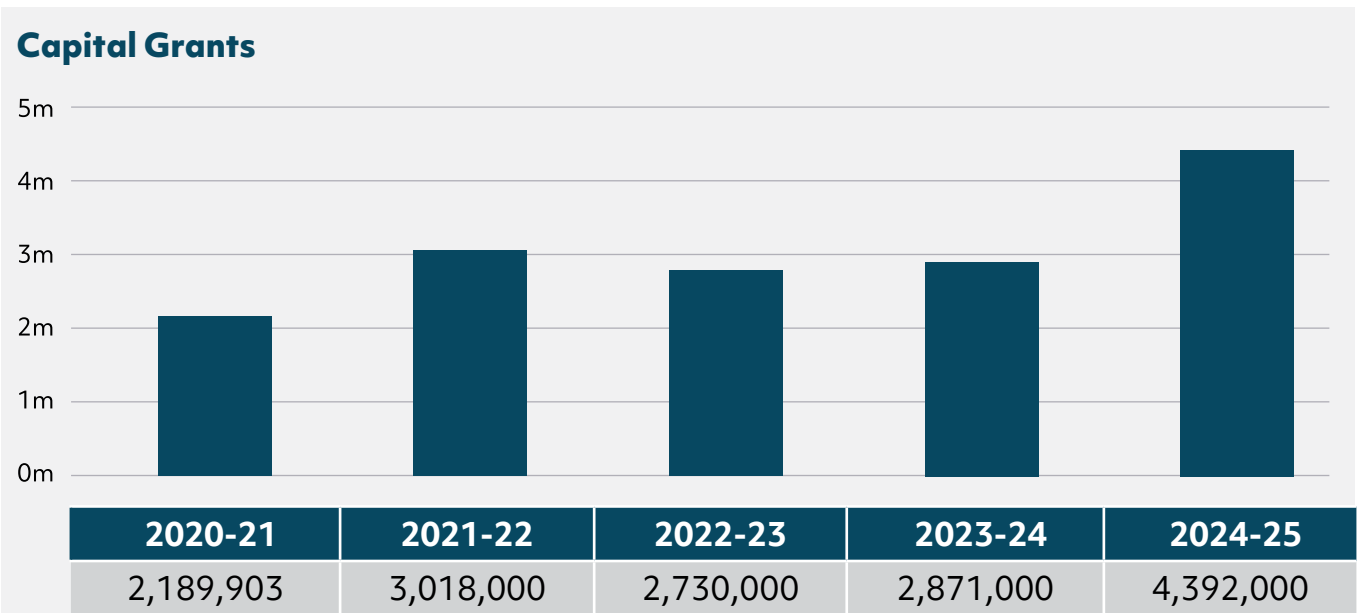
Parliamentary Accountability and Audit Report

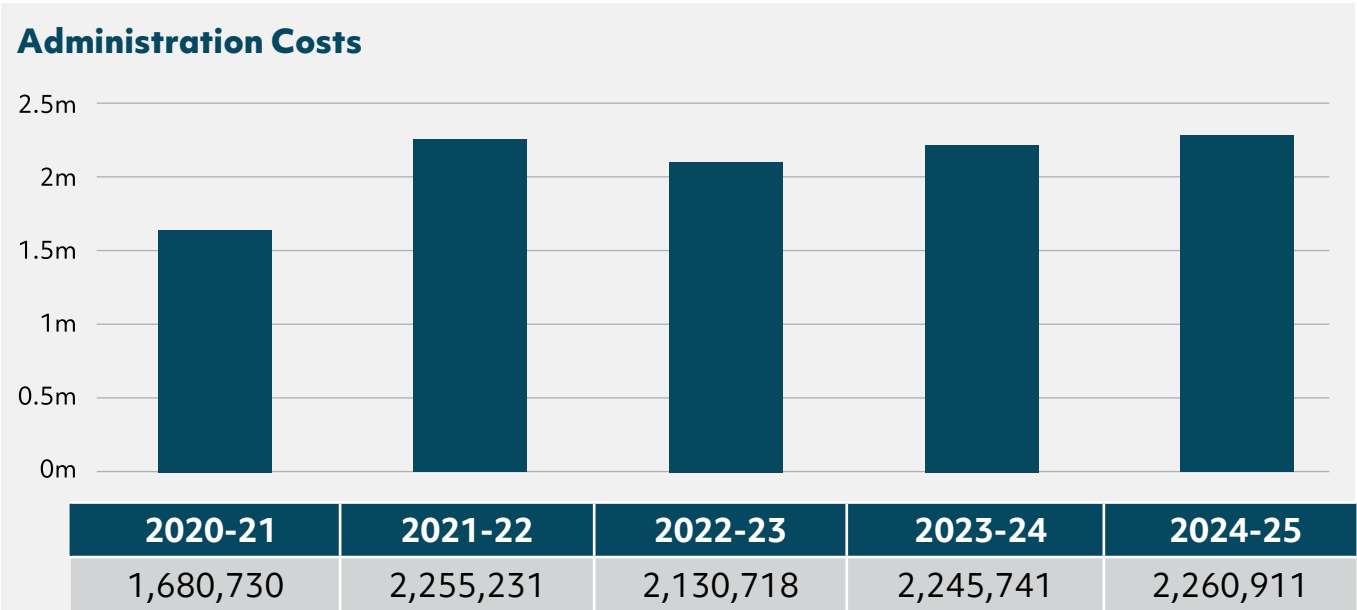
Remote contingent liabilities (subject to audit)

Sport Wales does not have any remote contingent liabilities.

Long term expenditure trends

Trends over the last five years can be seen below:





Losses, special payments and material income (subject to audit) - During 2024/25 there have been no losses, special payments or gifts made. There have also been no material fees or charges income.

Accounting Officer:

B Davies
9 October 2025

The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament and the Senedd

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account for the year ended 31 March 2025 under the National Lottery etc Act 1993.

The financial statements comprise the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution account's:

- Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2025;
- Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year then ended; and
- The related notes including the significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the financial statements is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and their net expenditure after taxation for the year then ended; and

- Have been properly prepared in accordance with the National Lottery etc Act 1993 and Secretary of State directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects, the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity of Public Sector Bodies in the United Kingdom (2024). My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my certificate.

Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Revised Ethical Standard 2024. I am independent of the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK.

My staff and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate.

The going concern basis of accounting for the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual, which requires entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it is anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

Other information

The other information comprises information included in the Annual Report, but does not include the financial statements and my auditor's certificate and report thereon. The Accounting Officer is responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my certificate, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion the part of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with Secretary of State directions issued under the National Lottery etc Act 1993.

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit have been properly prepared in accordance with Secretary of State directions made under the National Lottery etc Act 1993; and
- The information given in the Performance Report and Accountability Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account and their environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance Report and Accountability Report.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept by the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my staff; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- The financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or

- Certain disclosures of remuneration specified by HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual have not been made or parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited is not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- The Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Accounting Officer is responsible for:

- Maintaining proper accounting records;
- Providing the C&AG with access to all information of which management is aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- Providing the C&AG with additional information and explanations needed for his audit;
- Providing the C&AG with unrestricted access to persons within the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account from whom the auditor determines it necessary to obtain audit evidence;
- Ensuring such internal controls are in place as deemed necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;

- Preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view in accordance with Secretary of State directions issued under the National Lottery etc. Act 1993;
- Preparing the annual report, which includes the Remuneration and Staff Report, in accordance with Secretary of State directions issued under the National Lottery etc Act 1993; and
- Assessing the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the National Lottery etc Act 1993.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations including fraud

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud. The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud is detailed below.

Identifying and assessing potential risks related to non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, I:

- Considered the nature of the sector, control environment and operational performance including the design of the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account's accounting policies.
- Inquired of management, the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account's head of internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account's policies and procedures on:

- Identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations;
- Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud; and
- The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations including the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account's controls relating to the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account's compliance with the National Lottery etc Act 1993 and Managing Public Money.
- Inquired of management, the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account's head of internal audit and those charged with governance whether:
 - They were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
 - They had knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
- Discussed with the engagement team how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, I considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: revenue recognition, posting of unusual journals, complex transactions, and bias in management estimates.

In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), I am required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

I obtained an understanding of the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account's framework of authority and other legal and regulatory frameworks in which the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account operates. I focused on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account. The key laws and regulations I considered in this context included the National Lottery etc Act 1993, Managing Public Money, employment law, pensions legislation and tax Legislation.

Audit response to identified risk

To respond to the identified risks resulting from the above procedures:

- I reviewed the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described above as having direct effect on the financial statements;
- I enquired of management, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- I reviewed minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the Board and internal audit reports;

- I addressed the risk of fraud through management override of controls by testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements on estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business and

I communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential risks of fraud to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my certificate.

Other auditor's responsibilities

I am required to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control I identify during my audit.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

Gareth Davies
Comptroller and Auditor General
 15 October 2025

National Audit Office
 157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
 Victoria
 London
 SW1W 9SP

Sports Council for Wales – Lottery Distribution Account. Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2025

Description	Notes	2024/25 £000	2023/24 £000
Expenditure			
Grant offers made in year	3	14,152	20,203
Less lapsed and revoked offers	3	-	(7)
Staff costs	7	3,290	3,210
Depreciation	9	9	19
Other operating costs	8	794	545
Total Expenditure		18,245	23,970
Gross Income			
Proceeds from National Lottery Distribution Fund (NLDF)	11	(16,402)	(15,644)
Investment returns from the NLDF	11	(776)	(756)
Recoveries of grant		(5)	(1)
Other income	8	(239)	(239)
Total Income		(17,422)	(16,640)
Net Expenditure before interest and taxation		823	7,330
Pension finance cost	18	(6)	13
Loss on Disposal of Property, Plant & Equipment	9	-	-
Interest receivable		(18)	(25)
Net Expenditure before taxation		799	7,318
Taxation payable	6	3	5
Net Expenditure after taxation		802	7,323
Other Comprehensive (Income) / Expenditure			
Actuarial Loss / (Gain) on Pension	18	28	(246)
Total Comprehensive Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2025		830	7,077
Balance at 1 April		(5,293)	(12,370)
Balance at 31 March		(4,463)	(5,293)

All recognised gains and losses have been calculated on the historical cost basis and have been reflected in the above statement.

All activities are continuing with no acquisitions or disposals.

The notes on pages 154 to 172 form part of these accounts.

Sports Council for Wales – Lottery Distribution Account. Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2025

Description	Notes	As at 31 March 2025 £000	As at 31 March 2024 £000
Non Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	9	54	32
Pension Asset	18	450	450
Total Non Current Assets		504	482
Current Assets			
Trade receivables and other current assets	10	-	29
Investments - balance held in NLDF	11	6,917	10,852
Cash and cash equivalents	13	1,090	160
Total Current Assets		8,007	11,041
Total Assets		8,511	11,523
Current Liabilities			
Grant accrual	3	(74)	(2,781)
Other current liabilities	12	(3,974)	(3,449)
Total Current Liabilities		(4,048)	(6,230)
Non Current Assets plus Net Current Assets		4,463	5,293
Non Current Liabilities			
Grant accrual	3	-	-
Pension liability	18	-	-
		-	-
Assets less Liabilities		4,463	5,293
Reserves:			
Income and Expenditure Reserve		4,013	4,843
Pension Reserve	18	450	450
		4,463	5,293

The notes on pages 154 to 172 form part of these accounts.

The financial statements were approved by the Board and signed on its behalf by:

Accounting Officer:

B Davies
9 October 2025

Sports Council for Wales – Lottery Distribution Account. Statement of Cashflows for the year ended 31 March 2025

Description	Notes	2024/25 £000	2023/24 £000
Cash flow from operating activities			
Net (Expenditure) after taxation		(802)	(7,323)
Decrease / (increase) in receivables'	10	29	(29)
(Decrease) / increase in payables	3, 12	(2,182)	3,423
Decrease in balance held at NLDF	11	3,935	3,734
Interest received		(18)	(25)
Loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment	9	-	-
Depreciation of plant & equipment	9	9	19
Pension cost	18	(28)	(151)
Net cash inflow / (outflow) from operating activities		943	(352)
Cash flow from investing activities			
Interest received		18	25
Cash flow from financing activities			
Purchase of property, plant & Equipment	9	(31)	-
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment	9	-	-
Net cash inflow / (outflow) for the year	13	930	(327)
Net increase / (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents for the period			
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period		160	487
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period		1,090	160
		930	(327)

The notes on pages 154 to 172 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the Sports Council for Wales Lottery Distribution Account for the year ended 31 March 2025

Description	Balances held in NLDF £000	Balances held at SCW £000	Pension Reserve £000	Total £000
Balance at 1 April 2023	14,586	(2,269)	53	12,370
Changes in Taxpayers' Equity 2023/24				
Income from the National Lottery	15,644	-	-	15,644
Drawn down in year by Sport Wales	(20,000)	20,000	-	-
Investment Returns	756	-	-	756
Other Operating Income	-	239	-	239
Recoveries of grants	-	1	-	1
Expenditure in year	(134)	(23,980)	-	(24,114)
Pension Cost	-	-	397	397
Balance as at 31 March 2024	10,852	(6,009)	450	5,293
Changes in Taxpayers' Equity 2024/25				
Income from the National Lottery	16,402	-	-	16,402
Drawn down in year by Sport Wales	(20,850)	20,850	-	-
Investment Returns	776	-	-	776
Other Operating Income	-	239	-	239
Recoveries of grants	-	5	-	5
Expenditure in year	(263)	(17,989)	-	(18,252)
Pension Cost	-	-	-	-
Balance as at 31 March 2025	6,917	(2,904)	450	4,463

The notes on pages 154 to 172 form part of these accounts.

Sports Council for Wales – Lottery Distribution Account. Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025

1. Accounting policies

1.1 Basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified by the valuation of Property, Plant and Equipment by reference to current costs, in accordance with the directions given by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport with the consent of HM Treasury in accordance with Section 35 of the National Lottery etc Act 1993 (as amended) and the consent of Welsh Ministers. A copy of the accounts direction can be obtained by request in writing to Sports Council for Wales (Sport Wales), Sophia Gardens, Cardiff, CF11 9SW. Without limiting the information given, the accounts are prepared in accordance with the 2024/25 Government Financial Reporting Manual (IFRS based FReM) IFRS issued by HM Treasury.

Separate accounts have been prepared for the activities funded from grant-in-aid, in accordance with the directions issued by the Welsh Ministers. There is no requirement for this account to be consolidated with Sport Wales' accounts.

The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis. Sport Wales is required to account for long term grant commitments which fall due for payment in subsequent accounting periods, which are funded by future lottery proceeds.

1.2 Income from the National Lottery Distribution Fund

The distributing activities of Sport Wales' Lottery function are funded by allotted proceeds from the National Lottery. These are held in a fund administered by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and are available to be drawn down into Sport Wales' Lottery bank accounts when needed.

Balances held in the National Lottery Distribution Fund remain under the stewardship of the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. However, the share of such balances attributable to Sport Wales is shown in the accounts at market value and, at the Statement of Financial Position date, has been certified by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport as being available for distribution by Sport Wales in respect of current and future commitments.

The NLDF fund makes up the majority of the Income & Expenditure Reserve, with the remainder of the reserve balance being held within Sport Wales Lottery. Further detail can be seen in the Statement of Changes in Taxpayer's Equity on page 153.

1.3 Property, plant and equipment

Sport Wales capitalise any property, plant and equipment over £5,000 used exclusively in the administration of the Lottery Distribution function and the equipment is included in the Statement of Financial Position at historic cost less a provision for depreciation. In the opinion of Sport Wales, there is no material difference between the historic and current cost net book value of these assets.

1.4 Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on a straight line basis on all property, plant and equipment having regard to their estimated useful lives and anticipated residual values. The average asset lives used for this purpose are as follows:

Equipment	Years
Equipment - Computers	3 years
Equipment - Other	3-10 years

The policy of Sport Wales is to depreciate assets from the month following acquisition.

1.5 Pension costs

Sport Wales operates two pension schemes. Most staff are admitted members of the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The Fund is a defined benefit scheme based on Career Average Re-Valued Earnings (CARE).

The Fund's assets are held separately from those of Sport Wales. The other scheme is a defined contribution pension scheme with Scottish Widows.

IAS19 requires an actuarially calculated figure (current and past service cost) to be charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Income so as to spread the cost of pensions over employees' working lives with Sport Wales.

The apportionment of any pension liabilities or assets between Lottery Distribution and Sport Wales is based on the historic rate of apportionment of staff costs see 1.6.1. Further details in note 7.

1.6 Allocation of costs

The apportionment of staffing and indirect costs transferred from Sport Wales to the Lottery Distribution account is calculated on the following basis:

1.6.1

Staff costs are recharged to Lottery Distribution according to the time they spend in carrying out Lottery activities. Where staff are identified as being employed 100% for Lottery purposes their costs are recharged in full. Where staff work, or provide a service to both lottery and exchequer schemes, their costs are recharged in proportion to the amount of time spent on Lottery work. Any redundancy costs paid during the year remain in full within Sport Wales accounts, and are not apportioned to Lottery Distribution.

1.6.2

Non staff costs are recharged either on the basis of the floor area occupied by Lottery staff, or where no floor area data is available or considered appropriate, costs are apportioned based upon total Lottery staff time expressed as a percentage of total staff time.

1.6.3

Council Members remuneration and travelling expenses are apportioned on a 50/50 basis.

1.7 Policy for grant accruals

Grant awards are accounted for as expenditure in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure and, until paid, as a grant accrual in the Statement of Financial Position if they meet the definition of a liability, which is detailed within Note 3.

Grant awards which have been formally decided upon which do not meet the definition of a liability are not included in expenditure in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure or as an accrual in the Statement of Financial Position; but are disclosed as a contingent grant liability in the Notes to the Accounts.

1.8 Other income

Relates to income generated from UK Sport for the use of Sport Wales' assets and facilities.

1.9 Use of estimates and judgements

The preparation of the financial statements requires Sport Wales to make estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts. Estimates and judgements are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and in any future period affected.

Information about significant areas of estimation and critical judgement in applying accounting policies that have the most significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements is included in the following notes:-

Note 1.6.1 Staff costs are recharged to Lottery Distribution according to the time they spend in carrying out Lottery activities, see note 1.6.1 for further details. Note 18 relates to pension costs apportioned to Lottery Distribution based on historic averaged apportionment of staff costs.

1.10 Financial instruments

1.10.1 Financial assets

Trade receivables and other current assets do not carry any interest and are stated at their nominal value as reduced by appropriate allowances for estimated irrecoverable amounts. Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash in hand, short-term deposits and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

1.10.2 Financial liabilities

Trade Payables and other current liabilities are not interest bearing and are stated at their nominal value.

1.11 Segmental reporting

Sport Wales's management reporting for Lottery Distribution provides information relating to the distribution of Lottery grants. There is considered to be a single operating segment for the distribution of lottery funds.

1.12 Newly issued accounting standards not yet effective

The application of any new or amended IFRS standards is governed by their adoption by the FReM. Sport Wales applies changes to standards when they become effective.

There are no known material impacts from IFRS changes that have been issued and are not yet effective on the financial statements in the period of initial application.

2. Grants met (paid) in the year

Revenue Grants	2024/25 £000	2023/24 £000
Perform & Succeed	7,765	7,851
Local Authorities support	-	47
Sport Partnerships	19	235
Be Active Wales Fund	4,632	6,754
Sector Resilience	47	-
Leadership	4	120
Per Note 3	12,467	15,007

Capital Grants	2024/25 £000	2023/24 £000
National Partners	1,712	1,637
Local Authority Grants	10	828
Sport Partnerships	1,763	-
Innovation Fund	907	406
Per Note 3	4,392	2,871

The grant figures in the notes above includes £412,801 direct expenditure incurred on behalf of grant recipients (£365,869 in 2023/24).

3. Grant accrual

Description	Capital £000	Revenue £000	2024/25 Total £000	2023/24 Total £000
Balance as at 1 April	305	2,476	2,781	463
Grant offers met in the year	(4,392)	(12,467)	(16,859)	(17,878)
Grant offers not taken up	-	-	-	(7)
Grant offers made in the year	4,087	10,065	14,152	20,203
Movement in year	(305)	(2,402)	(2,707)	2,318
Accruals balance as at 31 March	-	74	74	2,781
Analysed as:				
Amounts falling due within one year	-	74	74	2,781
Amounts falling due after one year	-	-	-	-

Analysis of expected timing of cash flows	2024/25 Total £000	2023/24 Total £000
Amounts due during 2024/25 Financial Year	-	2,781
Amounts due during 2025/26 Financial Year	74	-
Amounts due during 2026/27 Financial Year	-	-
Balance at 31 March 2025	74	2,781

Sport Wales will treat Grant awards as expenditure, and if unpaid as an accrual, if a constructive obligation to make payment exists. Grant awards that are free from any special conditions of grant become a constructive obligation when the formal offer of grant has been sent to the grant recipient.

Grant offers with special conditions attached become a constructive obligation when the applicant has complied with the special conditions incorporated into the contract.

Awards that have been decided upon but have conditions of grant outstanding that have yet to be fulfilled will not give rise to a constructive obligation and will not give rise to a grant accrual; instead such awards will be disclosed by way of note as a contingent grant liability (see note 4).

Grant awards will be treated as a formal offer upon formal written notification to the intended recipient by means of an “offer letter”. Oral or informal communication by staff which is stated to be non-binding by Sport Wales will not be treated as a formal offer of grant.

Sport Wales will not treat any of the following conditions as being under their control:

- The requirement to obtain planning permission or any other regulatory approval.
- The requirement to obtain match funding from other sources.
- A general condition relating to the availability of lottery funds.

4. Contingent grant liabilities

Description	2024/25 £000	2023/24 £000
Grant Liability	43	343
	43	343

5. Capital commitments

At 31 March 2025, the Lottery account had no contractual commitments for Capital or Property, Plant and Equipment (2023/2024 Nil).

6. Taxation payable

Description	2024/25 £000	2023/24 £000
Tax payable on interest received at 19% (2023/2024 - 19%)	3	5

7. Staff numbers and related costs

The staff costs figure shown in the Net Expenditure Account is an apportionment of costs incurred by Sport Wales and is arrived at as follows:

Description	Average No. of full time equivalent staff involved 2024/25	Average No. of full time equivalent staff involved 2023/24	2024/25 Total £000	2023/24 Total £000
Gross salary costs				
Chair T Grey-Thompson ¹	0.20	0.20	18	18
Chief Executive	0.25	0.25	30	29
Other Staff	57.68	56.00	3,242	3,163
			3,290	3,210
Salaries and wages			2,661	2,543
Social Security costs			294	272
Other Pension costs			357	560
IAS19 Adjustments			(22)	(165)
			3,290	3,210

¹ The average number of staff employed are all permanent contract staff. The Chair is appointed to work 2 days per week and spends 50 per cent of that time on lottery activities.

Other Pension costs totalling £357,000, (2023/24 £560,000) is the employer pension cost allocated to lottery based on individual employee time apportionment to lottery work.

IAS19 Employee Benefits requires an actuarially calculated figure (current and past service cost) to be charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure (SoCNE) . For 2024/25, the actual employer's contribution was (£221,000) (28% of £790,000).

The lottery apportioned current, past and settlement service cost for 2024/25 totalled £199,000 (28% of £710,000) which must replace the actual employer's pension costs included in the SoCNE. Therefore, the net effect was (£22,000) to staff costs after deducting employer's contribution. As current service cost is a notional entry, this is reversed in the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity so that Lottery balances are only charged with the cost of employer's pension contributions. Further details can be found in note 18.

The net obligation in respect of these defined benefit pensions plans is calculated by estimating the amount of future benefit that employees have earned in return for their service in the current and prior periods. The benefit is discounted to determine its present value, and the fair values of plan assets are deducted.

Actuarial gains and losses that arise are recognised in the period they occur through Other Comprehensive Net Expenditure.

Any redundancy costs for the year have been met in full by and reflected in the accounts for the Sports Council for Wales. There are no redundancy costs included in these financial statements.

Staff costs are further analysed as follows:

Description	2024/25 £000	2023/24 £000
Administration	1,682	1,626
Sports Science Support to Athletes	1,608	1,584
	3,290	3,210

8. Other Operating Costs and Other Income

Costs	2024/25 £000	2023/24 £000
Direct Costs	277	136
Accommodation	75	72
Audit Fee	27	29
Recharges for Sport Wales Services	415	308
	794	545

Income	2024/25 £000	2023/24 £000
UK Sport Grant	239	239
	239	239

9. Property, plant and equipment

Description	Equipment £000	Total £000
Cost or Valuation at 1 April 2024	342	342
Additions	31	31
Disposals	(2)	(2)
At 31 March 2025	371	371
Depreciation at 1 April 2024	(310)	(310)
Charge for the year	(9)	(9)
Disposals	2	2
At 31 March 2025	(317)	(317)
Net Book Value at 31 March 2025	54	54
Net Book Value at 31 March 2024	32	32
Cost or Valuation at 1 April 2023	343	343
Additions	-	-
Disposals	(1)	(1)
At 31 March 2024	342	342
Depreciation at 1 April 2023	(292)	(292)
Charge for the year	(19)	(19)
Disposals	1	1
At 31 March 2024	(310)	(310)
Net Book Value at 31 March 2024	32	32
Net Book Value at 31 March 2023	51	51

Description	2024/25 £000	2024/25 £000	2023/24 £000	2023/24 £000
Proceeds from sale		-		-
Gross book value	2		1	
Accumulated depreciation	(2)		(1)	
Net book value		-		-
Loss on disposal		-		-

10. Trade receivables and other current assets

	31 March 2025 £000	31 March 2024 £000
Due within 1 Year		
Other receivables	-	29
Due within more than 1 Year		
Other receivables and prepayments	-	-
	-	29

11. Trade receivables and other current assets

	Balances held in NLDF £000
Balance at 1 April 2023	14,586
Income from the National Lottery	15,644
Drawn down in year by Sport Wales	(20,000)
Investment Returns	756
Expenditure in year	(134)
Balance as at 31 March 2024	10,852
Income from the National Lottery	16,402
Drawn down in year by Sport Wales	(20,850)
Investment Returns	776
Expenditure in year	(263)
Balance as at 31 March 2025	6,917

The above balances agree to the National Lottery Distribution Fund (NLDF) statement issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

12. Trade payables and other current liabilities

	31 March 2025 £000	31 March 2024 £000
Sport Wales	3,945	3,418
Accruals	29	31
	3,974	3,449

13. Analysis of changes in cash and cash equivalents

	2024/25 £000	2023/24 £000
As at 1 April	160	487
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	930	(327)
As at 31 March	1,090	160

All cash is held in commercial bank accounts.

14. Contingent liabilities

In addition to the contingent grant liabilities disclosed in Note 4, there were the following contingent liabilities at 31 March 2024 and as at 31 March 2025.

Section 37 legal case

In June 2023 the High Court found in the Virgin Media case that changes to member benefits in contracted out defined benefit pension schemes between 1996 and 2016 required an actuarial certificate in line with section 37 of the Pension Schemes Act 1993 and that changes without this certification are to be considered void. This requirement applies to past service rights and future service rights, and to changes to the detriment or benefit of scheme members. The judgement was appealed in June 2024 but the appeal was dismissed.

Where there are changes to member benefits that might fall into the scope of the judgement, the actuarial certificates are being sought.

Central government have indicated their intention to legislate to retrospectively cover any potential impacted changes, and hence there is no impact on future IAS19 liabilities.

15. Contingent assets

The National Lottery Distributors are entitled to receive a share of receipts from the sale of land on Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in return for their contribution of an additional £675m to the funding of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The arrangements are set out in a legal agreement between the Secretary of State and the Greater London Authority (GLA) dated 29 March 2012 which sets out the distribution of funds between the GLA and the Lottery Distributors (via the core department). We expect that the GLA will communicate directly with the Lottery Distributing Bodies on forecast of land receipts due to the National Lottery and the timing on when such payments will be made.

16. Financial instruments

International Financial Reporting Standard 7: Financial Instruments, requires disclosure of the role which financial instruments have had during the period in creating or changing the risks Sport Wales's Lottery function faces in undertaking its role.

Liquidity risks

In 2024/25, £16,402,000 or 94.1% of income is derived from the National Lottery (2023/24 £15,644,000 or 94.0%). Of the remaining income, £776,000 or 4.5%, is derived from investment returns from the balance held with the National Lottery Distribution Fund, (2023/24 £756,000 or 4.5%), and £244,000 or 1.4% from sundry income (2023/24 £240,000 or 1.5%). Sport Wales does not consider that its Lottery fund is exposed to any significant liquidity risk, and are satisfied that the balance within the NLDF and projected future Lottery proceeds are sufficient to meet its commitments.

Interest rate risks

The financial assets of the Lottery are invested in the National Lottery Distribution Fund, which invests in a narrow band of low risk assets such as government bonds and cash. Sport Wales has no control over the investment of Funds in the National Lottery Distribution Fund. Cash balances which are drawn down from the Fund to pay grant commitments and operating costs are held in an instant access variable rate bank account which on average carried an interest rate of 0.50% (2023/24 0.50%) in the year.

The cash balance at the year-end was £1,090,000 (2023/24 £160,000). Sport Wales considers that its Lottery function is not exposed to significant interest rate risks.

Foreign currency risk

The Lottery Distribution function of Sport Wales is not exposed to any foreign exchange risks.

17. Related party transactions

Public bodies

The Lottery Distribution operations of Sport Wales are funded from the National Lottery Fund through the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The Department is regarded as a related party.

Individuals

Lottery Distribution paid grants during the year to a number of organisations in which members, senior staff, and other related parties (being close family members), declared an interest and which are considered material are shown below. Any declaration of interest for items discussed in meetings must be declared by the individual, who will withdraw for that section of the meeting.

Member's Panel	Body	Grant Payment in Year £000	Nature of link	Commitments not yet met £000
Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson DBE, DL Chair	Youth Sport Trust	76	Patron	-
	University of Swansea	88	Fellowship	-
L Robinson Council Member	Central South Activity Partnership	70	Chair	-
P Tilley Council Member	Welsh Triathlon Association	202	Member	-
	Welsh Cycling Union	616	Member	-
	Canoe Wales	240	Member	-
M Veale JP Council Member	Pembrokeshire County Council	31	Lay member of Governance & Audit Committee	-
	Monmouthshire County Council	9	Lay member of Governance & Audit Committee	-
	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	11	Lay member of Governance & Audit Committee	-
	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	78	Chair of Governance & Audit Committee & Member of Standards Committee	-
	Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC	75	Lay member of Education & Inclusion Committee	-

Member's Panel	Body	Grant Payment in Year £000	Nature of link	Commitments not yet met £000
R Begum Council Member	Wales Council for Voluntary Action	101	Employee	-
D Evans Council Member	Urdd	373	Trustee	-
N Mead-Batten Council Member	Welsh Rugby Union	175	Ad-hoc Chair of Fit and Proper Person Panel for Community Members	-
C Jenkins OBE Council Member	University of South Wales	20	Employee	-
	Commonwealth Games Council for Wales	213	CEO and Trustee	-
B Davies OBE CEO	Welsh Gymnastics	583	Spouse Coach	-
	Welsh Hockey Union	214	Daughter member of Wales U18's hockey team	-

Remuneration of senior managers and board members:

Senior Managers and Board Members are considered to be the Directors and their remuneration is disclosed within the Remuneration and Staff Reports on pages 134 to 141.

18. Pensions

The following pension disclosures have been prepared in accordance with IAS19 'Employee benefits'.

Pension data contained within this disclosure have been provided by the Scheme's independent actuary, AON Hewitt. The IAS19 valuation provided by the actuary is for Sport Wales as a whole; no separate valuations have been obtained for the Sport Council for Wales Consolidated financial statements and the Lottery Distribution financial statements, and hence the data below is disclosed as gross.

The pension fund asset/deficit along with the associated entries which impact the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Changes in Taxpayers Equity have been apportioned between the Sports Council for Wales Consolidated financial statements and the Lottery Distribution financial statements in a ratio based on the historic apportionment of staff costs to the Lottery Distribution account. For 2024/25 this is Sports Council for Wales 72% (2023/24 73%), and Lottery Distribution Accounts 28% (2023/24 27%).

Sport Wales made a total pension contribution in 2024/25 of £790,000 (2023/24 £1,400,000) which is analysed as follows:

- Employers pension contributions £790,000 representing 33.4% of pensionable pay (2023/24 £1,385,000 33.4%). Employer contributions were only made during the period 1 April 2024 to 31 October 2024. Following an actuarial review, Sport Wales is now recognised as a Scheduled and Subsumed Body within the Cardiff and Vale Local Government Pension Scheme. At the date of the review, the actuaries identified that the surplus position on the Sport Wales fund exceeded the target for Scheduled and Subsumption bodies. This meant that a new contribution rate of 0% was required until the next triennial valuation.
- There were nil contributions in respect of early retirement cost during 2024/25 (2023/24 £15,000).

The rate of employer's pension contributions from 2023/24 is 33.4%.

This has been set as a result of the last triennial valuation of the scheme which was carried out as at 31 March 2022.

The actuary's report has been prepared in accordance with Guidance Note GN9 issued by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries, current at the valuation date, to the extent that it applies to the Local Government Pension Scheme. Sport Wales expects to contribute nil to the fund in 2025/26 due to the change in the recognised status within the pension fund. In addition to this "strain on fund" contributions may be required as well.

The full pension cost to Sports Council for Wales is (£20,000) (2023/24 £50,000) of which (£14,000) (2023/24 £37,000) is allocated to the consolidated accounts, with the remainder of (£6,000) (2023/24 £13,000) allocated to Lottery Distribution.

The full actuarial loss on pension to Sports Council for Wales is £100,000 (2023/24 gain of £910,000) of which £72,000 (2023/24 gain of £664,000) is allocated to the consolidated accounts, with the remainder of £28,000 (2023/24 gain of £246,000) allocated to Lottery Distribution.

Applying the provisions of IFRIC14, the pension asset to Sports Council for Wales is not able to be recognized so is Nil (2023/24 Nil), of which Nil (2023/24 Nil) is allocated to the consolidated accounts, with the balance of Nil (2023/24 Nil) allocated to Lottery Distribution. The Lottery Distribution pension asset is adjusted by £450,000 to accommodate the net impact of historic changes in apportionment of staff costs to the Lottery Distribution account with the offset £450,000 allocated to the pension deficit in the Sports Council for Wales consolidated accounts.

Main financial assumptions

Description	31 March 2025 %	31 March 2024 %	31 March 2023 %
Discount Rate	5.8	4.8	4.7
Inflation - CPI	2.5	2.6	2.7
Rate of increase to pensions in payment	2.5	2.6	2.7
Rate of increase to deferred pensions	2.5	2.6	2.7
Rate of general increase in salaries	3.5	3.6	3.7

Mortality Assumptions:	31 March 2025 Years	31 March 2024 Years	31 March 2023 Years
Future lifetime from age 65 (aged 65 at accounting date)			
Male	21.9	22.1	22.6
Female	24.2	24.3	24.7
Future lifetime from age 65 (aged 45 at accounting date)			
Male	22.2	22.7	23.2
Female	25.0	25.3	25.8

Sport Wales employs a building block approach in determining the rate of return on Fund assets. Historical markets are studied and assets with higher volatility are assumed to generate higher returns consistent with widely accepted capital market principles. The overall expected rate of return on assets is derived by aggregating the expected rate of return for each asset class over the actual allocation for the Fund at 31 March 2025.

Analysis of movements in surplus (deficit) during the year

Description	31 March 2025 £m	31 March 2024 £m
Fair value of fund assets	66.25	64.31
Present value of liabilities	(39.37)	(45.77)
Unrecognised asset due to restriction of surpluses	(26.88)	(18.54)
Additional liability under minimum funding requirements due to commitment to pay deficit contributions	0.00	0.00
Asset / (Deficit) in scheme at end of year	0.00	0.00

Analysis of amount charged to operating costs

Description	31 March 2025 £m	31 March 2024 £m
Current service cost	0.71	0.77
Past service cost	0.00	0.02
Settlement cost	0.00	0.00
Interest cost	(0.02)	0.05
Expense recognised	0.69	0.84

Remeasurement of amounts recognised in other comprehensive expenditure

Description	31 March 2025 £m	31 March 2024 £m
Return on plan assets (in excess of) / below that recognised in net interest	1.05	(4.09)
Actuarial (gains) due to change in financial assumptions	(8.14)	(1.69)
Actuarial (gains) due to change in demographic assumptions	(0.34)	(0.69)
Actuarial losses due to liability experience	0.08	0.50
Adjustment loss (gain) due to the restriction of surplus	7.45	6.60
Adjustment loss (gain) due to minimum funding requirement	0.00	(1.54)
Total amount recognised in Other Comprehensive Expenditure	0.10	(0.91)
Total amount recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure	0.79	(0.07)

Changes to the present value of defined benefit obligation during the accounting period

Description	31 March 2025 £m	31 March 2024 £m
Opening defined benefit obligation	45.77	46.14
Current service cost	0.71	0.77
Interest expense on defined pension obligation	2.18	2.14
Contributions by participants	0.30	0.29
Actuarial (gains) on liabilities – financial assumptions	(8.14)	(1.69)
Actuarial (gains) on liabilities – demographic assumptions	(0.34)	(0.69)
Actuarial losses on liabilities - experience	0.08	0.50
Net benefits paid out	(1.19)	(1.71)
Past service cost (including curtailments)	0.00	0.02
Settlements	0.00	0.00
Closing defined benefit obligation	39.37	45.77

Changes to the fair value of assets during the year

Description	31 March 2025 £m	31 March 2024 £m
Opening fair value of assets	64.31	57.54
Interest income on assets	3.09	2.70
Remeasurement (loss) / gain on assets	(1.05)	4.09
Contributions by the employer	0.79	1.40
Contributions by participants	0.30	0.29
Net benefits paid out	(1.19)	(1.71)
Settlements	0.00	0.00
Closing fair value of assets	66.25	64.31

Actual return on assets

Description	31 March 2025 £m	31 March 2024 £m
Expected return on assets	3.09	2.70
Actuarial gain / (loss) on assets	(1.05)	4.09
Actual return on assets	2.04	6.79

History of asset values, present value of defined benefit obligation and deficit

Description	31 March 2025 £m	31 March 2024 £m	31 March 2023 £m	31 March 2022 £m	31 March 2021 £m	31 March 2020 £m
Fair value of assets	66.25	64.31	57.54	61.70	54.14	44.37
Present value of defined benefit obligation	(39.37)	(45.77)	(46.14)	(71.32)	(74.63)	(58.40)
Unrecognised asset due to restriction of surplus	(26.88)	(18.54)	(11.40)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Additional liability under minimum funding requirements due to commitment to pay deficit contributions	0.00	0.00	(1.47)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Surplus / (Deficit)	0.00	0.00	(1.47)	(9.62)	(20.49)	(14.03)

Sensitivity analysis

Funded Defined Benefit Obligation £39.37m	+0.1% p.a		-0.1% p.a	
Change in Assumptions on Present value of the funded defined benefit obligations	£m	% Increase / Decrease to Employee Liability	£m	
Adjustment to Discount rate	38.74	-1.6%	1.7%	40.04
Adjustment to Salary Increase rate	39.41	0.1%	-0.1%	39.33
Adjustment to Pension Increase rate	40.00	1.6%	-1.5%	38.78
	-1 year		+1 year	
Adjustment to Mortality rate	40.28	2.3%	-2.3%	38.46

19. Events after the reporting period

The accounts were authorised for issue by the Accounting Officer on the date they were certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General.



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ISBN: 978-1-915287-65-6