



ANNUAL REPORT 2016



HOCKEY WALES
HOCI CYMRU



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Growing the Game

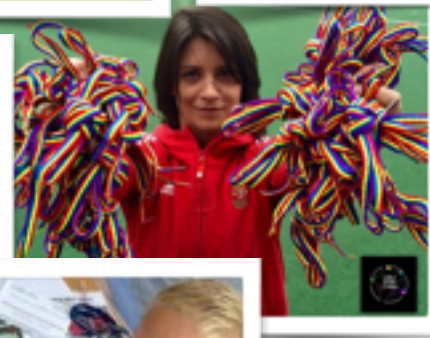
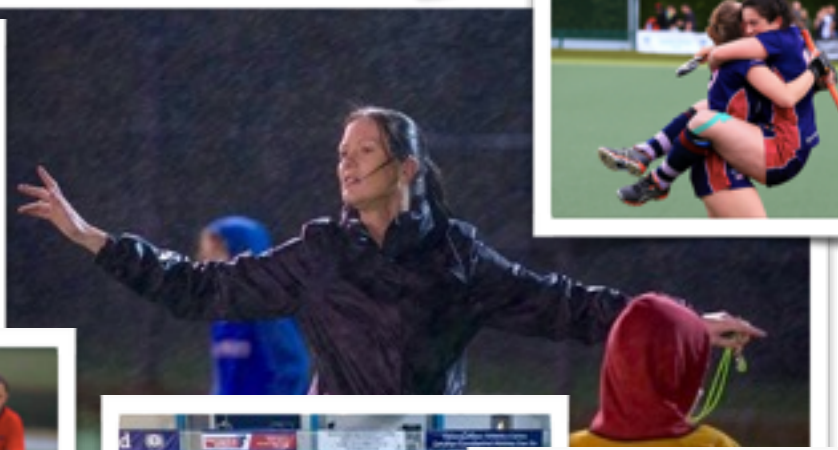
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FOREWORD



President's Message

This is my last report to you, the members of Hockey Wales, as I have decided to retire as your President.



I have had a lifetime involvement in hockey beginning when, as a eleven-year-old schoolgirl I attended Gowerton Girls' Grammar School and saw my first hockey stick and hockey game. Thanks to an inspirational PE teacher I became "hooked" on hockey and as they say, the "rest is history". I was elected President in 1996 following the merger of the Men's and Women's Associations into the Welsh Hockey Union, and into what is now Hockey Wales.

It has been my privilege to have served as your President for the past twenty years and I wish to thank everyone for their support and friendship during this time. My thanks also to our key partners; our clubs, schools, colleges/universities, Sport Wales and also the many volunteers who work so hard to ensure that hockey remains a key sport for all.

Following the resignation of CEO Helen Bushell last year, David Phenis was appointed her successor and has made a positive start. I wish him and his staff every success in the future.

My sincere thanks to all members of staff, coaches, managers, umpires, teachers and volunteers, and everyone who works and contributes in any way to hockey in Wales; it is because of the commitment, expertise and enthusiasm of all these people that we are able to maintain high standards and create opportunities for more people to play and enjoy hockey.

Also my thanks to all Board Directors, three of whom - Sarah Thomas, Helen Humphrey and Debbie Jarvis - will also be standing down at this AGM. Their contribution and commitment together with that of their fellow directors has been outstanding.

Good luck to our Welsh teams who will be competing internationally over the next few months. My thanks also to Sport Wales for their ongoing support.

It has been an honour and privilege to have served as your President for the past twenty years and I wish you every possible success in the future.

M. A. Ellis

Anne Ellis OBE

Hockey Wales President

Foreword

By Hockey Wales Chair Richard Proctor
and CEO David Phenis

We hope you enjoy reading the Hockey Wales Annual Report. It aims to provide an overview of progress made during the past year and hopefully will bring to life how the sport of hockey is growing and improving as a result of our dedicated team of staff, the commitment of our Board Directors, our incredible army of passionate volunteers and indeed the whole 'Hockey Family'.

The achievements highlighted in this report together with the future opportunities and challenges cannot be realised without the unity of all involved. It is so evident that this unity is unlike any other sport and certainly unique to hockey, and it is this common passion that, despite this period of change and financial uncertainty, gives us the confidence of further improvements and success.

We, like many others across the sector, have felt the pressures of reductions in funding but the delivery of our new Commercial Strategy will ensure that we continue to grow the business and become less reliant on public funding. Despite these pressures we have recently been successful in securing funding to improve facilities with new pitches in Colwyn Bay, Bridgend and Gwent. The sporting landscape is also changing, particularly with the introduction of Sport Wales' new funding model; the Community Sport Project (CSP). We have been working with Board members and colleagues from Sport Wales on a revised delivery model and are confident of our readiness when this new approach is introduced in 2017.

We are very proud that levels of participation and membership continue to grow, bucking the trend of many other team sports. However, we recognise that more work is required for sustained growth and as requested through our recent membership survey, we will provide improved support for our clubs.

We also recognise that further work is required to grow the game in all communities across Wales and also need to reverse the decline in men and boys membership. We are also disappointed that the Rush Hockey initiative did not have the impact we had hoped for, but will continue to work with our partners to introduce a modified recreational version of hockey to meet the needs of those wanting to play a less traditional format of the game.

We are engaging and collaborating with a wider range of partners to deliver the continued growth of hockey. The core to our future success is to put the clubs and members at the heart of what we do.

We are thrilled with the progress being made across our performance programme and it is evident that our high performance culture is embedded from our 360 programme through to our National squads. We are determined to provide the support required for our players and coaches to ensure we continue to improve our world ranking and build towards a successful Commonwealth Games.

Our new hosting strategy is beginning to make an impact, not only by providing our teams with home advantage but the ability to raise the profile by showcasing our amazing sport to a wider audience. The Champions League football final will not be the only major event in Cardiff next year , we are all excited that we have secured our bid to host the Women's European Championships that will result in success both on and off the pitch.

We are delighted that many involved in hockey in Wales and across the world have recognised the improvements achieved through the delivery of our Communications Strategy, which is the envy of many other sports. This report hopefully graphically displays an overview of hockey in Wales, but we are determined to keep you fully informed and engaged throughout the year through our various forms of media.

We are grateful for the legacy left by Helen Bushell, former CEO of Hockey Wales, of a very successful, financially stable and well governed organisation and we aim to build on these foundations through the next twelve months and beyond.

We will continue to maintain the excellent progress achieved through the Leadership and Governance Framework, ensuring all key stakeholders and partners have the confidence in the ability of Hockey Wales and our Board to effectively govern the sport of hockey and embed the strong culture and values across all members of the hockey family.

The passion and energy of everybody involved in hockey is overwhelming and certainly presents us with exciting times on the next phase of our journey to 2020.

We hope you enjoy reading this report and thank you very much for your continued support.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. Proctor".



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D Phenis".

Richard Proctor
Chair

David Phenis
Chief Executive Officer



GROWING THE GAME



Debra Barker

Head of Growing the Game



Clubs are the heartbeat of our game and volunteers the lifeblood, and so it is our mission to ensure that they are properly supported in order for them to become thriving hubs of hockey that are accessible to all, with a supported and passionate workforce. I hope you read this synopsis of 2015-2016 and see the strides that we are making to grow our game and make it the sport of choice for more people.

Clubs

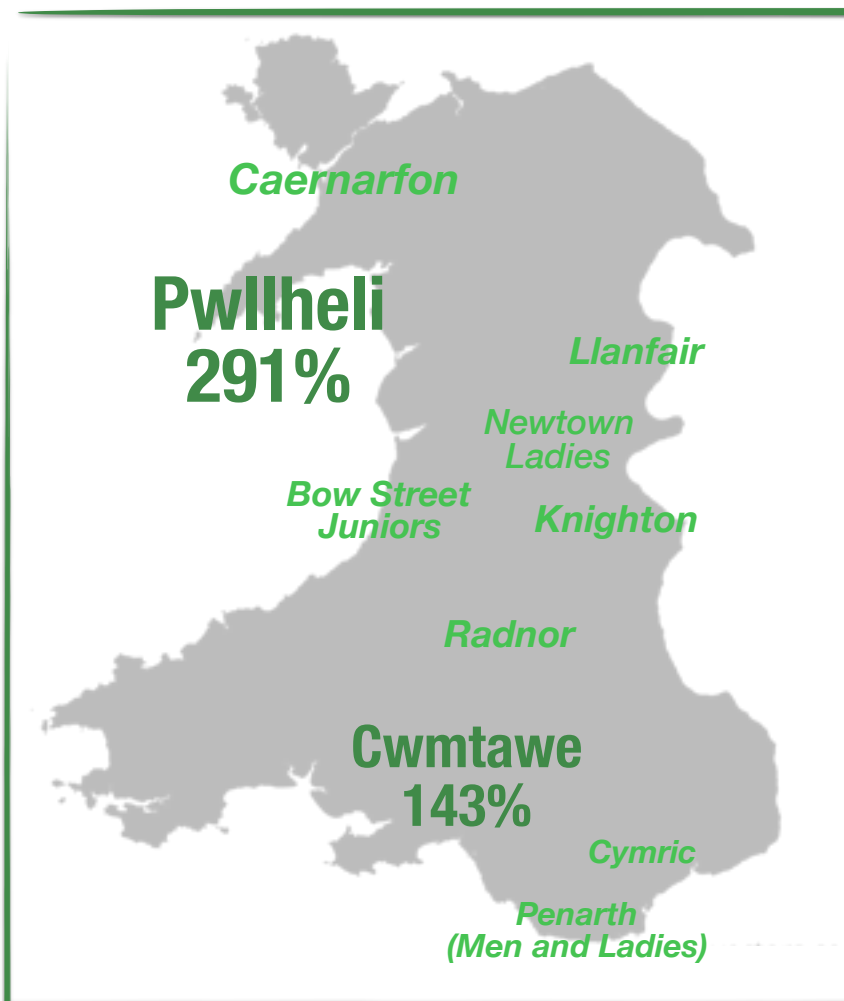
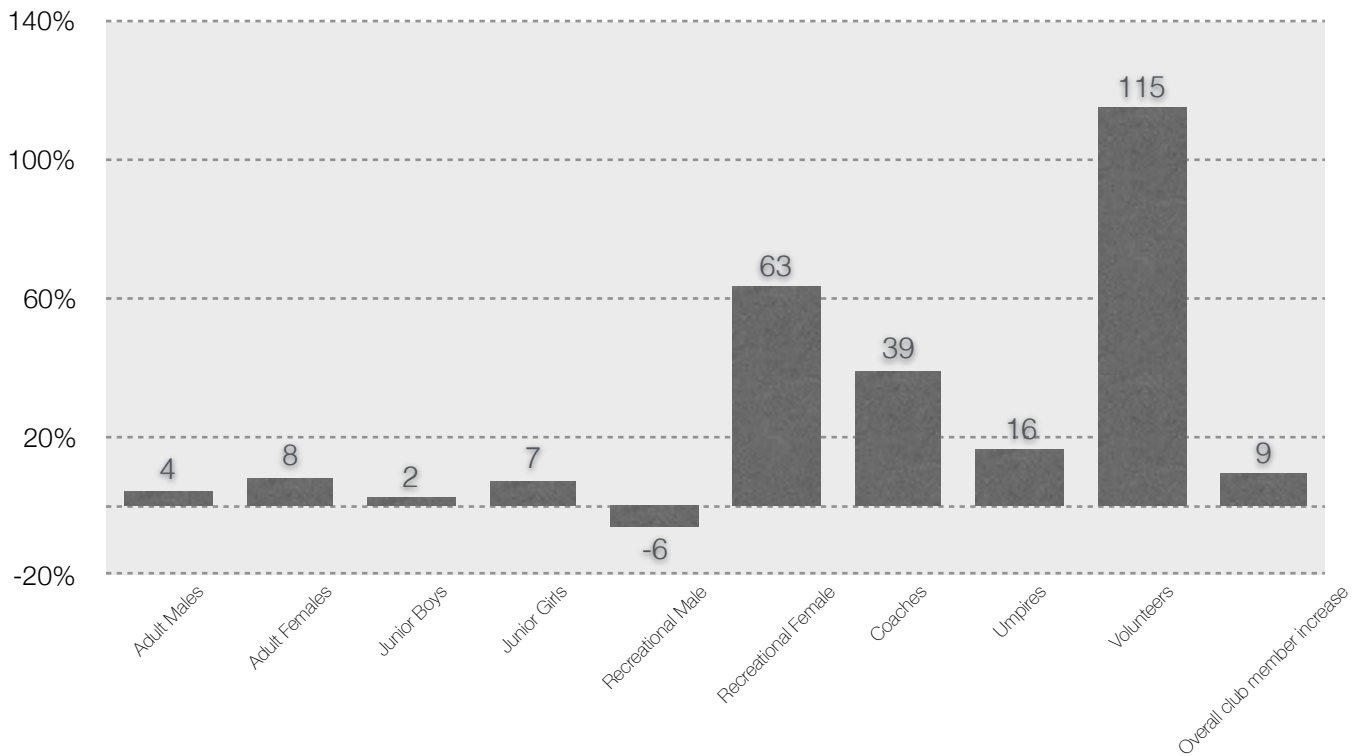
Membership in 2015-16 has seen the biggest increase in the last three years; an 8000 membership increase. Club membership has increased by 483 members, the biggest increase in club membership we have seen in recent years. This is also double the number we had predicted. There are also 487 more recreational members this year, bringing the total increase to 970 more people regularly playing hockey.

Category	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 Target	2015-16 Actual
Club members	6816	7000	7299
Recreational Adult	458	1125	427
Recreational Junior	743	1654	1230
Junior participant	3982	9976	10182
Life members	11	11	11

19,149
End of year membership figure

2.1 Memberships achieved compared to targets

2.2 The percentage increase in club membership across each category that clubs affiliate to Hockey Wales.



A number of clubs have shown a significant increase in their membership this season over 50% increase, as highlighted on the map, while two clubs in particular have had extremely high increase; these are Pwllheli and Cwmtawe.

2.3 Clubs that have had a particularly large increase in membership.

Summer Camps ran in August which saw our International Athletes travel throughout Wales inspiring the next generation of Hockey Players. This is the first time camps have been run like this by our Athletes, and participants were inspired and eager to hear all about what it takes to become an International Athlete.



Club Open Weekend saw eighteen clubs participate in the most successful National Club Open Weekend (#NCOW15) to date. Hundreds of new and existing hockey players got involved in family friendly events hosted by clubs across Wales.

Participating offered clubs the opportunity to raise the profile of the sport in their local area and attract new members, as well as bringing the clubs together ahead of the new season to provide valuable match practice.

#Hocktober promoted participation and inclusion within hockey. Hockey Agents, partners and clubs were encouraged to run activities during October to promote the sport. A social media 'Trick or Treat' competition was held encouraging people to tweet videos of their best hockey tricks. A rainbow laces campaign was also promoted during this time, to encourage clubs to



register to be listed on the LGB&T Sport Cymru website as safe and friendly club for Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual & Transgender (LGB&T) individuals. Those who registered received free rainbow laces for their club, and we were proud to have many clubs sign up and show their support of inclusive sport.



Lewis Prosser; Image courtesy of Sam Gillespie

International Athlete Ambassadors programme was launched to engage four of our International Athletes to act as role models promoting the game of hockey across Wales, raising the profile of the sport and of our international athletes.

This programme has been very successful in raising the profile of the four players involved while improving the experience for the participants. They have been making visits to specific events across Wales, including for the first time, in North and West Wales, which were very well received by our organisers and players.

Facility Development has continued to improve this year with the facilities collaboration taking place with the Welsh Rugby Union and Football Association of Wales. Funding to the value of £300,000 has been invested in new pitches at Pencoed and Eirias Parc. Both venues will become a hub of hockey activity and strong partnerships have been forged between Hockey Wales, the Local Authority and the clubs.



Partners

We are proud to say we are working with more partners than ever before. Our Local Authority partnerships continue to go from strength to strength and many new partnerships have been developed in the past year.



URDD A new partnership has been developed, the URDD are running eight Welsh Language hockey programmes with over 200 children taking part in community based hockey.



Scouts A partnership is in place with pilot projects taking place in West and South East Wales, a scout troop with over 200 members has signed up to the approach and will be delivering hockey in the near future. A three year plan has been developed for partnership working.



Bangor University Hockey Wales are entering a partnership with Bangor University which will see ten students delivering 40 hours each in the community, and a Hockey Activator in the university setting up recreational opportunities.



Great Britain Hockey A working relationship has been developed with England Hockey and Scottish Hockey. This partnership working at a development level is new and has made our partnership with England and Scotland much stronger, resulting in the link with NottsSport who are sponsoring #HockeyFest, and strengthened links to BUCS sport.



KickIt and **Play Sports** are two private companies that we are in partnership with who have returned over 3000 junior participant members, offering a first quality hockey experience in areas that Hockey Wales are not currently working in.

Regions

Both North and South Regional Boards continue to develop, prioritising regional budgets against the needs of hockey in their Regions. South Wales Regional Board committed to investing in clubs to develop boys and men's hockey. The North Wales board approved a decision to set up a social enterprise to be more commercial viable.

Both Regions have invested in and implemented a new programme called POD centres. The aim of this programme is to bridge the gap between club hockey and 360 in the more rural areas of Wales. Both programmes made a good start in 2015-16 and will be continued in 2016-17. Both Boards have Regional Plans in place for 2016-17 which can be found on the Hockey Wales website.

Competitions

The past season saw the implementation of a new structure for the Women's National Cup competitions. It was changed to encourage more clubs to take part and for all clubs to have an equal playing field. A review of the National School Girls competitions took place and saw the implementation of a new Under 12 School Girls competition. Over 40 schools took part in this year's competition.

The 2015 National Cup Finals was a great success with clubs receiving a goody bag for the first time at the event. Sponsorship was secured for the Youth Finals through Homeforce. Among the spectators of the day's proceedings was EHF President Marijke Fleuren, which along with the sponsorship from HomeForce, added real value to the event. All players were presented with a t-shirt, water bottle and either a medal or a certificate. The winning clubs in each age group were also presented with a framed certificate, and all winning players received a £10 gift voucher for hockey equipment.



Workforce

Coaching A new suite of coaching qualifications were introduced this year following feedback that courses should be simplified and more accessible.

377 coaches have been trained this year, from 4689 through to the new Coaches Award. We have seen 22 Level 2 Coaches complete their assessment, the most we have had in a single year, and four new sessional courses delivered with 30 candidates qualified and delivering back in their clubs.

A coaching audit is also underway with the findings utilised to help shape how clubs will be supported in the new season



2.4 New qualifications cross mapped with previous qualifications.



Umpiring The WHUA continue to drive umpire appointments and development at all levels of the game. The full WHUA annual report can be found on the Hockey Wales website.

An extract from the WHUA Chairperson's Report is available overleaf.



Extract from the WHUA Chairpersons Report

Following two-years of establishing the newly formed WHUA Exec Committee, this season was one in which we needed to start building on activities and showing tangible results. Progress has been made on a number of fronts. These included growing the pool of dedicated league umpires via delivery of a series of Level 2 courses, through to mentoring and assessment. Providing tools, resources and coaching for Level 1 and newly qualified umpires, giving young umpires more opportunities to do level-appropriate games. Furthermore, the change in (outdoor) rules coming into force throughout the league structure at the beginning of the season – necessitated the need to discuss the new rules with members to ensure a consensus in understanding and application. A good deal of preparation went into delivering some very well attended new rules seminars in North & South Wales.

Last season saw an array of tournament appointments for umpires & officials, including:

- EuroHockey Masters
- UK School Games
- Euro Hockey League R1
- Junior & Senior test matches involving GB, Argentina, USA & Ghana

EHF appointments have seen the WHUA providing umpires & officials for tournaments in Finland, Belarus, France, Bulgaria, Russia, Slovakia, Austria, Gibraltar, Czech Republic, Scotland, Slovenia, Lithuania, Poland & Turkey.

Development, coaching & mentoring

- ✓ Mentors have been allocated to each POD and are available to answer any umpiring/rules-related queries from POD members;
- ✓ Hockey Wales have run nine Level 1 courses across Wales, with 115 attendees & 53 passes;
- ✓ Very successful Level 2 courses run in November by Cathy Wright, Marcus Powell and Karen Evans, in Cardiff. This was followed up with a youth tournament in which those attending the course umpired and were assessed;
- ✓ National Panel selection policy drafted and approved;
- ✓ South Region produced a helpful booklet to support newly qualified Level 1s - regional contacts, POD contacts, day in the life feature, umpire pathway, mentoring advice, info on becoming an official & kit details;
- ✓ Jim Marchant and Kevin Roberts have attained their Level 3 and are now regular fixtures on the NPUA.

Volunteering Last season saw another in-take of Hockey Young Ambassadors (HYA) and there are now over 70 silver, gold and platinum HYA's across Wales, responsible for a range of duties, such as helping with the day-to-day running of their club, coaching, club promotion, organising events and tournaments, and assisting at national events. In addition, some HYA's will run sessions in local schools to increase participation and promote the positive values of hockey. Some of the more proactive HYA's will attend regional POD meetings where they will work with a number of other clubs and local authorities to support the development of hockey across that POD area.

Recently five young ambassadors (Chloe Jordan, Kloe Jarvis, Amelia Davies, Alice Gregory and Heledd Evans) were selected to represent Wales in the European Hockey Federation Youth Panel (EHFYP). Following on from the success of Harri Evans who was selected last year, the



representatives will work to give young people a voice throughout the development of hockey, from a local to international scale. This year Wales has been allocated more representatives within the EHFYP than any other nation, demonstrating the success of the Hockey Young Ambassador Programme and all the hard-work and dedication our representatives have shown. We hope that their success inspires more young people to get involved with the programme and take advantage of all the amazing opportunities available to them.

Masters

Masters continues to be a major growth area within Wales with squad selection becoming more and more difficult for the management teams.

With squads spread across all age groups, both Men's and Women's participate in tournaments across the UK and Europe and in late Spring 2016 a large Welsh contingent will be making their way to Australia for the World Championships.



It would be remiss not to mention that during the last few months, Bernie Wheeler, together with Jane, who have been the driving force in Men's Masters for a considerable number of years, have decided to take a back seat. The thanks offered to them are immeasurable.



Jeff Robinson has taken up the reins of co-ordinating the Men's Masters and Jackie Whiller continues to devote much of her time in looking after the Women's side. Please contact Jeff at jeffrobinson@myphone.coop and Jackie at jackie.babes@sky.com for further information.

Equality and Inclusion

2015-16 has seen our continued commitment to being more inclusive. In partnership with the Golf Union of Wales, an equality Steering Group has been established to provide support and guidance on Equality.

BME There are three new community based sessions taking place in Cardiff in conjunction with Cardiff City Foundation and Premier League Kicks programme.

LGB&T Hockey Wales had the highest number of clubs signed up across all sport on the LGB&T Sport Cymru website helped by the #Hocktober rainbow laces campaign.



Welsh Language We continue our commitment to the Welsh Language through our work with the URDD, who deliver hockey sessions through the medium of Welsh in many communities across Wales.

Disability Hockey Wales were awarded the Disability Sport Wales insport Ribbon Award and several clubs have also received or are working towards insport awards:



WORKING TOWARDS RIBBON
Abergavenny
Penarth
Dowlais
Newtown
Wrexham

RIBBON
Colwyn Bay
Rhondda
Fishguard & Goodwick

SILVER
Bangor City

Hockey Wales received Equality Human Rights Commission Grant for £7,500 to deliver a disability and BME project. Four clubs were engaged in a project to set up inclusive sessions. Wrexham Hockey club working with the Local Authority ran the first ever SEN festival in Wales. The day, which was based at Wrexham Glyndwr University was a huge success and saw over 50 children from the main four special schools in Wrexham. Previous to this 18 students from St Christopher’s School had been trained to deliver 4689 games following funding provided by North Wales Regional Board giving the older children the opportunity to gain some leadership and coaching experience.



PERFORMANCE



Dan Clements

Head of Performance



2015 – 2016 was a busy season for the Hockey Wales performance programmes. It saw Wales as a nation improve our international rankings for both men and women, whilst also seeing us make huge strides towards Vision 2020. Management teams and coaching staff continue to drive our performance culture and as our support teams grow, the service that athletes now receive is greater than ever. It was fantastic to see our performance clubs perform so well through the year, both in the league and Europe, and a centralised approach piloted at 360° level has seen standards improved for players deemed to be at the higher end of the programme. Thank you to everyone that has made the performance programme what it is this past year.

Under 18 NAG Programme

The Hockey Wales National Age Group (NAG) programmes continue to go from strength to strength as the management teams continue to embed the Hockey Wales high performing culture across the Under 16 and Under 18 squads. Continuing to train as one homogenous group per gender, this has shown transition from Under 16 to Under 18 to be seamless due to the consistency of message from management team and pathway visibility.

Although improvements within the Under 18 programmes were evident through 2015-2016, there were mixed results at the European Championships in July 2015. With both squads competing in EuroHockey Division II, the goals for each gender were to finish top 4, which after some fine displays in Calais; France, the boys programme achieved, eventually losing out to Switzerland to secure a 4th place finish. Meanwhile, out in Italy in a very tight group the U18 girls squad struggled to adapt to the pressures of tournament hockey.



With around 40 players per gender, the programmes continue to evolve and maintain a good mix of training camps and test matches, with the ultimate aim of preparing players for senior international hockey. This year, there were test matches against Switzerland, and Scotland, as well as the UK School Games, on top of a number of training games and training camps.

Player Development Programme

360° Hockey Programme Entering its fourth year as a programme the Hockey Wales 360° centres continued to evolve to meet the aims outlined in 2012, those being Hockey Wales' vision of providing a focused training environment that harnesses and develops talent within Wales and develops future international players.

There was a significant step change in September 2015 with the introduction of two centralised sessions, one in the North and one in the South, where higher ability players were grouped together to provide a more focused and challenging environment for players that were deemed to be National Age Group level or just outside. This shift was very well received and improved

standards across the board. Six centres continued to run across Wales ensuring that all players had the opportunity to access the programme and work with a dedicated talent development workforce.



Above: Nick Fackrell, 360 Coach

In total, 246 players engaged with the 360° programme in 2015 / 2016 across Wales with 17 new players progressing to the National Age Group programme, a new high in terms of player progression. Average attendance rose again from last year, with a 78% attendance across the board.

Senior International Programme

Senior Men On the back of competing at the Commonwealth Games and a number of retirements, the senior men's focus shifted firmly to the European Championships in July 2015 with a clear goal of promotion back to division II, after the disappointment of relegation in 2013. The young squad had a robust programme of preparation in place



leading up to the Europeans, which saw the men record some notable results against higher ranked nations. First up was Scotland in Glasgow, that saw Wales secure a draw in the opening game and narrowly lose out in the remaining two matches by a goal each time. This was followed up with an away test series against Austria that saw Wales secure a 2-1 test series win, with some fine performances in games one and two that set up the series win.



Going into the Europeans in a confident mood, the men secured the title in emphatic fashion going unbeaten through the tournament, including a 16-0 win against Sweden and then beating the hosts Portugal 4-0 in the final. This gold medal also secured the men a 17th place finish in Europe overall.

Senior Women Wales went into the 2015 - 2016 season focused on the EuroHockey Championships Division II in July 2015 to secure their spot in the division following promotion two years prior.

Preparation got underway with a test series against Scotland that saw the squad secure a draw in the second of the three games as the programme started to build for Europe. This was followed up with the senior women's first test series win in a number of years as they travelled to France and came away with a 3-0 win with the notable achievement of not conceding a goal against a top ranked nation.



On arrival to Prague, they knew the challenge that lay ahead, but a strong performance in game one against Belarus that saw Wales draw 2-2. This was backed up with a 2-1 win against Austria and meant a positive result versus Azerbaijan would secure a top four finish.

Conceding a late goal, Wales lost out 2-1 and set up cross over games against France and Ukraine.

A 0-0 draw with France followed up with a 2-0 win over Ukraine secured a 5th place finish and an impressive final standing of 13th in Europe.



Left: Kevin Johnson, Wales Women Head Coach
Image courtesy of Irfon Bennett

Performance Teams

Swansea Spartans As the premier women's team in Wales, Swansea Spartans continued to fly the flag for the principality in the Investec Women's Hockey League Conference West. The 2015/2016 season saw Swansea eventually secure a fourth place finish in the league after being in and around the top of the league for the majority of the season. Once again the club boasted a number of senior internationals amongst their ranks, with consistent notable performances from Jo Westwood and Wales skipper Abi Welsford throughout the year.



In May 2015, the Spartans headed to the Austrian capital of Vienna to compete in the EuroHockey Club Champions Challenge I to represent Wales, knowing a strong performance was needed to secure their status. After a win, a draw and a loss in the group stages, including a notable 5-2 win against KHC Dragons of Belgium, they achieved a second place finish in the group. A cross over game between Swansea and Grodno saw the Welsh team lose out 4-0 and end up with a credible third place finish in the division.

The year also saw a breakthrough year with a number of National Age Group players making the step up to senior domestic hockey with Swansea. Most notably, local products Lowri Ratti and Sara Jayne Thorburn who would go on to progress to senior international status in 2016.

Cardiff & Met After securing the Hockey Wales Cup in April 2015, the 2015 / 2016 season saw Cardiff & Met men's team hold top spot for the duration after some outstanding displays in the Conference West. Going into the play offs in confident mood sights were firmly set on promotion to the premier division after a number of close shaves over the past four years.



Left: Cardiff & Met Men's First XI
Image courtesy of Irfon Bennett.

After losing out to Loughborough Students in game one, Cardiff & Met headed to Lee Valley knowing that two wins were needed to stand a chance of promotion in 2016. Two wins against Canterbury and Richmond however did not prove enough as Cardiff agonisingly missed out on promotion by the virtue of goal difference.

Cardiff & Met were in Wettigen, Switzerland to represent Wales in the EuroHockey Club Champions Challenge I and in confident mood off the back of a strong domestic season. Two wins and a draw in the group stage, including a tight 0-0 against the hosts set them up for an appearance in the final.

A resounding 9-0 win against Mladost of Croatia saw Cardiff & Met crowned champions of the division whilst also securing promotion to the European Hockey League for the following year.

Aspire GB Programme

The Aspire GB Programme continues to provide support for Hockey Wales athletes that are deemed to have the potential to represent Great Britain, and 2015 / 2016 has seen a number of athletes engaged with various development programmes endeavouring to make the step up to senior international hockey with Great Britain.



Left: Ioan Wall, image courtesy of SmifSports.



Right: Julie Whiting, image courtesy of Andy Smith

With Great Britain (GB) programmes running at U21 level and the potential of GB U23 programmes in the near future, we continue to provide a bespoke support service to athletes that have been nominated for these programmes to ensure they have the best possible support to transition to senior GB hockey. The Aspire GB programme is supported by lottery funds from Sport Wales which enables a more individualised approach to player development.

Great Britain Hockey

The relationship between Hockey Wales and Great Britain continues to go from strength to strength with regards to talent, performance and coaching. 2015-2016 saw Hockey Wales and Great Britain collaborate on a number of projects across the home countries with an aim of delivering a more aligned playing pathway within Great Britain.

Following full participation in a pathway health check, a number of priorities were identified for each home nation in terms of player performance. A large part of this related to coach development, and Great Britain Hockey supported Wales with a number of programmes to support coach development. This included support for both talent and performance coaches through bespoke continual professional development opportunities.

The support and insight is invaluable to Hockey Wales as we continue to increase the provision for coaches within the performance programmes.



Right: Ben Francis, GB Under 23
Image courtesy of Andy Smith.



Owen Burgess

Head of Commercial & Business



Amid a background of reductions in public funding, Hockey Wales have taken a positive and proactive approach to being a more commercially astute organisation during 2015-16. The creation of a Commercial Strategy has started to bear fruit and will continue to do so. We are committed to raising the profile of our sport, providing a service to our members and being less reliant on public funding. We want to see our Sport flourish in Wales, I hope you read the following and see the positive steps that we are making to grow our sport and be a strong, commercially viable organisation.

Awards Evening

The Hockey Wales Awards were once again held at the Vale of Glamorgan Resort in October. The evening was a great celebration of hockey in Wales and an opportunity to thank and give back to all those involved in the game, from our volunteers in grass roots clubs to our athletes

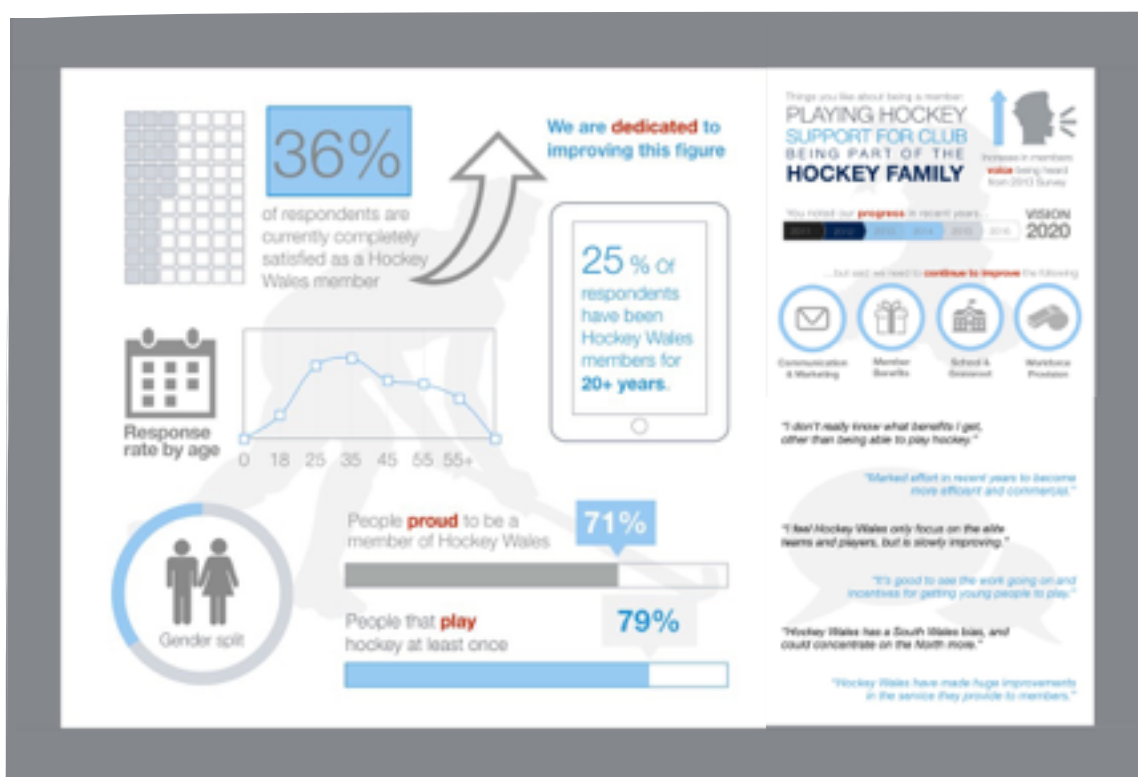


who represent our country on the international stage. The evening was well received by those who attended and we were pleased with the turn out. We had more sponsors engaged in the Awards Dinner than ever before, which is great for the organisation.

Based on the feedback of members, Hockey Wales will be making changes to future Hockey Wales Awards evenings with the aim to increase attendance from clubs, cater to more peoples needs and become a celebration of hockey in Wales for everyone, and not just those nominated for an award.

Membership Survey

A Membership Survey was carried out at the end of last year in order to gain insight directly from our members into the direction of the organisation. We wanted to find out what is important to our members, so that we can make positive changes to our membership offering.



4.1 An infographic to provide a overview of the results of this 2015-2016 Membership

With our members being at the centre of our organisation, the feedback we received has helped to inform our decisions about our membership structure and how to continue to improve our services to better the sport. The response rate was 8% with 185 respondents.

One thing that came across loud and clear was that our members are exceptionally proud to be part of the hockey family –something that we will continue to build upon. At the upcoming AGM we will be proposing changes to our membership offering which we hope our members will find beneficial.

36%

satisfied with their membership

71%

proud to be a Hockey Wales member

79%

play hockey at least once a week

4.2 Three key figures of this year's Membership Survey

RUSH Hockey

Throughout 2015 Hockey Wales aimed to inspire people into hockey via a more casual yet competitive format of the game – RUSH. RUSH Hockey, developed by England Hockey, was a 5-a-side version of game played with a lighter and larger ball and was rolled out in leisure centres and private providers across Wales.



Unfortunately the format of RUSH Hockey didn't attract as many new participants as hoped. Feedback suggested RUSH Hockey was not enough like hockey for existing players and too much like hockey for newcomers. In March we took the decision to focus on the traditional game and work more with the FIH, EHF and other leading nations to develop a more engaging shorter format of the game that will help us meet our objectives in the long term.

Attracting new players and re-engage lapsed players via shorter formats of the game is crucial to the growth of hockey in Wales and we seek to introduce the right product in the near future.

Events

Hosting events is a crucial component of our commercial strategy. Throughout the 2015-2016 season we supported all semi-finals in cup competitions leading to the National Cup Finals.

All events had a consistent look and feel with branding, social media and marketing support and staff on site.

This was to ensure that players, deliverers and spectators felt a renewed show of support from Hockey Wales. We were assisted at events by an events management intern.

We have aspirations to host far more international fixtures in Wales and have made significant progress in this area. This summer will see national teams from France, Poland and the Czech Republic come to Cardiff for a number of home internationals. These matches provide a great opportunity to not only benefit from a home advantage, but to develop commercially attractive products that can generate revenue and create compelling content that will inspire media to cover Welsh hockey.

We will take steps to secure video highlights for media outlets and fans via our own digital platforms, new catering outlets and engage with far more with clubs in the lead up to international fixtures.

In April the organisation was thrilled to receive confirmation that we had been successful in securing the Women's EuroHockey Championships Division II. Winning the bid to host the tournament, which is to be held in Cardiff in August 2017, was the starting point of an exciting journey toward an event which we are certain will have a momentous impact on the sport in Wales.

Partnerships

We have strengthened partnerships with suppliers to ensure more commercially attractive and beneficial relationships. Agreements are in place with Opro, PAS, Grays Hockey, Adidas and Integro and this area of work will continue to ensure we work with companies that share our vision.



We have started to build meaningful links with the Welsh business community – a link that has been missing for a number of years. This is part of a long term plan which aims to generate sponsorship revenue and value in kind support from the business community.

Some wins from this are expected to come to fruition over the summer for the 2016-2017 season.

Performance Player Link

In December Jo Westwood, Abi Welsford and Katrin Budd ran a Christmas Masterclass at SWNC. The revenue generated from this went towards the women's performance programme and is one of a number sessions like these led by our internationals in an effort to neutralise their playing costs.

Decreasing the cost that Welsh players have to pay is key in discussions with sponsors and suppliers, and as such, it is hoped we will see a reduction in their costs this coming season.

The International Athlete Ambassador programme has allowed us to showcase our elite athletes as role models and as mentioned in the Growing the Game section, their engagement with young players at camps has been well received.



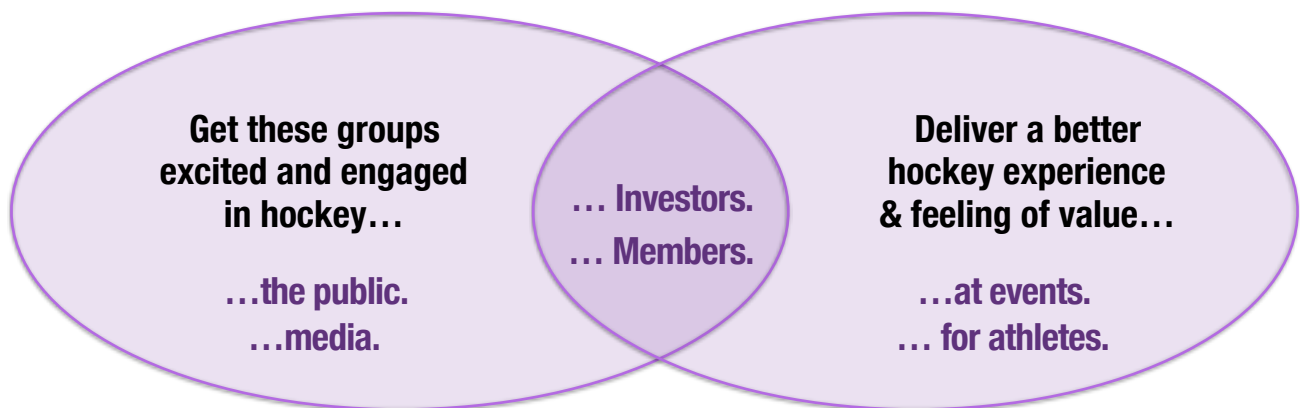
Retails and Kit

In the months leading up to Christmas, a number of offers and competitions were pushed out to members giving them the chance to buy gifts and stocking fillers at a discounted rate. Our collaboration with Footprint Promotional Products, Adidas, Quill Sports and Panthera on the promotions generated some revenue, but more importantly has driven the implementation of a new retail offering. This is set to be launched at the start of the coming season at the same time as a new kit supply agreement, which will enable a sustainable retail operation for Hockey Wales.

Communications

Hockey Wales communications strategy has been highly praised and has driven the growth of our digital communities. We have developed our rapport with national and regional media and as a result, we have seen journalists become increasingly interested in the sport.

Compelling content has been integral to our communications and in 2016-2017 we will be looking more to our members for your fantastic stories, as well as providing you with the tools to promote your own clubs with your local press, to ensure that we achieve 'top-to-bottom' coverage of the sport.



4.3 The key objectives of Hockey Wales communications

The overarching aims of our communications strategy (outlined above) has been strategically implemented via a number of channels and backed up with improved marketing materials, consistent public relations and improved branding and imagery. The results have been a rapid growth in social media, higher quality and quantity of media coverage, more engagement with brands and potential sponsors, and most importantly, our members have been better informed than previous years.

Finances

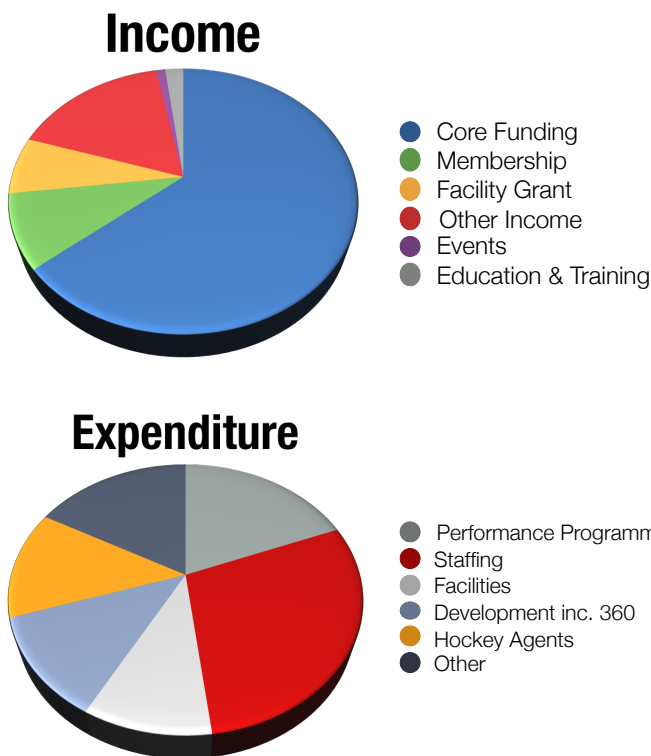
Like most Welsh National Governing Bodies of Sport, Hockey Wales is heavily reliant on public funding from Sport Wales. During 2015/16 we received £716,202 from Sport Wales made up of both national lottery and exchequer funding. This currently means the organisation is 64% reliant on public funding from Sport Wales. The grant included a 3% decrease in exchequer funding as a result of national public funding cuts.

**Hockey Wales' income for 2015/16 was £1,212,497
and with our expenditure being £1,207,135
the surplus for the year was £5,362**

Hockey Wales received a further £84,277 in facility grant aid from Sport Wales to be used at the National Centre in Cardiff, primarily for talent and performance purposes. Hockey Wales also received £12,250 from UK Sport to support the International Influencing programme during the period.

Hockey Wales continue to be very grateful for the funds received and recognises this is received in recognition of our ambitious plans, our track record for delivery and the high quality governance of the organisation. It is noted that Hockey Wales need to reduce our reliance on public funding generate our own revenue through various streams. The appointment of a Head of Commercial and Business in September 2015 is a positive step in this direction, and as an organisation we have a clear commercial strategy to reduce our reliance on public funding.

4.4 Breakdown of income and expenditure in 2015-2016



Membership income accounted for over 9% of overall revenue during 2015/16. Other income streams include athlete income through the Tier 2 and 4 programmes, the education and training programmes and revenue through competition and events.

The full detailed accounts are as always available for members at the AGM and ahead of the AGM on the Hockey Wales website.

Friends of Welsh Hockey

Friends of Welsh Hockey is a Charity set up to support field hockey activities within Wales and is run independently of Hockey Wales. Its two main areas of operation are to run a monthly draw and to administer the funds that this draw generates.

This fund allows Friends of Welsh Hockey to help develop hockey throughout Wales by supporting projects run by Clubs / Schools or individuals and also provides financial assistance for young people to improve their hockey experiences whether it be as a player, umpire, official or volunteer.

Their monthly draw has over 300 members with £150 worth of prize money awarded every month - 80 clubs are members and most months at least one club has won a prize!

This year they have provided some individuals with financial assistance and have also agreed to support a Youth Development project being run by the Mid South Hockey POD which will develop school / club links and increase participation in the local area.

The Friends of Welsh Hockey Trustees (Mary Bainbridge, Roger Caddick, Rebecca Daniels, Roger Harris, Jane Price, Jeff Robinson and John Taylor) continue to seek opportunities to support hockey in Wales which meet their charity objectives.

For more information please visit www.friendsofwelshhockey.org.uk (Charity No: 1140894).



Social Media

Firstly, thank you to everyone that has followed and/or engaged with us on our Twitter, Facebook or Instagram this past year. It may seem like a small thing, but these days thriving digital platforms are crucial to any successful organisation. Not only do they allow us to communicate informations more efficiently to our members, they are also invaluable when it comes to attracting sponsors and media to engage with the sport.

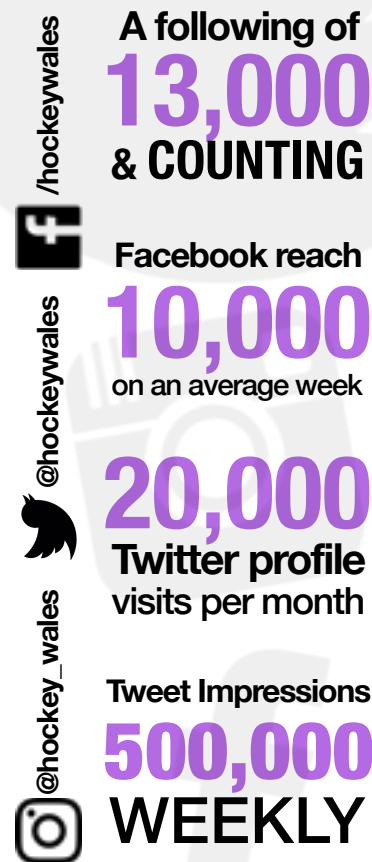
Our platforms have boomed over the last twelve months! The figures on the right demonstrate this and at present we are the fifth most followed sport in Wales on Twitter and Facebook behind the WRU, FA Wales, Boxing Wales and Welsh Athletics - and we continue to see week on week growth.

Since September our platforms have been managed predominantly by one person to ensure more consistent content and clearer messaging. We also launched our Instagram account, which for those who aren't in the know, is a great platform for sharing picture and video content.

While a lot of what happens on social media seems like fun, it does have a number of serious functions. We contribute to hockey's global presence by sharing content or campaigns and interacting with our fellow hockey nations and governing bodies, such as the FIH. It has also helped us better launch a number of initiatives, such as the Hockey Hub and successfully run campaigns like Hocktober. It has also given you, our members mores channels on which to communicate your news and stories.

We would like to encourage more of you to engage with us in 2016-2017, so please like and follow our pages if you don't already do so, and keep your tweets and post coming throughout the season - we will do our best to promote!

If you're new to social media or want guidance on how to better promote your club on social media, check out www.clubsolutions.wales/social-media.



Press Coverage

Hockey has attracted attention from more media outlets than any other year outside of a Commonwealth Games year. Members of our national teams have appeared on S4C and BBC Get Inspired, as well as interviewed live on BBC Radio Wales and Radio Cymru.

At a participation level, Hocktober, which aimed to promote participation and inclusion in hockey, received coverage from BBC Get Inspired and Made In Cardiff, with presenters even having a go at hockey for the feature.

In the coming season we would like to see greater coverage of grass roots hockey in regional and local media, and so we aim to provide clubs with the tool they need to better engage media in their local area.



THANK YOU FOR READING

For any feedback or questions,
please email us at
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