

A photograph of a netball match in progress. A player in a dark blue jersey with 'WD' and 'AKUMA' on the front is holding a netball high above her head with both hands. To her left, a player in a pink and black jersey is jumping with her right arm raised. In the background, other players and spectators are visible on a wooden court. The text 'ANNUAL REPORT' is overlaid in large white letters on the left side of the image.

ANNUAL REPORT

2022/23



WALES NETBALL
PÊL-RWYD CYMRU



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CHAIR FOREWORD

Following a strong season of building back, Netball in Wales has hit the ground running and is moving from strength to strength.

This season has seen our regional leagues confidently return to the courts, with new leagues emerging across Wales and others expanding their divisions. Our Welsh Feathers took to the world stage with strong and fierce performances at the Commonwealth Games and achieving qualification for the Netball World Cup. Our operational team has grown, introducing two new roles to support our growth in both participation and commercial ventures. We have witnessed a full season of our new format of the Welsh Performance Pathway, nurturing our talented, future athletes across Wales, and made strides to build upon and maintain good governance both internally and across the community.

It's always an exciting time for netball in Wales, and witnessing the quantity and quality of netball produced this season has been so refreshing following the last few years. It's wonderful to have netball back and to be a part of the most popular female team sport in Wales. Everyone plays a role in this incredible sport, pushing it to reach its true potential across the country. We also now have two full blown international umpires and it's amazing seeing them travel the world officiating the sport at the highest level.

Our CEO, Vicki Sutton, made an impact from day one, realigning the strategic goals of the organisation. Thank you to the Wales Netball Board and Panels who continue to work conscientiously to push netball in Wales to new heights.

We look forward to cheering on our Welsh Feathers after securing their place at the 2023 World Cup in South Africa this July. Here's to a summer of netball!

Catherine Lewis,
Chair Wales Netball

WALES NETBALL BOARD 2022/23

Chair

Catherine Lewis

Vice-Chair

Cath Hares

President

Sheila Cooksley

Vice-President

Jean Foster

Compliance and Engagement Director

Carol Anthony

Participation Director

Mel Hellerman

Performance Director

Julia Longville

Commercial Director

Kerry McDonald

Legal Director

Andrew Brenton

Policy & Governance Director

Rhian Edwards

Communications & Marketing Director

Simon Jones

Finance Director

Mike Bobbett

BIGGER BETTER BOLDER



CEO SUMMARY

Well... what a great year it has been. We've had lovely weather, events have been hosted around Wales, and whilst there are still scars from the pandemic etched into our hearts by those we lost, it does seem like lockdowns are fast becoming distant memories.

Netball has exceeded pre-covid levels, we have more clubs, more events, more pathway sessions, more partnerships, more fans, and more merchandise! And from what we can see, you are enjoying it all!

I am now just over 18 months into my time as CEO of Wales Netball and it has been such a joy to see the growth we have achieved across the netball landscape here in Wales. One of my most important duties here is to ensure that the profile of netball is constantly being propelled to new heights and that our sport is reaching those that aren't traditional netball fans. We are making good headway through targeted pitching and networking, but we still have a long way to go to match our counterparts in Football, Rugby, and Cricket.

Last year I mentioned three important words in my opening remarks. **Bigger**, **Better** and **Bolder**. 12 months on and we have even more clarity that those three words are the right ones to continue to drive us forward into this new era of netball in Wales. That is why we have used them as key pillars for our 2030 strategy. Let me explain...

BIGGER

We want more people playing netball in Wales than ever before, across a range of formats and in as many different settings as possible.

This means more affiliated members, more affiliated organisations, more national competitions, and more facilities. Our 2030 strategy will strive to make all this a reality.

BETTER

We are constantly striving to improve our position in the World Netball rankings. As I write this, we are 9th. The highest we have been in recent years was 7th.

Qualification for the 2023 World Cup in Cape Town this summer is a huge step in the right direction, and we have made wholesale changes to the Wales pathway to ensure we are a regular on the world stage.

BOLDER

We want to be more than just a sport. We have a strong female - first ethos and we intend to use that to help Wales as a nation grow.

Sustainability, financial independence, wellbeing, and innovation are all strong features in this part of the strategy.



Whilst **Bigger, Better** and **Bolder** are three key pillars, throughout the work of all departments here at Wales Netball, those three words come up often and dictate our daily interactions. Keep an eye out for more detail on our exciting 2030 strategy over the next 12 months.

A strategy is only as strong as those tasked with delivering it, and I am again grateful to our Board of Directors led by our Chair, Catherine Lewis, for their support and positive challenge over the last 12 months. As we have stood taller and been more ambitious, they have always been right behind us.

The day-to-day implementation of **Bigger, Better** and **Bolder** is already well underway thanks to our brilliant staff team.

Joining me in the Senior Leadership Team are Laura Milford (Head of Operations), Sara Moore (Head of Performance) and Keira Edwards (our new Head of Participation). The four of us are laser focussed on delivering the strategy and making Wales Netball an even stronger organisation.

A special mention to Sarah Palmer who celebrated her 10-year work anniversary with us this year. Sarah has been a great

asset to the team over the last decade, and has witnessed much change, yet always been flexible enough to be a valued asset to the team.

To finish off the year, we have the last two events of National League – a brilliant new competition that has taken the world of club netball by storm. We also have our final few rearranged National Competitions following the unexpected snow in February. And finally, a World Cup warm up game in Cardiff; where the Welsh Feathers face the Scottish Thistles before we head off to Cape Town for our 13th World Cup appearance.

Thank you to all our partners for their ongoing support. To all our members, we will strive to keep serving you to the best of our ability over the next 12 months. And finally, to those of you reading this that maybe aren't involved in netball... what are you waiting for?

Vicki Sutton, Wales Netball
Chief Executive Officer



PARTICIPATION

In September, the community netball season got off to a strong start, with clubs and leagues across Wales pulling their netball trainers back on! In total, 12 clubs were successful throughout the year in being granted Be Active Wales funding – enabling them to develop and diversify netball delivery in their local area.

We continued to support our community clubs and leagues from far and wide by running online information and support forums throughout the year, which saw great attendance and engagement – allowing us to directly connect with our community volunteers. The forums were reviewed in April, and valuable insight was collected from club and league leadership, ready for a refresh ahead of the 2023/24 season.

The new year saw a long-running project come into fruition – with a successful ‘Seated Netball’ pilot session delivered, in partnership with Age Cymru and Linc

Cymru. Seated Netball aims to be fun and inclusive, for all ages and abilities – and crucially, is played sitting down!

In February, our ‘Netball Tots’ resources were relaunched and made available on the Wales Netball online shop. This allowed our members with the requisite training to independently deliver Netball Tots sessions within their own communities, expanding the reach of the programme.

It was ‘all-change’ in March and April, with the ‘Growth’ department transitioning to the ‘Participation’ department, to align with the 2030 strategy and bring further clarity to the structure of the Wales Netball operating model.

This period of change also saw us say goodbye to Anneka O’Connor, and hello to Keira Edwards, our newly appointed Head of Participation. Keira, having recently completed

a MSc Sport Management, Politics & International Development from Loughborough University, a globally renowned sporting institution, brings with her a decade of corporate management experience, and is heavily involved in community netball leadership in Bristol. From day one, Keira was keen to connect with the netball community, filming a welcome message for our invaluable volunteers.

May saw our new Head of Participation connecting with the community, staff, and board members alike, to truly understand our 2030 strategy, and how Participation can become ‘Bigger’ than before. Focus areas and priority work programmes for 2023/24 were identified that align with our strategic intent.

Finally, in June an ‘Activities Pack for Welsh Schools’ was created and distributed to all schools across Wales, to celebrate the Welsh Feathers attendance at the upcoming Netball World Cup and inspire netball participation! Along with engaging educational activities, schools received bilingual Welsh/English ‘Player Cards’ and a ‘Fixture Tracker’ poster so they can support the Feathers from afar!



THE WELSH FEATHERS

VITALITY NETBALL WORLD CUP 2023 FIXTURE TRACKER

When Wales are playing	Who Wales are playing	What will the score be?	Final Score	Your Player of the Match
Friday 28th July @ Sam (Sam South Africa)	South Africa			
Saturday 29th July @ Sam (Sam South Africa)	Jamaica			
Sunday 30th July @ Sam (Sam South Africa)	Sri Lanka			
Monday 31st July	Preliminary pool C			
Wednesday 2nd August				
Thursday 3rd August				
Playoff match				
Final Placing match				



2022			2023			
Sept	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
Season gets off to a strong start, with clubs and leagues across Wales putting their netball trainers back on!	Seated Netball pilot session delivered in partnership with Age Cymru and Linc Cymru	Netball Tots relaunched and made available on the Wales Netball Online Shop	Growth Department transitioned to Participation Department to align with the 2030 strategy	Keira Edwards appointed new Head of Participation	Head of Participation connects with the community, staff, and board members	Wales Netball and eCoach launch new online training platform

Activities Pack for Welsh Schools was created and distributed to all school across Wales to celebrate the Welsh Feathers attendance at the upcoming Netball World Cup and inspire participation!



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Workforce Development has continued to go from strength to strength this year, with the number of coaches and umpires successfully taking assessments increasing from last season across the board – and new C Award Umpires rising from 16 in 2021/22, to a mammoth 137 in 2022/23.

This year, our Netball Leaders and Intro to Umpiring virtual learning have been popular options for Schools, Local Authorities, Colleges, and Universities, enabling closed courses and additional learning opportunities for umpires and leaders, to aid the running of their own netball events.

Adding to our virtual portfolio, we launched our new online learning platform in June 2023, in partnership with eCoach. The platform currently hosts two netball specific 'starter' courses – 'Essential Netball Skills' and 'Essential Netball Rules', a 'First Aid Awareness' course and a 'Period Dignity in Sport' course – all of which members of Wales Netball can access for a discounted price!

Whilst continuing to make the most of the flexibility that online and virtual delivery gives us, we have also held many in-person courses across the length and breadth of Wales: Bangor, Bridgend, Cardiff, Caerphilly, Cwmbran, Wrexham, St Asaph, Swansea, Llanelli, and Pembrokeshire! In November, combining the delivery methods – we launched a new B Award Umpire course format which offers a blended learning approach to delivery.

To ensure we can continue to sustainably grow our pool of umpires across Wales, we've been working with Europe Netball on an umpire

development plan and have hosted several Umpire Assessor courses. These courses have already resulted in 10 newly qualified Umpire Assessors, with more to come!

Finally, this year we've seen an increase in high-level match play across Wales – from the launch of National League to hosting Europe Netball's Open Challenge in Cardiff. Both these events have enabled our Umpires to experience high quality games, provided us with mentoring and assessing opportunities, and we've been able to train up some new Technical Officials too.



COACHING AWARDS		COACHING COURSES	
New Level 1 & Level 2 Coaches	91	Netball Leaders Attendees	232
UMPIRING AWARDS		UMPIRING COURSES	
New C Award Umpires	137	Intro to Umpire Attendees	240
New A & B Award Umpires	2	C Award Umpire Course Attendees	37
New Umpire Assessors	10	B Award Umpire Course Attendees	30

EVENTS AND COMPETITIONS



Planning for another exciting year of events and competitions across grassroots netball in Wales began in June 2022, with another edition of the Events & Competitions Steering Group. The group, which is formed from community representatives, and Wales Netball staff, collaborated on date setting and felt strongly that the events should be dispersed across Wales – resulting in the release of the National Competitions Calendar and events being held across the country.

This year, we took advantage of technology, and moved all our events and competition entries onto the already existing Sport:80 membership system. This move has supported easier team management, smoother competition

entry and means our members are making the most of their profiles!

In October and November, we piloted a new model of regional round competition organisation, by employing seven 'Regional Competition Organisers' (RCOs) to support with the regional rounds of our national competition, and create a point-of-contact within the community.

March brought with it an unusual cold spell, which left us no choice but to postpone the U16 and U19 National Club Competitions, due to concerns over the safety of travelling teams. Fortunately, despite a packed netball calendar, we've been able to rearrange them and both competitions were successfully hosted in July.

INTER COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

	A	B
U14		
Winners	South East	North East
Runners Up	Cardiff & Vale	Cardiff & Vale
Player of the tournament	Lacey Williams (North West)	Nellie Spender (North East)
U16		
Winners	Glamorgan Valleys	North East
Runners Up	Cardiff & Vale	Glamorgan Valleys
Player of the tournament	Ruby Ellis (North East)	Ella Baynham (Glamorgan Valleys)
U18		
Winners	North East	North East
Runners Up	West Wales	West Wales
Player of the tournament	Georgina Lillicrap (Afan Nedd Tawe)	Hannah Davies & Imogen Wall (West Wales)

ANN SMART TROPHY & PRESIDENT CUP

	ANN SMART TROPHY	PRESIDENT CUP
Winners	Ysgol Y Strade	Coleg Cambria
Runner Up	Bishopston Comprehensive School	Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni
Player of the Tournament	Ffion Tovey (Ysgol Y Strade)	Annie Taylor (Monmouth School for Girls)

NATIONAL CLUBS CHAMPIONSHIP

	CUP	PLATE
U12		
Winners	Deeside	Wizards
Runners Up	Mold	Tillery Dragons
Player of the tournament	Hefina Lewis (Gilfach)	Daisy Cooper (Fishguard Kites)
U14		
Winners	Eastside	Cwmbran Youth
Runners Up	RCT Rockets	Rhosnesni
Player of the tournament	Isabelle Caesar (CTK)	Bryony Jones (Rhosnesni)
U16		
Winners	Penarth Allstars	CTK
Runners Up	Gilfach	Wallis
Player of the tournament	Mannon Howells (Merlins)	Ellie Gosset (Wallis)
U19		
Winners	Treforus	
Runners Up	Cardiff Met	
Player of the tournament	Bella Jones (Treforus)	

In May, the culmination of years of hard work came into fruition with the first of three game days of our newly launched 'National League' taking place in Bangor.

The National League was created to offer the community a competitive platform for adults to play, and so far, it hasn't disappointed with some thrilling netball played between the six squads: West Wales Phoenix, Valley Volcanoes, North West Fury, North East Inferno, City Flames, and South East Blaze. Our headline sponsor, Tantrwm Media,

have also enabled us to stream each game day to the masses, ensuring the community can cheer on their teams from afar.

Finally, we'd like to thank everyone in the community who make these events happen – players, parents, teachers, coaches, managers, volunteers, officials, umpires, and staff. You are all integral parts of the brilliant game days and enable us to continue to create participation opportunities for women and girls across Wales. Thank you!

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

BIGGER, BETTER, BOLDER has been the mantra for Performance in 2022/23, as we aimed to raise performance standards and remove barriers to success. Reviewing our progress, our performances and our processes have been key to this. This season has been hugely successful in many ways, and most importantly it has been a year where we have challenged the status quo both on and off the netball court. Some of our achievements this season are highlighted below:



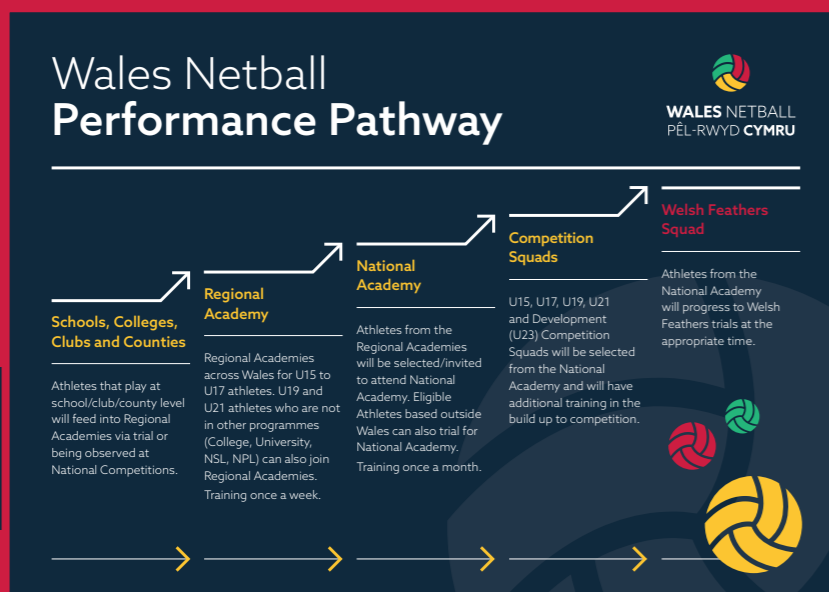
2022				2023							
July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May			
Hosted a Test Series event against South Africa	Wales achieve an 8th place finish at the Commonwealth Games	The 'Welsh Feathers' are unveiled	House of Sport is unveiled as the new home of the Welsh Feathers & hosted a Test Series against Uganda	The Welsh Feathers are undefeated at the World Cup qualifier and qualify for the Netball World Cup 2023	Wales Netball Performance Team grows with the addition of a Performance Operations Lead for Wales	Wales U17 claim Bronze at the U17 Europe Netball Championship	Strategic working between Wales, Europe Netball & the other Home Nations in relation to world rankings and age grade competitions	Our newly formed Wales Development Squad begin training	Wales Development Squad compete in the Europe Netball Challenge	National Academy grows with the planned inclusion of U15/17/19/21 & Development Squads for the 2023/24 season	Performance Team grows with the inclusion of a full time Performance Pathway Officer

At the start of the year, it became clear that if we were to achieve our strategic objectives as a Performance Team and as an organisation, that we needed to align all our day-to-day performance processes and activity to these objectives. We wanted to challenge ourselves to be **BIGGER, BETTER & BOLDER**, and with that in mind we began the year with an audit of our core performance processes,

and our Performance Pathway offering. This allowed us to identify areas of strength, any gaps, and any areas for improvement. This process allowed us to re-evaluate our offering, and re-focused our attentions on continuing to maintain high standards in everything we do, whilst aiming to work more efficiently, and effectively on the things that would allow us to achieve our strategic aims.



The Performance Team, led by Sara Moore, grew in size in 2023, with several new roles introduced. This ensured that we had a workforce that could support the continued growth in performance netball across Wales, as well as developing a workforce that could deliver on our strategic aims.



The new look performance team is responsible for managing and providing performance netball for approximately 315 high performance athletes, 26 high performance coaches and 20+ volunteers & support staff across our Performance Pathway. These numbers are set to grow further in 2023/24 with the expansion of our Regional and National Academies.

Sara Moore and her team have instilled systemic change in working practices, as well as developing a framework for long-term success across all of Wales Netball's high-performance teams and programmes. Allowing us to really see the development of an oversupply of talent in terms of athletes, coaches, and support staff come to fruition in just a short period of time. The creation of more training and competition opportunities in 2022/23 has been fundamental to

this, helping us to continue to build a solid and sustainable foundation for our performances at international level.

We are delivering high performance netball for a **BIGGER** pool of athletes, coaches, and support staff than ever before. Our performance squads are playing netball in a **BIGGER AND BETTER** arena at House of Sport, and we are being **BOLDER** than we have ever been in terms of our working processes, ambitions and our strategic decision making when it comes to performance. However, we are not where we need to be just yet, and the next stage of our journey as we look to success at the Commonwealth Games in 2026 and Netball World Cup in 2027, will be to focus on the parts of our Performance Strategy that will really stretch and challenge us - as this is where the biggest growth will be seen.



The current sporting landscape means that netball will have to navigate several challenges over the coming years, including:

- The professionalisation of other female sports making them more attractive than netball.
- Lack of financial support for female sport.
- Underrepresentation of female sport in the media.

In order to tackle the above we need to continue to work collaboratively with our partners, and allies at World, European and National level. We need to continue to lobby government and funding providers to ensure that Netball continues to be recognised as the number one sport for women and girls in the UK. Our ambition as an organisation is to move to a more professional environment for our top athletes, coaches, and support staff

so that we can continue to remove the barriers to performance, both financially and otherwise. This is key to allowing us to continue to attract the best and brightest talent to our sport. This is not to say that our volunteer athletes, coaches, and support staff are not delivering on the world stage - they are.

However, this does beg the question as to how much better we could be if we were able to invest more time and resource into supporting high-performance netball in Wales? This challenge is not insurmountable, and it is one we are committed to overcoming as a National Governing Body.

We continue to be hugely grateful for the efforts of our high-performance athletes, coaches, and support staff. We have asked for more on and off the court this year and you have delivered, at times exceeding expectations, and for this we thank you!

WELSH FEATHERS



The Welsh Feathers have had a stellar year, with many highlights including:

Wales v South Africa Test Series Results

Test 1 Wales 44 – South Africa 61

Test 2 Wales 47 – South Africa 57

Wales v Uganda Test Series Results

Test 1 Wales 47 – 56 Uganda

Test 2 Wales 46 – 64 Uganda

Commonwealth Games Results

Wales 43 – 72 Jamaica

Wales 48 – 42 Scotland

Wales 33 – 79 Australia

Wales 53 – 69 South Africa

Wales 60 – 44 Barbados

Wales 56 – 62 Malawi

World Cup Qualifiers Results

Wales 78 – 22 Isle of Man

Wales 95 – 19 Gibraltar

Wales 75 – 23 Republic of Ireland

Wales 60 – 34 Northern Ireland

Wales 58 – 51 Scotland

The Netball Super League (NSL) competition remains integral to our performance at international level, and this season saw 15 of our Welsh Feathers Squad training and playing at the highest level in the UK in either NSL or NPL competitions. A further six athletes secured Training Associate positions with NSL Franchises, which is an increase from last season. This is fantastic for Wales as representation of Welsh athletes in both the NSL and NPL remains essential to our success moving forwards.

NSL Athletes 2022/23

Clare Jones	<i>Celtic Dragons</i>
Shona O'Dwyer	<i>Celtic Dragons</i>
Zoe Matthewman	<i>Celtic Dragons</i>
Phillipa Yarranton	<i>Celtic Dragons</i>
Celyn Emanuel	<i>Celtic Dragons</i>
Millie Carter	<i>Celtic Dragons</i>
Ella Powell-Davies	<i>Celtic Dragons</i>
Georgia Rowe	<i>Celtic Dragons</i>
Ally Housley	<i>Celtic Dragons</i>
Nia Jones	<i>Leeds Rhinos</i>
Christina Shaw	<i>Saracens Mavericks</i>
Bethan Dyke	<i>Team Bath</i>
Abi Caple	<i>Severn Stars</i>
Sarie Watkins	<i>Team Bath NPL</i>
Meg Evans	<i>Manchester Thunder NPL</i>



Several athletes secured Training Associate positions at NSL Franchises this season, including:

Beth Johnson	<i>Celtic Dragons</i>
Lucy Howells	<i>Celtic Dragons</i>
Nansi Kuti	<i>Celtic Dragons</i>
Caris Morgan	<i>Celtic Dragons</i>
Meg Pilkington	<i>Leeds Rhinos</i>
Ellen Morgan	<i>Team Bath</i>

Wales finished 8th overall at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, in August 2022. An improvement of three places from the 2018 Games in Sydney where we finished 11th. The Welsh Feathers then returned to training in the Autumn of 2022, as they prepared for the World Cup Qualifiers (WCQs) in Glasgow in October.

There were some new faces in the Squad for the WCQs, after several athletes stepped down from international netball following the Commonwealth Games. This reinvigorated the squad, as did the arrival of Assistant Coach Emily Handyside, who worked alongside Head Coach Sara Moore for the competition. The Welsh Feathers qualified in impressive fashion, winning all five matches (results on previous page). After the Welsh Feathers failed to qualify for the World Cup in 2019, the elation at securing qualification was evident for all involved. This also marked the

end of Sara Moore's tenure as Head Coach. Moore first worked with the Feathers in 2018, as an Assistant Coach after returning to Wales following two seasons as an Assistant Coach for the England Roses. She then stepped into the Head Coach role in November 2019, following the departure of Julie Hoornweg. Moore, Welsh Feather #160 and Captain herself, set the standards high for the Feathers, focusing on developing a high-performance culture and clear on court structures, which produced excellent results against some of the best in the world during her tenure. Moore moved into the role of Head of Performance in January 2023, and was replaced as Head Coach by her former Assistant, Handyside. Handyside will lead the Feathers at her first World Cup in the summer.

Wales are currently ranked 9th in the world as of January 2023, and we will face South Africa, Jamaica, and Sri Lanka in the pool stages of the Netball World Cup.

Day 1	28/07
South Africa vs Wales – 5pm (BST)	
Day 2	29/07
Jamaica vs Wales – 10am (BST)	
Day 3	30/07
Wales vs Sri Lanka – 8am (BST)	
Day 7	31/07-3/08
Preliminaries Stage	
Day 8, 9 & 10	4/08-6/08
Playoffs and Placings	

PERFORMANCE PATHWAY

We have seen growth in our Performance Pathway this season, and since its launch in 2022 we have moved from having just an U17 and U21 National Academy age group, to now having U15, U17, U19, U21 & Development Squads. Alongside this, our Regional Academies have grown from 7 to 8 Regions across Wales.

NATIONAL ACADEMY

Our National Academy is now home to our U15, U17, U19, U21 and Development Squads, out of which we select our Wales age group sides for international competition. The National Academy is home to Wales' most talented age grade athletes, those who are the next generation of Welsh Feathers. The National Academy continues to develop talented young athletes on and off the court, that can transition into the Welsh Feathers Squad.

The focus this year has been to provide our squads with regular and meaningful competition. This allows our age group athletes to experience pressure at regular intervals, which is key to their success.

We are working closely with Europe Netball and our Home Nations counterparts to ensure that this is achievable long term.

2022/23 saw the first of our age group squads return to international competition following a hiatus due to Covid, as our U17s competed in Europe Netball in Belfast in February 2022:

Wales U17, 44 - 49, Scotland U17

Wales U17, 66 - 31, Northern Ireland U17

Wales U17, 32 - 71, England U17

Wales U17, 53 - 52, UAE U17

Our U19s and U21s will compete in their Europe Netball competitions later this year and the details of the two competitions are below:

**U21 Europe Netball Open Challenge
Event - 6th - 8th October, EIS Sheffield**

**U19 Europe Netball Open Challenge
Event - 16th - 17th December, Venue TBC**

WALES DEVELOPMENT SQUAD

A squad of 15 athletes and three training partners were selected from our Welsh Feathers and National Academy squads to represent the Wales Development Squad in the Europe Netball Challenge competition in May 2023.

The squad was led by Head Coach Sarah Lewis and Assistant Coach Jo Ricketts. The results of the competition were as follows:

Wales Development, 70 - 31, Malta

Wales Development, 67 - 42, UAE

Wales Development, 81 - 41, ROI

Wales Development, 92 - 31, IOM

The Development Group are an important addition to our Performance Pathway, allowing us to bridge the gap between U21 and Welsh Feathers, whilst further developing the depth of talent we have in Wales.

REGIONAL ACADEMY

Our Regional Academies are continuing to develop athletes for the long term that embody our values and behaviours in a welcoming and enjoyable environment. We have seen growth in our Regional Academies, and we now have 8 Regional Academies across Wales:

Bangor University

Coleg Gwent

Cardiff University

USW & Coleg Y Cymoedd

Bridgend College

Neath Port Talbot College

Coleg Sir Gar

Coleg Cambria

We have over 200 talented athletes across our Regional Academies, and we will be increasing the number of coaching hours we deliver across all of our Academies next season, allowing us to double the athlete intake across Wales in 2023/24.



UMPIRES

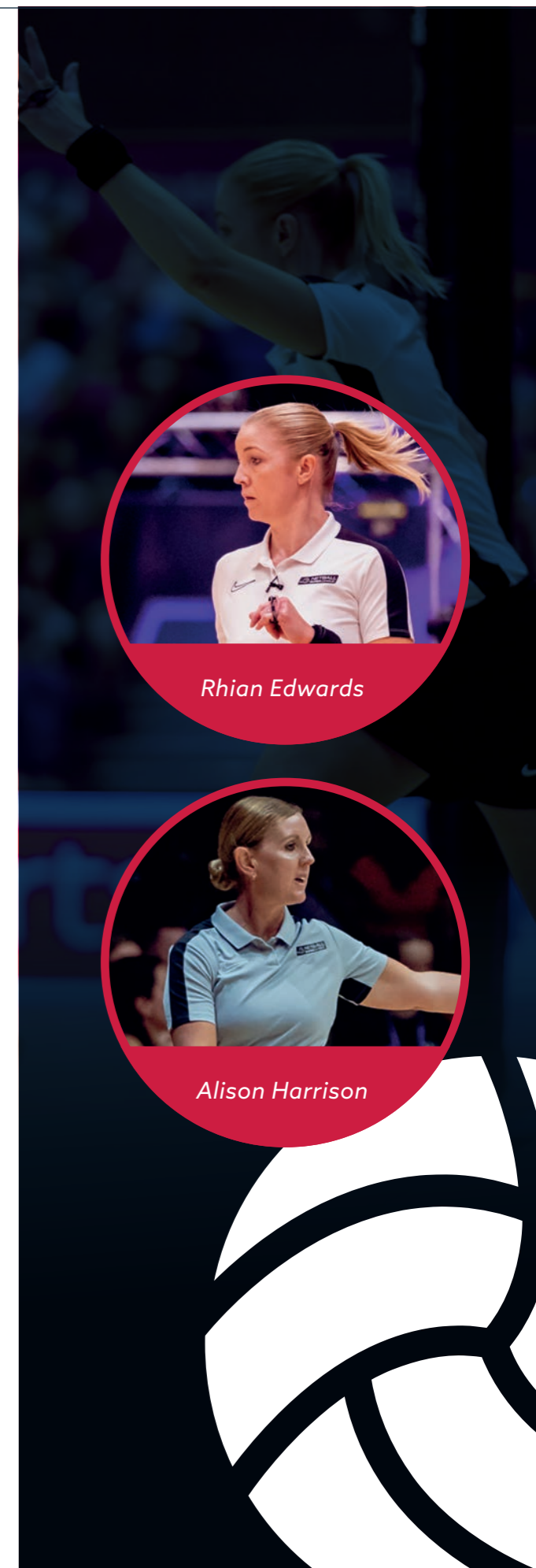
Alison Harrison and Rhian Edwards have umpired many Netball Super League (NSL) matches this season. They both had stand-out seasons with Alison umpiring the NSL Grand Final, and Rhian receiving the 2023 Umpire Assessors Award. Both Edwards and Harrison umpired in the UK 2023 Fast 5 All-Stars competition too.

Edwards has had many achievements this year, including umpiring in her 50th NSL match, receiving her International Umpiring Award, being selected to umpire in the Europe World Cup Qualifiers, the Europe Netball 2023 Open Challenge, and the Scottish Thistles Test series.

Harrison has also had many achievements this year including umpiring in the Roses Reunited test series, representing Wales and umpiring at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, and being selected to umpire in the 2023 Netball World Cup.

Congratulations to both Rhian Edwards and Alison Harrison for a great year, and a huge good luck to Alison this summer.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our coaching staff, team managers, sport science support staff and all of our athletes once again, for their dedication and commitment to their training programmes this year. We could not do it without you!



Rhian Edwards



Alison Harrison

OPERATIONS

It's been a busy and productive season for the Operations Team, as a department that feeds into all areas of the organisation and community, our goal to be **bolder** and pioneer a new business approach for our sport in Wales has been the driver across the department.

Throughout the year, the team have strived to uphold and deliver excellent standards of governance both internally and in the wider community. We have prioritised data, insight, and learning to create opportunities for all stakeholders. Additionally, we have successfully managed and developed technology platforms that enhance efficiency and effectiveness. Furthermore, effective communication has been a key focus in conveying our products, programs, and projects to the community and external stakeholders.

The significant milestones in our timeline (p30) demonstrate our dedication to continuous improvement, player welfare, customer service and fostering a supportive netball community. By prioritising strategic partnerships, communication enhancements, facility improvements, and safeguarding measures, we aim to further strengthen and maintain a strong and sustainable Netball business.

We have placed a strong emphasis on maintaining and improving governance standards within our organisation. By adhering to best practices and implementing robust policies and procedures, we have ensured transparency, accountability, and ethical decision-making. Our commitment to governance extends beyond our internal operations and encompasses our engagement with the wider community.

Every September, we share a governance pack with all affiliated clubs and leagues, to provide them with the tools to manage and maintain good governance within their club. We have exciting plans for 2023/24 season as we intend to roll out governance reviews across the organisations in Wales, to support them in becoming sustainable.

We recognise the value of data, insights, and learning in driving positive change and creating opportunities for all. Through rigorous data collection, analysis, and interpretation, we have gained valuable insights that inform our decision-making processes. By leveraging data-driven strategies, we aim to foster inclusivity, diversity, and equal access to our programs and services.

Our Head of Operations, Laura Milford, has actively managed and developed our membership platform, Sport:80, to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in our operations. By investing in intuitive and user-friendly technologies, we have improved internal processes, streamlined workflows, and optimised resource allocation. These technological advancements have allowed us to better serve our stakeholders and deliver seamless experiences, that we plan to continue to strive to improve!



Rose, our Business Support Officer, has connected with the community since day one of the season, leading our query portal for platform issues and maintaining a fantastic response time across all channels of communication to Wales Netball. Rose has been fundamental in building and upholding our historic records for player history – a long term project that we will witness coming to fruition over the summer.

Lucy, our Digital Communications Officer, has been integral in communicating the successes and news across the organisation via social media channels and our website.

We have celebrated tremendous success both on and off the court, marked by significant partnerships, launch of the National League, Commonwealth Games celebrations, and the anticipation for the upcoming World Cup. Lucy shares the inspiring stories of netball in Wales and connects past, current, and future netballers with our sport.

Communication plays a vital role in conveying our products, programs, and projects to the community and external stakeholders. We have prioritised clear and concise messaging, utilising various communication channels to ensure effective dissemination of information. By fostering strong relationships with our stakeholders, we have enhanced engagement, collaboration, and understanding.



Two announcements that stand out are the reveal of the Welsh Feathers identity, and Suzy Drane's achievement of surpassing the Welsh record for number of caps received!

As part of our efforts to refresh the brand and resonate with our Welsh identity, we successfully rebranded from Wales Seniors to Welsh Feathers. The new name reflects our national pride and symbolises the strength, grace, and unity of our netball community. Alongside the announcement, we celebrated Feathers both past and present, at an International Caps Awards evening – an extremely inspiring event where previous Feathers achievements were recognised and celebrated.

We also extended our heartfelt congratulations to Suzy Drane, who became the most capped player in Welsh netball history during this season. Suzy's remarkable dedication, skill, and leadership have made her an inspiration to aspiring netballers nationwide.



121 Club Safeguarding Officer's registered to report concerns

Hosted **4** 'Time to Listen' training sessions

138 CSOs across Wales

111 successful DBS applications

Maintaining safeguarding Level 2

By consistently striving for excellence in governance, utilising data and insights, managing technology platforms effectively, and implementing robust communication strategies, as a team we aim to create a positive impact on our organisation and the broader community.

These efforts are instrumental in achieving our goals and delivering value to all members, to create a vibrant netball community and inspire individuals

of all ages to engage in this exciting sport – and we can't achieve this without our members, so a big thank you to you all!

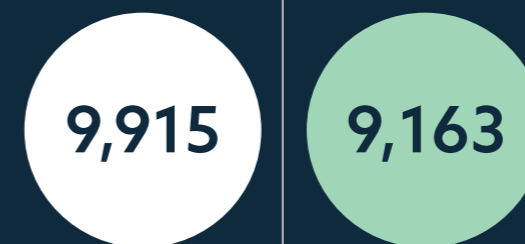
Whether you play netball socially or competitively, support from the sidelines, follow the Feathers and other international teams, or haven't picked up a netball since school – get involved today, be a part of our wonderful netball family in Wales!

2022	July	TikTok channel launched
	August	Successful close of the season at our AGM hosted on Teams and CWG campaign via social channels
	September	First year of successful Auto-Renewal for members on our Sport:80 membership platform New look Wales Netball website launched
	October	Legal and Governance Group formed and TOR agreed
	December	Safeguarding courses launched for Q1 of 2023
	2023	January
February		Internal appraisal structure reviewed & all recruitment packs aligned Three outdoor facilities over Wales improved via the Court Collaboration group with Tennis and Basketball
March		All policies made available in larger fonts for those with sight impairments National League Website launched
April		Community concussion guidance launched
May		Safeguarding Panel Assessment, successfully maintaining Level 2
June		A blind and safer recruitment process implemented

COMMUNICATIONS

2022/23	2021/22
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Members



Organisations



Leagues



Solved **1100+** member platform queries

75% solved within 24 hours

SOCIAL STATS

Platform	June 2023	June 2022	
Facebook	7,792	5,085	
Twitter	12,379	11,700	
Instagram	7,717	5,413	
TikTok	1,661	0	

NEWSLETTER

Subscriber increase of **31%**

Opening rate of **68%**



OFFICIAL WALES NETBALL PARTNERS



Official Wales Netball Partners

Ace Feet in Motion • Coleg Gwent • Gilbert Netball • Hugh James
 NPTC Group of Colleges • Neon Arena Services • Netball UK
 Newfield Law • O'Neills • Orthotix Sports & Orthopaedic Bracing
 Physique • Tantrwm • University of South Wales
 Dreams and Wishes (Official Charity Partner)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As always, we would like to take this time to thank and acknowledge all our members, partners, staff, board members, volunteers, coaches, umpires, and fans. We appreciate the support we see and feel on and off the court.

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- MYCONCERN
- NETBALL EUROPE
- SPORT WALES
- SPORT:80
- WELSH GOVERNMENT
- WORLD NETBALL





Vicki Sutton

Chief Executive Officer



Keira Edwards

Head of Participation



Laura Milford

Head of Operations



Sara Moore

Head of Performance



Amy Burton

Performance Pathway
Officer



Tasha Constable

Events and
Competitions Officer



Rose ten Donkelaar

Business Support
Officer



Emily Handyside

Welsh Feathers
Head Coach



Louvain Lake

Performance
Operations Lead –
Celtic Dragons



Sarah Palmer

Performance
Operations Lead –
Wales



Lucy Roberts

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WALES NETBALL
PÊL-RWYD CYMRU