

**WSA**

Welsh Sports Association  
Cymdeithas Chwaraeon Cymru

**2020**

# Annual Report



# Chair's Welcome



**It was a great pleasure to be elected the Chair of the Welsh Sports Association at our last AGM in 2019, and I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Helen Humphrey for her work as chair over the preceding three years. Her efforts helped put the WSA on the firm footing it is today, and I'm delighted that she agreed to remain as a director.**

This year the board has also welcomed Paul Whapham, who has joined us from the Ospreys. Paul's experience of developing the hugely successful Osprey's in the Community programme is a great asset to us. His insights into the need, and best methods of engaging young people through sport has and will help us align the work of the WSA to key Governance policy areas over the coming years.

Whilst the country did not start to feel the tremors of Coronavirus until our financial year was nearing its end, it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge in this address the major impact the pandemic has had on the sector. Though we are facing the greatest challenges of more than a generation, it is also encouraging to see the way in which the sport and leisure industry in Wales has come together in its response to the virus to seek to ensure it emerges stronger and more resilient for the future. Over the coming year we will need to ensure we continue to present a united voice as a sector, and act responsibly as an industry to protect our future.

However, there are significant challenges ahead with significant strains on budgets at a time when we need to rebuild consumer confidence. These challenges create a more uncertain future for the sector in a post Coronavirus, post Brexit world. The WSA has a unique role to play in supporting the sector to be as effective as it can be at maximising income opportunities, whilst continuing to evidence and champion the need for investment in sport. The WSA will continue to seek to lead by example. During the year we have continued to diversify our own revenue streams and increase our membership income as well as generating commercial revenue through our trading arm Vibrant Nation.

Vibrant Nation continues to deliver the highly successful Governance and Leadership Framework for Wales on behalf of Sport Wales, having won the tender for this significant contract last year.

With the ongoing challenges that 2020 has brought, I'm pleased that Sport Wales have demonstrated their continued confidence in the WSA by extending this contract, and we are looking forward to bidding for the successor program towards the end of 2020/21. I am confident in saying that without the expert delivery of this contract, the sector would not have been as resilient as it has been in the face of the flooding in February 2020, or the ongoing crisis related to Coronavirus. It's a real credit to the sector that they have engaged so readily and earnestly with this work, and there have been some real success stories.

2021 will see the development of a new three-year strategy for the WSA, and we will have an opportunity to reflect on the opportunities that the next three years will bring, including a change of Government in The Senedd. Our lobbying voice on behalf of the sector has never been stronger, and we must seize the opportunity to center sport in the Coronavirus recovery plan. It has also never been clearer that the sector needs an independent voice, something which the WSA has demonstrated it can provide with great success.

Over the previous three years we have developed and grown as an organisation, and I look forward to the coming three years to build on our vision of "a Vibrant, Active Nation".

Thank you to all our members, partners and Sport Wales for their continued support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynn Pamment". The signature is fluid and cursive.

**Lynn Pamment**  
Chair

## Our Vision

“A vibrant, active nation”

## Our Mission

“To empower our members to be stronger and more successful, contributing towards a society fit for the future”

## How will we achieve this?

### Leading Advocacy

An independent, collective voice

### Building Capability

Professional support, training and development

### Developing Resilience

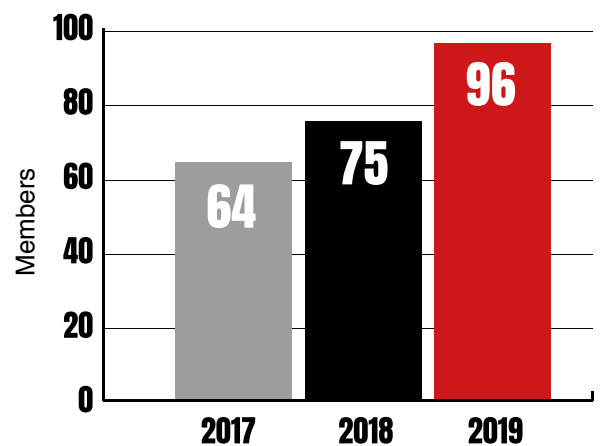
Financial and organisational sustainability

# Membership

**50%**

Since the WSA has charged for Membership in 2016/2017, our membership has increased by 50%.

We are proud to serve 96 organisations involved in sport and leisure.



## Membership Survey

We conducted our member survey in March 2020, we had a 39% response rate.

Political Monitoring, Advocacy, Safeguarding and WSA Helplines are seen as our most valuable services.

‘Other’ was an interesting category as members valued our ability to facilitate collaboration and enable networking. Members also appreciated our wider consultancy support.

The biggest ongoing challenge facing the members is funding and the need to diversify revenue, and this was prior to the onset of Covid-19.

Members also indicated that they would like us to deliver more Governance, Leadership, Management and IT training.

We are mindful that these requirements may have changed since Covid-19 and so we are preparing a follow up survey this month.

Please note we delivered on our promise to provide a Welsh Language support offering to our members from the previous survey.

**39%** Response rate.



**1079** Newsletter Database



**2011** Twitter Followers

# Leading Advocacy

An independent, collective voice for sport

## Evidence

Championing and promoting the contribution of the sector to wider public policy issues continues to be at the forefront of our work. Demonstrating impact continues to be an issue for our members, and with the likely move to an outcome-based public funding model in Wales, this has never been more important.

## Championing

We continue to be the voice of the sector, championing and amplifying the voice of all our members. During the year, we held a number of consultation events for members, and responded to Government and Welsh Parliament consultations on behalf of the sector.

We will refresh and build upon the success of our advocacy group over the next financial year, preparing for the launch of the WSAs new strategy in September 2021 to align with the new Government term.

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## Soft Power Consultation

WSA has worked with the British Council to explore the potential of leveraging our sporting assets in a global context, building Wales presence on the global stage. A report is forthcoming.



Meeting with the Minister regarding International Strategy



Meeting regarding review of Major Events Strategy

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## Development of The Power of Sport

This has been delayed to take into account the evolving impact on Welsh sport of the February flooding and unprecedented Coronavirus outbreak.

We have rolled this work over into the coming financial year, in anticipation of the formation of a new Welsh Government in May 2021

## Engagement

Building on the success of previous years, the WSA has continued to develop key relationships with decision makers in Wales and strengthen our working relationship with Sport Wales.

- Ensuring the direct alignment with the Future Generations Act
- Regular communications with sister organisations across the UK – SRA, SSA, Eire



# Building Capability

## Developing Resilience

### Overview






This has been a year of success for our training - we have been improving efficiencies, aligning our training courses and support to reflect member need, and reducing overheads to ensure that our members are getting value for money. We have also looked at our environmental impact, focusing on reducing waste, and moving forward, we are considering our online presence in terms of promotion, payment and e-learning so that there are no barriers to accessing our training across Wales.

### Safeguarding

We continue to offer the breadth of safeguarding training, from SPC, Online renewal and Time to Listen courses. We have worked specifically with senior Safeguarding leads to develop our supporting templates e.g. creating a document which suggests the best practice for responding to child protection issues, complaints or allegations within a sporting setting.

### Training attendance

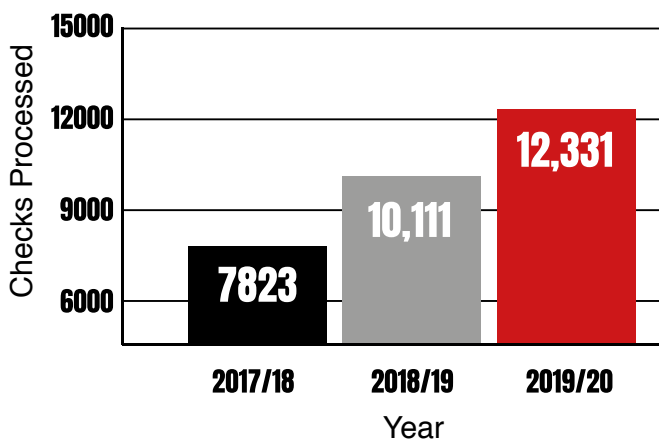
We have continued to build on the success of our training programmes, an offering we wish to continue developing throughout the next financial year.

-  Safeguarding - 136
-  Governance - 227
-  Legal Structures - 26
-  Team Management - 80
-  Politics - 60

"The improvement of our membership systems has been a priority for some time, having seen what Sport:80 has delivered for our peers they proved to be the ideal choice. The new platform will provide a great foundation for us to engage with the people involved in our sport and improve our internal processes."

*Ria Male, Chief Executive Officer, Hockey Wales*

### DBS



**18/19 - 19/20**  
**21.96% Increase**

**We finished the year with**  
**22% year on year growth**

### New Services & Partners

- **Legal Support & Helpline** - Loosemores Solicitors are a leading Cardiff law firm, they have in-depth sports industry knowledge and experience needed to provide quality legal advice, tailored to the needs of organisations and individuals involved in all aspects of sport. Through Loosemores we have been able to increase our pro bono Legal Helpline Service to 1hr per matter.

- **First Aid** - The WSA are delighted to be working with St John Cymru to offer First Aid training, Event cover and First Aid products to WSA members at discounted rates. The St John Cymru team offer a bespoke Sports First Aid course to WSA members, as well as Mental Health Awareness and Automated External Defibrillator training.

- **Equipsme Health Scheme** - Equipsme offers practical health and wellbeing support plans for employed staff. The WSA is working collaboratively with existing partner Watkin Davies on this new Health Scheme.

- **Welsh Language Translation** - The WSA has created a suite of resources in conjunction with the Welsh Language Commissioner (WLC) and Sport Wales. Developing a Welsh Language translation service framework was one of the specific requests from the 2019 annual members survey. The offer includes a range of free support and resources to allow WSA members and the wider sporting sector to develop their use of the Welsh language. There is also a bank of accredited and sport specific translators offering a discounted rate to WSA members.

### Existing Partners:

- **Watkin Davies** - As detailed above, Watkin Davies are our Wales based independent broker who support our members in terms of organisational and club insurance arrangements. They have offered free independent and confidential insurance reviews for our members.

- **Acorn Executive Search** - The WSA formed a strategic partnership with Acorn in 2017 to collaborate with National Governing Bodies of Sport to strengthen their boards with non-exec directors. The service continues to flourish with 14 of our members having utilised the service this year, with 23 Board placements. In total this partnership has enabled over 80 appointments to Boards with 25 different member organisations engaging with the Acorn Executive Search team.

- **Sport:80** - The Sport:80 solution is a sophisticated yet easy-to-use sports management system, that enables our members to manage multiple areas of their business including: Membership registrations and renewals, Event entry and management, Qualifications, certifications and licensing etc.

- **Enterprise** - The WSA partner deal with Enterprise offers dedicated, rental and pool car vehicles, for all our members, at terrific rates. 14 members have switched to the Enterprise service this year. They are making significant financial savings and contributing to a smaller environmental footprint for the sector.

- **Traveleads** - Traveleads are making a significant difference to our members in terms of reduced costs and time saved for group travel. They have been delivering an impeccable service throughout Covid, managing delays, cancellations and recouping refunds for members.

- **Sportscover** - Sportscover are our insurance underwriters. Sportscover is one of the world's leading specialist sports and leisure insurers and work collaboratively with our brokers Watkin Davies on the bespoke coaches insurance portal for WSA members. Sportscover offer valuable insight and provide advice on risk drawn from international experience on issues such as concussion.

- **Orchard** - Our Media & Events Partner offering our members award-winning creative and strategic support. Orchard's Digital team worked on redeveloping the WSA's website, improving security and user experience so members can access the various services available. Orchard also deliver WSA's Media training.

# The Governance and Leadership Framework Wales

## Overview

Since securing the contract with Sport Wales to deliver the Governance and Leadership Framework in May 2018, through our trading company, Vibrant Nation, the programme has gone from strength to strength.

It has been a successful year, despite ending the year with the very real challenges posed by coronavirus (COVID-19). Beneficiary organisations, as a cohort, are clearly satisfied with the programme and the vast majority have indicated that the programme has had an impact on their organisations. Throughout the last year, Vibrant Nation has invested substantially in time and resource, over and above the commitments made in the tender document and service contract. As is evidenced through an independent evaluation of the programme.

## GLFW END OF YEAR REPORT 19/20

Added value (Services and Fees)

Contract fee £68K



121%

ROI ON CONTRACT

Added Value (Services and Fees) £85.5K

## Illustrative Videos

Principle 1 : [Integrity](#)

Principle 2 : [Defining the role of the Board](#)

Principle 3 : [Setting Vision, Mission and Purpose](#)

Principle 4 : [Balanced, Inclusive and Skilled Board](#)

Principle 5 : [Standards, Systems and Control](#)

Principle 6 : [Accountability and Transparency](#)

Principle 7 : [Understanding, Engaging with and Embracing the Sporting Landscape](#)

[Testimonials](#)

The impact of the governance programme is substantial. It has provided tools to engender a cultural shift in the way in which many of the governing bodies of sport operate. From the co-creation of the original programme, to ensure it was 'for the sector, by the sector', we have had 100% positive engagement from the Chairs and CEO's engaged in a Thought Leadership Programme to enhance the understanding of the relationship between these respective leadership roles. The provision of practical hands on support in reviewing articles, supporting strategic development and encouraging a cultural shift to enhance levels of diversity and equality has also been invaluable.

The overall programme is highly valued by the NGB beneficiaries and Sport Wales should acknowledge their role as the catalytic enabler in helping the sector to thrive, both now and for generations to come. Vibrant Nation is keen to continue to play a pivotal role in this process and explore opportunities to be able to engage a wider cross section of the industry.

"The support from Vibrant Nation continues to impress, we asked for support with our new strategy and would not have finished the project without such guidance. We asked for support for our Articles to be reviewed and again it was available allowing us to work to bring them up to date."

*Colin Metson, CEO, Welsh Boxing*

"The GLFW for Disability Sport Wales has helped us focus our attention and to make sure it is high on the agenda and is considered within board meetings consistently and core within our work-programme"

*Fiona Reid, CEO, Disability Sport Wales*

## Enhancing understanding of the value of the Principles:

A need was identified to continue to promote the programme through a variety of means. Given the way in which the programme was co-created by 'the sector', we returned to this underlying principle for the creation of a series of short films to underpin the importance and understanding of the governance principles on which the programme was built and therefore all films featured the volunteers, board members and executive teams who have fully embraced the programme and have enhanced their organisation by embedding the 7 Principles of the Governance and Leadership Programme for Wales.


# Finances

During 2019/20 we have continued to deliver for our members, helping them navigate the many challenges they face in what has been a very unusual year. Our service offerings continue to grow as we continuously seek to deliver into our members value added, solution focused initiatives. We aim to deliver these services sustainably and we have continued to reduce our reliance on grant funding, with a reduction to 42% (excluding disbursements) of total income compared to 52% in 2018/19. During the year we saw turnover rise significantly, leveraging both the WSA and Vibrant Nation brands. Across the two companies we made a slight deficit, the first in more than a decade driven by an exceptional membership matter.

As we look forward, we remain confident that WSA continues to be a going concern. We continue to focus efforts on sustainability; diversification of our income streams and growing to meet the demands of the rapidly changing landscape and supporting our members to do the same. We are very grateful for the continued support of our members and look forward to working with them to ensure that we collectively maximise the positive impacts of sport within Wales.

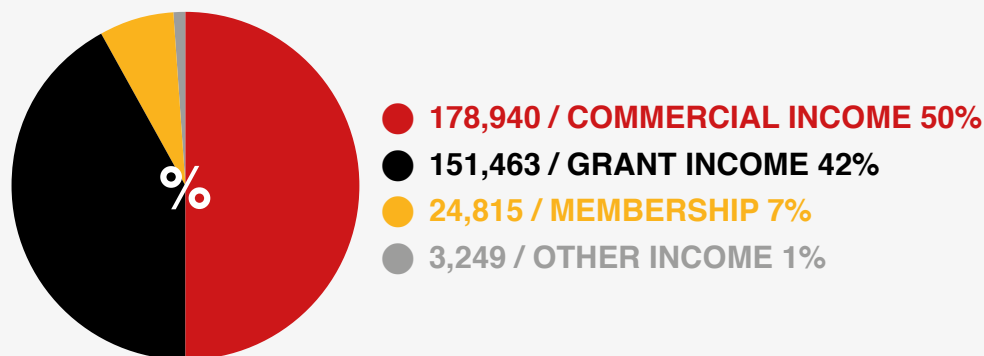
Our annual accounts are available on the WSA website: <https://wsa.wales/about-the-wsa/wsa-governance-documentation/>

The graph below demonstrates the breakdown of the combined income of WSA and it's trading subsidiary Vibrant Nation (excluding disbursements). The biggest increase was seen in commercial income, thanks to increasing the value of partnerships, an increase in DBS checks and the GLFW contract award.

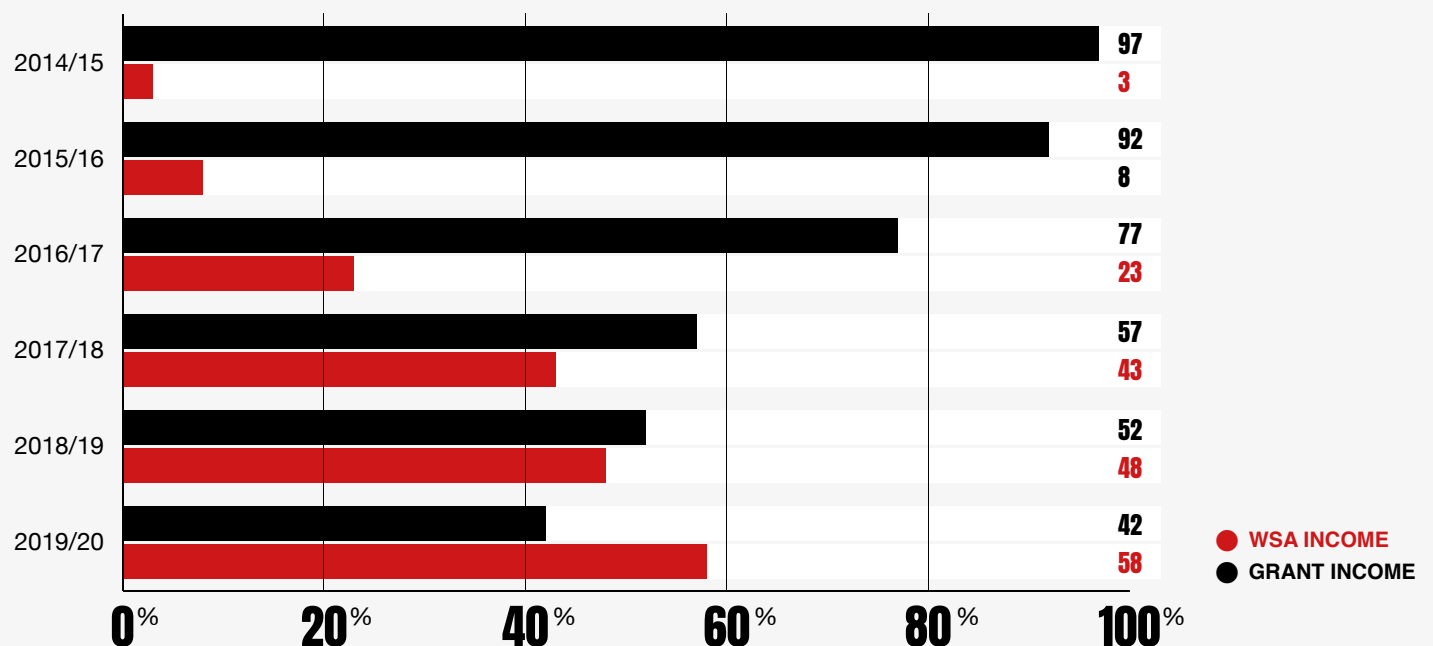


Mark Tweed, Finance Director, WSA Board

## WSA / VN Income Breakdown 2019/20



## WSA / VN Income 2019/20



# Our Priorities for 2020/21

The very end of the financial year 2019/20 brought huge challenges for the sector in Wales, initially with widespread flooding across South Wales in February, and then the onset of the global pandemic through February and March.

At the WSA, we are committed to actively supporting our members through the crisis, and as always we seek the best value for money and explore the potential for collaborative opportunities that are of benefit to the sector.

The next financial year will see us continue to face the unprecedented challenges thrown up by Covid19, a new Welsh Government and Senedd, and the beginnings of a new strategy for the WSA. We will need to anticipate emerging trends and helping to position our members to best deal with the change.

- Continue to lead the sector in a phased return to sport, post Covid. Emerging stronger through collaboration
- We will bid to retain the contract to manage the Governance and Leadership Programme for Wales
- Broaden the range of shared services available through professional partnerships that are able to demonstrate enhanced service levels and efficiency savings
- Explore the opportunity of securing charitable status to provide a new dimension to the organisation, to support future generations
- Continue to build the Vibrant Nation brand and services, reinvesting any surplus back onto the services offered to WSA members
- Continue to strive towards a continued reduction in public sector investment and develop our financial independence
- Consult on a new strategy for 2021 - 2024

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We would like to show our appreciation for our partners and associates with us on our journey in 2018/19:

