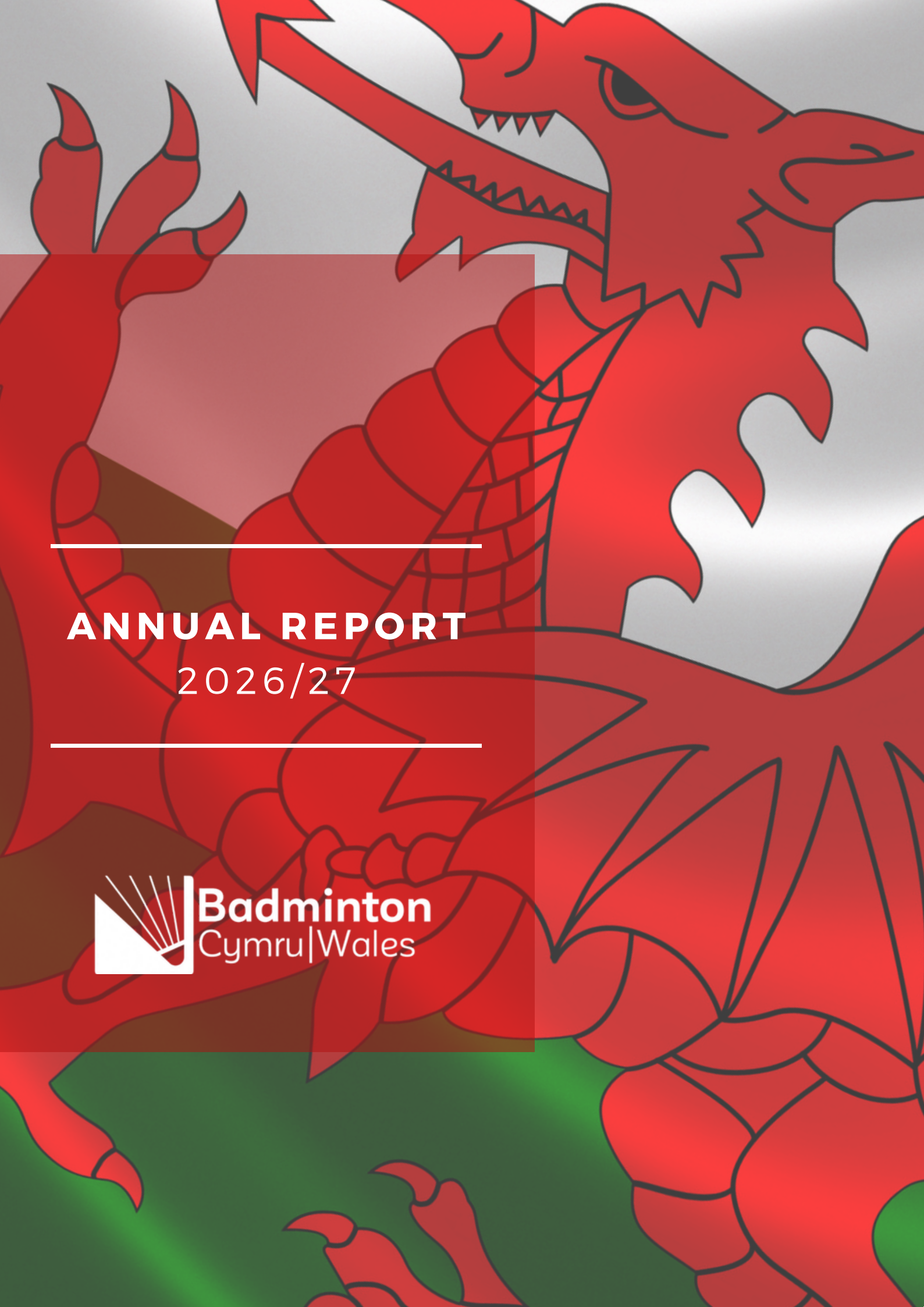


A stylized red dragon with black outlines, facing right, set against a background of grey, white, and green. The dragon's body is covered in scales, and it has a long, pointed tongue.

ANNUAL REPORT

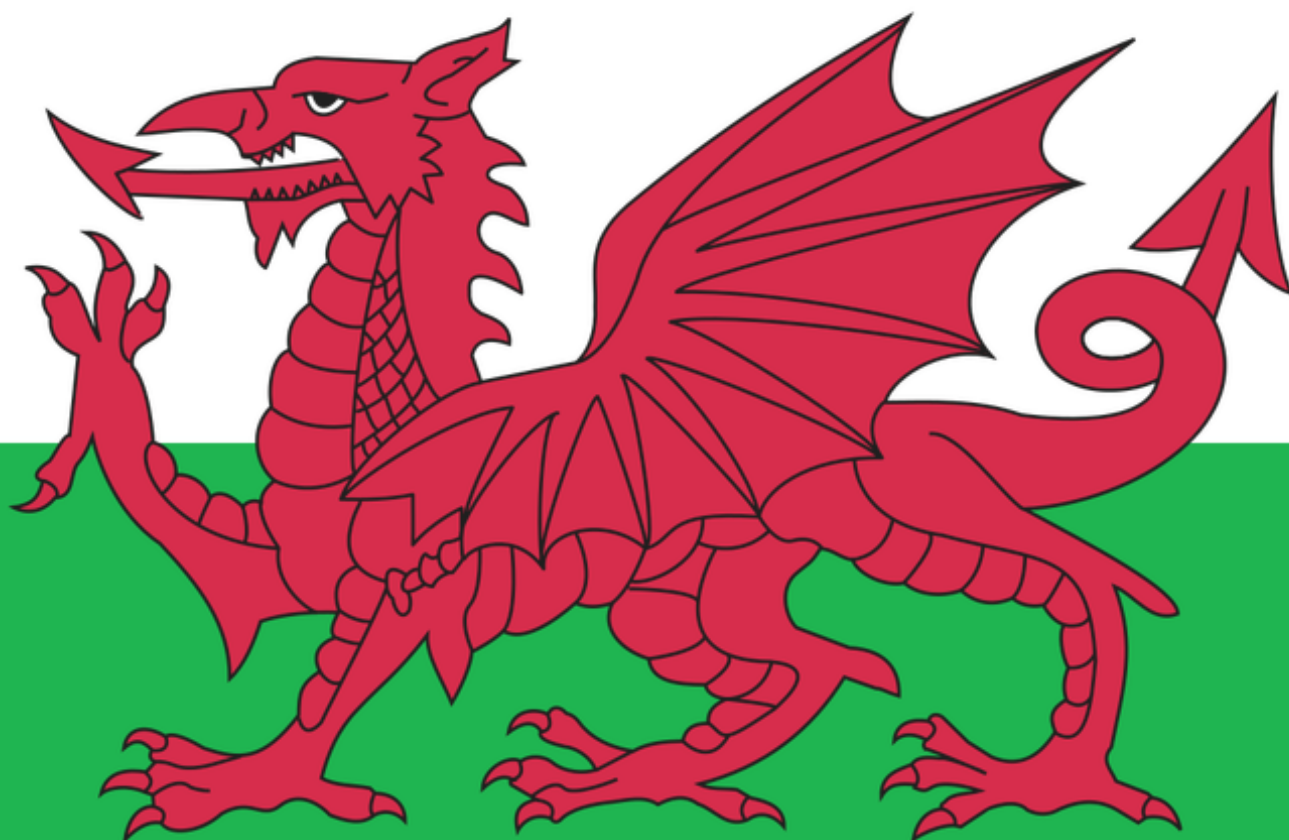
2026/27



Badminton
Cymru|Wales

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BADMINTON WALES BOARD

John Walsh
President

Peter Hybart
Chair & Governance Director (Badminton)

Chris Egan
Strategy Director (Badminton)

Cath McCluskey
Coaching & Development Director SOUTH | WEST (Badminton)

Neil Cottrill
Coaching & Development Director NORTH | MID (Badminton)

Adam Stewart
Income Generation Director (Badminton)

Meryl Randall-Jones
Marketing and Communications Director (Badminton)

Jon Austin
Performance Director (Senior Independent Director)

Nick Ralph
Finance Director (Independent)

Ray Marley
Safeguarding Director (Independent)

Leanne Brown
EDI Director (Independent)

CHAIRS FOREWORD

Welcome to the Badminton Wales 2025-26 Annual Report. On behalf of the Board, I thank our members, clubs, leagues, counties, volunteers, coaches, officials and partners for their continued commitment to badminton in Wales.

This year, the Board has focused on supporting the organisation through an important period of strategic development. The new 2030 strategy provides a clear long-term direction for badminton in Wales and will be presented to the Membership at this year's AGM. Our role is to ensure that this direction is governed well, supported appropriately and delivered with accountability.

Roadshows across Wales confirmed support for our proposed direction, while highlighting the need to strengthen relationships with the voluntary badminton network in some areas. Your continued support is vital, particularly in Coaching and Junior Development (CJD), as we work together to create more opportunities for young people and address our ageing club playing base.

As the strategy moves into implementation, the Board will continue to provide oversight, constructive challenge and support to the Executive team. This includes ensuring that decisions remain aligned to the long-term interests of the sport, that progress is measured effectively, and that the organisation continues to strengthen relationships across the badminton network.

I would like to acknowledge the leadership of our CEO, Kelly Aston, who has continued to lead the organisation with commitment and integrity. Her election to the Voluntary Board of Badminton Europe, and appointment to chair its Governance Sub-Committee, is a significant recognition of her contribution and gives Badminton Wales a valuable voice within the wider European badminton community.

My thanks also go to my fellow Board Directors for the time, expertise and challenge they provide. In particular, I thank Nick Ralph, who stands down as Finance Director at the AGM after four years of excellent service, and welcome Colin Arnold as his successor following an external recruitment process. Colin brings strong financial experience, club badminton knowledge and voluntary sector governance expertise.

Subject to confirmation at the AGM, I also congratulate Chris Egan on a further three-year term as Strategy Director. Chris has played an important role in shaping the new strategy and will support the Board in scrutinising its implementation and considering future trends that may impact badminton in Wales.

Finally, thank you to everyone who contributes to badminton across Wales. Your commitment remains the foundation of our sport, and I wish you all a successful and enjoyable new season.



HIGHLIGHTS



01

Launch of the Badminton Wales 2030 Strategy



02

CEO elected to the Badminton Europe Board



03

100% safeguarding compliance across junior clubs



04

First ever BWF Level 2 coaching course delivered in Wales



05

Launch of the Rising Stars performance programme



06

International recognition for the 'Can You Manage?' campaign



07

Successful Community Challenge Cup reaching new audiences



08

Launch of the inaugural Masters Welsh County Team Championships



09

New strategic partnerships with Fever Pitch and Tenez



10

Expanded inclusive badminton opportunities across Wales

Kelly Aston, MBE OLY

CEO REPORT



Badminton Wales continues to build momentum as we work towards creating a healthier, more active and connected Wales through badminton. Throughout 2025/26, we have strengthened progress across participation, governance, safeguarding, performance and development, driven by the dedication of our operational team, Board Directors, volunteers, coaches, officials and members.

GROWTH 25/26

Junior Affiliated Membership	Senior Affiliated Membership	Affiliated Clubs with Junior Section (Players)	Engaged & Active Coaches	Junior Clubs with a Safeguarding Officer	% of members that are female	% of members from an ethnic minority background	% of members with a disability	Key BW Community Volunteers	Average Senior Series Participation	Welsh Senior Grades	Players meeting BWF criteria	Welsh Players on WOP
396	1074	34	222	100%	33%	19%	2%	96	39	2 4	6	1

The year has seen encouraging progress across key performance measures, including 100% safeguarding compliance across all affiliated clubs, ensuring every club has a designated Safeguarding Officer in place.

These measures provide a useful snapshot of progress and show where continued focus is needed, particularly in strengthening growth, diversity, inclusion and engagement.

Shaping Priorities Through Engagement

A key focus this year has been developing our plans around the two strategic priorities identified in last year's annual report: Coaching and Junior Development, and Income Generation and Engagement.

Over the past year we have shaped these areas in more detail and delivered member roadshows across Wales. Engagement with clubs, coaches, volunteers, players and parents validated the priorities and strengthened our commitment to focusing effort where it can make the greatest difference.

Coaching and Junior Development

We are clear that Coaching and Junior Development must receive focused attention and investment over the coming strategic cycle. To grow and improve badminton in Wales, we need more young people entering and staying in the sport, supported by a larger, more confident and better-connected coaching workforce that can strengthen pathways, raise standards and create more opportunities for lifelong participation.

Income Generation and Engagement

We are building greater financial sustainability and reducing reliance on a limited number of funding sources.

Alongside this, we have a significant opportunity to better engage the thousands of people already playing badminton across Wales who currently have little connection with the National Governing Body. Through stronger engagement, partnerships and new opportunities, we can create a more sustainable future and reinvest more back into the sport.

As we deliver against our 2030 strategy, we are focused on clear plans, measurable outcomes and sustainable investment decisions that direct our time and resources where they will make the greatest long-term impact for badminton in Wales.

Other Reflections

It was fantastic to see the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games go ahead, particularly given the uncertainty around the future of the Games. Glasgow stepped up and delivered a memorable event, providing an important platform for Welsh athletes and a positive reminder of the value of the Commonwealth Games movement.

Although badminton was not included in the Glasgow 2026 programme, we remain hopeful that the sport will return to the Commonwealth Games in India in 2030, giving future Welsh players the opportunity to qualify and represent Wales at a major multi-sport Games.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to Badminton Wales over the past year, including the operational team, Board Directors, partners, clubs, coaches, officials, volunteers, players and members. Your commitment, passion and support continue to drive progress across badminton in Wales.

Together, we have a clear opportunity to grow, strengthen and re-energise badminton across Wales.

GOVERNANCE

Board Meetings 2025/26

Month	Attendance	Attendance %
Sept 2025	12 out of 12	100%
Nov 2025	11 out of 12	92%
April 2026	11 out of 12	92%
July 2026	7 out of 11	64%

The organisation's annual business cycle is now firmly established, with Board meetings held throughout the year in September, November, January (TEAM | Board Workshop), April, and July.

Detailed discussions take place within Sub-Committees ahead of each Board meeting. These Sub-Committees covering - Audit & Risk, Governance & Policy, Masters, Coaching & Junior Development, Engagement & Income Generation and Events — are now well-formed and increasingly influential.



GOVERNANCE & POLICY

SUB COMMITTEE (GAP)

Recommendations were made to the Board/AGM in the following areas:

- Terms of Reference for the Fan Engagement/Income (FIG), Coaching and Junior Development (CJD), sub-committees and the Centenary/Awards Working Group;
- New Senior League and County Affiliation packages;
- Joint safeguarding Case Management with Badminton England;
- New definitions for Badminton and Independent Board Directors;
- 2026 Board Director Recruitment;
- New and revised HR policies;
- Membership/Membership Renewal policies and case study;
- New Disciplinary Regulations and Concerns/Complaints Policy;
- Updated International and Masters International Selection Policies;
- Nomination of a Board Director (Jon Austin) to replace the CEO on the GB Board;
- New BW Values to be included within the new BW Strategy

My thanks go to fellow Board Directors Ray Marley, Leanne Brown and Kelly Aston (CEO) for their hard work on the sub-committee during the year.

GAP sub committee 2025/26

Month	Attendance	Attendance %
Nov 2025	3 out of 5	60%
Feb 2026	5 out of 5	100%
Mar 2026	5 out of 5	100%
April 2026	4 out of 4	100%
June 2026	4 out of 4	100%



AUDIT & RISK SUB COMMITTEE (ARC)

ARC comprises the Finance Director (Chair), Safeguarding Director, Strategy Director, Chief Executive Officer and Finance Manager.

It met quarterly in advance of the main Board meetings in November, April and July to undertake its main responsibilities of scrutinising the accounts, financial plans, procedures and controls, risk management and the risk register.

Further development of the Risk Management Policy introduced;

- a more well defined methodology for grading risks;
- a requirement for risks graded as High and Very High to be reviewed at quarterly Board meetings
- an annual review by the CEO of the effectiveness of the risk management process

Safeguarding is the only risk graded as ‘High’ on BW’s risk register after implementation of all reasonable mitigating procedures and controls, due to its nature and potential seriousness.

Rather than directly replace BW’s in house Financial Coorcinator who left during the year, the accounting function was outsourced to Wales Sports Association (WSA). WSA’s outsource package included a change in external accountants for the annual statutory financial statements to Hodge Bakshi.

An audit of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2026 was not considered necessary by ARC or the Board. The year end statutory accounts prepared by Hodge Bakshi are consistent with the management accounts reported to ARC and the Board during the year.

The increase in income this year is one off funding received for hosting the British and Irish Para Badminton International in July 2025. The tournament is run on a not for profit basis with the funding received all defrayed on running the event.

Reserves are all held in cash savings and remain very healthy albeit in excess of BW’s Reserves Policy, so the budget and plan for the coming years remains to operate at a controlled annual deficit gradually returning reserves to policy level.

Audit & risk sub committee 2025/26		
Month	Attendance	Attendance %
Nov 2025	4 out of 5	80%
April 2026	4 out of 5	80%
July 2026	3 out of 4	75%

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

Income statement for year end - 31st March 2026

	31.3.25 £	31.3.26 £
Turnover	480,923	701,846
Administrative expenses	472,074	687,906
Operating surplus/(deficit)	8,849	13,940
Interest receivable and similar	2,239	2,821
Operating surplus/(deficit) before taxation	11,088	16,761
Tax on surplus	425	536
Surplus/(deficit) for financial year	10,663	16,225
Other comprehensive income for year end - 31st March 2026	31.3.25 £	31.3.26 £
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	10,663	16,225
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	10,663	16,225

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

Balance sheet

31.3.25
£

31.3.26
£

Fixed assets Tangible assets

-

-

Current Assets

Debtors

9,038

46,457

Cash at bank

256,422

199,008

265,460

245,465

Creditors

Amounts falling due within one year

94,109

57,889

Net Current Assets

171,351

187,576

Total Assets Less Current Liabilities

171,351

187,576

Reserves

171,351

187,576

Income and expenditure account

171,351

187,576

FY25/26 Financial Accounts have been produced in conjunction with Hodge Bakshi Limited Chartered Accountants and are subject to approval at the AGM26.

COACHING & JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT SUB COMMITTEE (CJD)

The past year has seen important progress in delivering Badminton Wales' strategic priority of strengthening coaching and junior development. Our focus has been on building the foundations that will support long-term growth, improved coaching quality, and increased opportunities for young players across Wales.

A key priority has been growing and supporting the coaching workforce. We have committed to delivering a minimum of two BWF Level 1 coaching courses each year and have strengthened links with universities, colleges, parents, and the badminton community to attract new coaches into the sport. Alongside recruitment, the Sub-Committee has recognised the importance of retaining and developing coaches through ongoing mentoring, CPD opportunities, and practical support.

Within the player pathway, work has continued on the development of the National Junior Development Squad (NJDS) and the Rising Stars programme. Four NJDS development weekends have been scheduled to provide consistent opportunities for players and coaches, while future plans include clearer progression criteria and enhanced communication for players and parents. Demand for development opportunities continues to grow, highlighting the importance of investing in the next generation of Welsh players.

Competition opportunities have also expanded, with around 30 sanctioned and community competitions now taking place across Wales. Work is underway to strengthen links between local competitions, the Junior Series, and the wider performance pathway, creating clearer progression routes for aspiring players. Increasingly, local clubs and coaches are taking ownership of competition delivery, helping to build a sustainable future for the sport.

Looking ahead, our priorities remain clear: recruit and develop more coaches, strengthen junior competitions, improve understanding of the player pathway, and establish meaningful measures of success. While challenges remain, the foundations are now in place to support sustainable growth and create more opportunities for players, coaches, clubs, and volunteers throughout Wales.



FAN ENGAGEMENT & INCOME GENERATION SUB-COMMITTEE (FIG)

The past twelve months has been an accelerating year for the Fan Engagement and Income Generation (FIG) sub-committee with dedicated ownership and objectives. Meetings were held in Oct 25, Dec 25, Feb 26 and June 26.

The sub-committee's focus has been on building the foundations for sustainable self-generated income, and on engaging players and communities who are not currently part of the Badminton Wales family. Progress was made in the following areas:

- Terms of Reference for the FIG sub-committee approved, together with a Level 0 delivery plan
- An income analysis was completed, setting out Badminton Wales' income sources;
- Agreement of a long-term ambition to move from the current 80/20 Sport Wales to self-generated income split towards 60/40 by 2030;
- Growth priorities confirmed – Membership, Partnerships, Community and Fan Engagement;
- Community Challenge Cup delivered in April 2026;
- A review of membership performance, including the first review of the social membership introduced in September 2024;
- Ongoing review of the Orchard sponsorship programme;
- A partnership framework and tracking system established, aligned to the ARC Sub-Committee, to ensure effective oversight and management of vendor-related risks arising from new partnerships
- Partnership agreed with Tenez and Fever Pitch;
- Creation of a new part-time Business Development Executive role, planned to start in September 2026, focused on partnerships, sponsorship and relationship management;
- Input into the communications plan supporting the launch of the new Badminton Wales strategy

My thanks go to fellow Board Directors Meryl Randell-Jones, Ray Marley, Chris Egan and Kelly Aston (CEO), and to sub-committee members Shuvro Ghoshal and Dave Bendle, for their hard work on the sub-committee during the year.



EVENTS SUB-COMMITTEE (ESC)

The Events sub-committee provides strategic oversight of events on behalf of BW. Key current areas of work are:

Development of a feedback process for organisers and participants of events at all levels to identify good practice and areas for improvement. This then informs planning for all future events.

Development of a programme to encourage the recruitment and training of technical officials with a view to increasing numbers.

Ensuring BW is in a position to be able to host a major (international) event by 2030.





MASTERS SUB COMMITTEE (MSC)

January 2026 – England Masters County Championships

Masters Welsh Counties continues to go from strength to strength, with participation and regional representation growing significantly. At the English MCC Championships in January 2026, Welsh Counties doubled the number of teams entered, with players from West and North Wales joining the competition. Represented across Wolverhampton, Bournemouth and Worcester, all teams performed strongly, with the Over 40s and Over 45s both achieving runner-up finishes. Growth has accelerated from 20 players across two teams in 2024 to a projected 90 players across ten teams in 2027. This continued expansion reflects the increasing strength, depth and sustainability of Masters badminton across Wales.

May 2026 - Welsh Masters Nationals 2026 – Summary

Despite a number of last-minute changes, expertly managed by the Badminton Wales Events Team, the event was a resounding success. Participation reached a record high of 139 players, representing a 54% increase on the previous year and continuing a strong upward trend in engagement. The day was delivered exceptionally well by Stephen Temple, Harriett Johnson and Dave Bendle whose commitment ensured the event ran smoothly from an early start through to a late finish. Special thanks must also go to our volunteer umpires, whose support throughout the day was invaluable. Most importantly, congratulations to all the players who competed with great determination and sportsmanship, producing closely contested matches across all age categories and contributing to a fantastic atmosphere throughout the event.

June 2026 - Masters Welsh County Team Championships (MWCTC)

With the support of Badminton Wales, the inaugural Masters Welsh County Team Championships (MWCTC) was successfully held in Deganwy, North Wales, bringing together players from all five Welsh county regions. Organised by Cath McCluskey, alongside a dedicated team of regional volunteers including Dave Markey, Alex Dalton, Marie Morgan, Roy Watkins, Heather Astley, Gareth Gooding, Chris Egan and Simon Lane, the event featured Over 35s and Over 45s competitions, with players aged 35 to 72 competing in a round-robin format. The finals showcased excellent badminton, with South Central defeating North East to win the Over 35s title, while North East A edged out North West A in a closely contested Over 45s final. Thanks go to all players, volunteers, and event sponsors YC Sports and Central Sports for making this inaugural championship a resounding success. We look forward to building on its success in 2027.

Conclusion

This year has marked another exceptional year for the domestic growth of Masters badminton in Wales. Record participation, expanding regional representation, and the launch of the inaugural Masters Welsh County Team Championships have highlighted the continued strength of the Masters community. These achievements provide a solid platform for further growth and success in the years ahead.

MEMBERSHIP



Badminton Wales currently has 1,502 members, with Senior Competitive membership remaining the largest category at 885 members.

Junior membership remains strong, with almost 400 young people engaged through competitive pathways and the National Junior Development Squad.

Women make up 499 members (33%) of the membership base, while 284 members (19%) identify as being from an ethnic background. A further 27 members (2%) have declared a disability. These figures show encouraging progress in building a more diverse and representative badminton community across Wales.

Several membership changes have been introduced for the 2026/27 season to simplify the membership structure and improve reporting. The Junior Social membership category has been removed, creating a clearer picture of junior participation and ensuring junior membership figures better reflect active engagement within clubs, programmes and competitions.

The Senior Social membership fee has increased from £5 to £10. Despite this change, the membership continues to offer excellent value through insurance cover, member communications, opportunities to engage with the sport and access to the wider badminton community.

Alongside membership changes, Badminton Wales has introduced a new League Affiliation model to help strengthen governance and close gaps in compliance across local competition structures. This is currently being introduced with a soft launch, with Regional Community Managers working closely with leagues over the next 12 months to support implementation and ensure clubs, leagues and players understand their responsibilities.

Overall, membership remains in a healthy position with a strong adult playing base, a growing and diverse membership community, and a positive pipeline of young players entering the sport.

Key priorities for the year ahead will be retaining juniors as they move into adult badminton, increasing female participation and supporting clubs and leagues to operate within a sustainable and well-governed structure.

DIGITAL

Badminton Wales has continued to advance its digital transformation, strengthening its position as a visible, values-led, nationally and internationally recognised governing body.

Activities for the past 12 months have focused on three core areas:

- Enhancing digital reach and engagement
- Elevating storytelling across all levels of our sport
- Exploring partnerships and income-generation opportunities

Brand Visibility and Storytelling

A significant focus has been on the amplification of badminton activity across Wales, spanning grassroots participation, performance pathways, development programmes, national competitions and Welsh International. In addition, storytelling has been a key driver of visibility. Alongside performance content, there has been a sustained emphasis on showcasing coaching, volunteering, clubs, and community activity to reflect the full badminton ecosystem and reinforce the sport's wider social impact.



Campaigns and Engagement

A broad range of digital campaigns were delivered this year. The most important obviously being 'Can You Manage?' which fetched us recognition at the Badminton Europe and Badminton World Federation AGM.

Other pieces of content supported participation growth, membership engagement, and competition entry across juniors, seniors and Masters level.

Content approaches were diversified to improve engagement, including short-form video, reels, carousels, human-interest storytelling, and more informal content formats. This included light-hearted and relatable content designed to broaden appeal and attract younger and non-traditional audiences. Membership communications were strengthened through benefit-led messaging, survey engagement and awareness posts.



DIGITAL

Partnerships & Income Generation:

A key area of development has been exploring strategic partnerships and income generation avenues. We have been successful in securing two long-term partners in the form of Fever Pitch and Tenez. Additionally, we have a partnership with Easyfundraising which will benefit our member clubs.

Internal Digital Functions:

Internal digital systems and processes were strengthened and supported for governance and other strategic functions like EDI, safeguarding comms, development of sponsorship and strategy presentations.

Media Coverage and Recognition:

Badminton Wales continued to strengthen its external profile through sustained media engagement and high-quality storytelling, which reflects growing credibility and reputation within Welsh sector and wider badminton landscape.

- BBC Sport coverage
- BWF coverage of Badminton Wales
- Regular appreciation of our work in the sector by other NGBs, Sport Wales, and WSA.
- Increased visibility of grassroots, community and performance pathways
- Badminton Europe and Badminton World Federation Awards on Inclusion and Promotion
- Welsh Sports Industry Award nomination

SAFEGUARDING

SAFEGUARDING

Within the past twelve months BW have received a small number of safeguarding referrals. In some cases this has required a multi-agency response in line with national guidance. Oversight and professional advice on safeguarding issues is provided by the Badminton Case Management Group (Wales & England) which is currently chaired by BW safeguarding director.

A collaborative arrangement is being developed with Badminton England where BW will be able to utilise the Badminton England case management system. This will ensure effective information sharing in appropriate cases and provide a professional and clearly auditable means of managing all cases.

The Four Nations Safeguarding Group continues to meet, chaired by BW. This has allowed sharing of good practice between nations and ensures effective information sharing between nations where relevant.

BW is continuing to develop an effective approach towards the safeguarding of adults at risk and has received positive feedback from the Child Protection in Sport Unit (NPCC) in respect of the approach towards child safeguarding.

Club Safeguarding is in a strong position overall, with 100% of junior clubs having a safeguarding officer in place. Having an increase in club affiliations means this is not yet universal at senior level, and achieving full coverage should remain a priority to ensure consistency and compliance across all 74 clubs.



EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

As part of our Vision 2030 commitment to engage more effectively with global majority communities, we introduced the Community Challenge Cup as a new participation initiative. The event was delivered to a high standard and successfully engaged 58 participants who had not previously been involved with Badminton Wales. Feedback from the community has been overwhelmingly positive, reflecting strong local impact and relevance. Importantly, the event also achieved a break-even position in its first delivery, demonstrating both social and financial viability.

Inclusive Badminton in Wales has continued to grow since hosting the British and Irish Para Badminton Championships last summer.

Badminton Wales rolled out a number of para and Additional Learning Needs (ALN) school festivals with the aim of increasing the uptake of inclusive opportunities.

Furthermore, Badminton Wales are working closely with Disability Sport Wales (DSW) to upskill coaches across the country through the promotion and delivery of their Level 3 in Disability Inclusion Training.

We are also supporting some of DSW's Insport Series events which provide inclusive sport and physical activity opportunities for disabled adults and young people across Wales.

The development of the Vale of Glamorgan Wheelchair Badminton Club has been one of the most exciting stories this year. The club kicked off with a substantial successful Be Active Wales Fund, which has been used to purchase new sports wheelchairs and playing equipment.

Since then 8 coaches from the club have received Badminton World Federation's introductory qualification, Shuttletime, which focuses on fun inclusive activities that can be delivered to all ages and abilities.



The Cardiff Red Kites will support the EuroGames Cardiff 2027 which is a global event that takes place every four years (with Valencia having hosted the most recent edition in June-July 2026). This is the first time Europe's major LGBTIQ+ multi-sport event will be held in the UK and will take place in Wales from 14 to 17 July 2027.

REGIONAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Over the past 12 months Badminton Wales has continued to support clubs, leagues, volunteers and local partners across Wales. While each region has its own priorities, we have seen encouraging progress in growing participation, strengthening local badminton communities and creating more opportunities for people to get involved in the sport.

North Wales

North Wales has seen continued growth in both junior and adult badminton, supported by dedicated volunteers and strong local partnerships.

During the year, we held two regional roadshows which provided an opportunity to meet members, listen to feedback and discuss the future of badminton in the area. These conversations have helped strengthen connections between Badminton Wales, local clubs and leagues.

We have also worked closely with local authorities, schools and community organisations to increase opportunities for young people to access badminton. This has included the delivery of Youth Leader courses, support for school-based activity and engagement with disability sport initiatives.

The region has benefited from new volunteers stepping into key roles within leagues and committees. We would like to thank everyone who has contributed their time and energy to helping badminton thrive across North Wales.

South West Wales

South West Wales has experienced a period of change and development, with local volunteers continuing to play an important role in supporting the sport.

A significant change during the year was the appointment of a new County Manager, helping to ensure strong leadership and continuity within the county structure.

Badminton Wales has worked closely with league volunteers throughout the year, providing support and guidance where required.

There has also been positive progress in raising awareness of the benefits of affiliation and the protection that membership and insurance provide to players, clubs and leagues.

One of the most encouraging developments has been the growth of junior activity across the region. A number of clubs have come together to provide regular competitive opportunities for young players, helping to strengthen connections between clubs and create more opportunities for juniors to develop their skills.

Looking ahead, we will continue exploring ways to build this into a more sustainable and structured competition programme.

REGIONAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

South East Wales

South East Wales has enjoyed a positive year, with strong engagement from clubs, leagues and county organisations.

Gwent County has continued to develop both its playing and volunteer structures, with its Inter County team achieving promotion and strong engagement across league activity. This reflects the ongoing commitment of clubs and volunteers in the area.

Supporting the development of young people remains a key focus.

Coach education opportunities have been delivered to help strengthen the workforce and support the growth of junior sections within clubs. We will continue to work closely with existing junior clubs to help ensure they remain sustainable and well supported.

The Cardiff Junior League has been a particular success, bringing together multiple clubs to provide regular match play opportunities for young players. The initiative has helped strengthen relationships between clubs while giving juniors more opportunities to compete and enjoy the sport.

Looking Ahead

Across Wales, the commitment of volunteers, coaches, officials and club leaders continues to be the driving force behind our sport.

Over the past year, we have focused on strengthening clubs, supporting volunteers, increasing opportunities for young people and building stronger relationships with local partners.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to badminton in their community over the past 12 months.

Together, we are helping to create a stronger, more connected badminton community across Wales, and we look forward to building on this progress in the year ahead





EDUCATION

Schools badminton saw over 750 players enter our Shuttletime competitions and National School Championships. 70% of the attendances were from South regions, prompting a conscious effort to build closer links with the local authorities in the North. However, many openly state their priorities have shifted away from schools into a more 'place-based approach'. In an attempt to increase the attendance at our National School Championships, the date has been moved to November instead of March which often clashes with the exam timetable.

Furthermore, we have worked closely with local authorities around the country to support 119 Young Ambassadors to begin their coaching journey. This was regularly used to gain volunteers / school officials for our school competitions around the country. Additionally 81 adults were upskilled through our entry level qualification – Shuttletime. This was delivered to 48 teachers and 33 coaches in the community.

Going into the new academic year we will explore new opportunities to increase the amount of competitive badminton offered to schools, with the facilitation of 'schools participation league' being discussed.



COMMUNITY

The Graded Series has continued to be a strong and positive part of the competition calendar for the badminton community in Wales. This year saw further improvements to the regulations and ranking system, led by Alan Rodger from South West Wales, which has helped provide a clearer and more consistent structure for players and organisers. The series also recorded the highest event entry in Badminton Wales tournament software history, reflecting both the demand for accessible competitive opportunities and the continued commitment of players, clubs and volunteers across the country.

Tournament	Total Players	Male	Female	Juniors	Number of Grades				
					MS	WS	MD	WD	XD
West Wales	90	66	24	9	4	1	3	2	3
North 1	96	58	38	7	3	2	3	3	3
North 2	131	79	52	11	3	2	3	3	4
Neath	140	101	39	6	4	2	4	3	4
Swansea	127	85	42	8	4	2	4	3	4

o you

The Junior Series has not seen the same level of success as the Graded Series, although it is in a stronger position than in previous years. The main learning has been the importance of confirming dates early and giving families, clubs and coaches enough time to plan. This has been challenging, as junior events can be less attractive for tournament organisers due to lower financial return and the additional work involved when compared with graded events.

To address this, Badminton Wales has agreed that from 2027 it will take greater ownership of the Junior Series by securing venues and setting the event framework in advance. Tournament organisers will then have the opportunity to deliver these events within the agreed regulations. This approach should provide greater certainty for the community, improve planning, and help build a more sustainable junior competition pathway across Wales.

Tournament	Total Players	Male	Female
North Wales	50	35	15
MW Jan	40	29	11

COACH DEVELOPMENT

Shuttle Time and coach education have made a strong contribution to workforce development across Wales.

A total of 119 Young Ambassadors were supported to begin their coaching journey, helping to build a future volunteer and delivery workforce for badminton.

Alongside this, 81 adults completed the entry level Shuttle Time qualification, including 33 community coaches, increasing the number of people able to support badminton activity in local settings.

Coach development has also continued to support club growth. A completed BWF Level 1 course in West Wales created 8 new coaches, contributing to the growth of Vale Junior Badminton Club and its involvement in the Cardiff Junior League.

A second course has started in Gwent, with 5 new local coaches expected to qualify. These coaches are linked to plans for a new junior club in Gwent and have also supported wider inclusive delivery through the Disability Sport Wales Insport series.

Looking ahead, work is underway to explore suitable dates and structure for a BWF Level 2 course, with the intention of starting this in late 2026. Overall, this work is helping to build a stronger, more local coaching workforce and create better support for clubs, community activity and future player development across Wales.

HIGHIMPACT COACHING PROJECT



Our High Impact Coach Development Project continues to go from strength to strength. This year one of our topics we explored A Relational Approach to Mental Health and Wellbeing, supported by Sport Wales, focusing on the environments and cultures coaches create.

The project was showcased at the Performance Conference and has since attracted interest from other governing bodies, including Basketball Wales and Table Tennis Wales. We have also partnered with Think Beyond, who have produced a video and article highlighting the project.

We were also pleased to welcome Asmita Chaudhari to the programme. As a former England international, she brings valuable experience and has already made a positive contribution across several Badminton Wales initiatives.



PERFORMANCE PLAYERS

Rising Stars

We launched Rising Stars, a new entry-level tier within the Badminton Wales Performance Programme, providing young athletes with greater support around training, competition planning, and long-term development.

Samara Britto and Luke Betts joined the programme in January. Following their induction and development planning, both made their international debut in Belgium, with Luke also competing at the Austrian U17 Open. The experience provided valuable learning opportunities and several encouraging performances.

Mebel Mano Kurian

Mebel joined the Developing Programme in January following an excellent year, which included titles at the Turkish U17 and Derby U19 Gold, a quarter-final at the Junior All England, a last-16 finish at the U17 European Championships, and selection for the BWF World Junior Championships.

He continues to progress well and is following an individual development plan alongside a balanced domestic and international competition programme.

Jack Wilson

Jack has enjoyed an outstanding start to 2026, reaching the quarter-finals of the Para Badminton World Championships and achieving a career-high world ranking of 7. His consistent performances have also earned him promotion to Academy level within the GB Para Badminton Programme, allowing him to dedicate more time to training and recovery.



Isha Mekela

Isha enjoyed further success at the **2025 U17 European Championships** in Lanzarote, winning a **bronze medal** in the girls' singles to add another major achievement to her growing international record. She progressed to the semi-finals before narrowly losing to the eventual champion.

Overall, an outstanding year for Isha, finishing with two major championship medals. Her European Championship bronze complemented the **European Youth Olympic gold medal** she won in July, highlighting her continued development and success on the international stage.

Harper Leigh

Since transitioning to full-time training, Harper has shown excellent commitment to his development, training and competing extensively across the European international circuit. Over the past 12 months, he has represented Wales in tournaments across **France, Scotland, Ireland, Norway, Iceland, Latvia, Bulgaria, Finland, Denmark, and Slovakia**, gaining valuable experience against high-quality opposition while steadily improving his senior world ranking.

Alongside his international competition, Harper has also enjoyed success on the **Badminton England domestic circuit**, securing multiple medal-winning performances. These experiences continue to provide a strong foundation for the next stage of his development.



MAJOR EVENTS

Junior Nationals

The 2025 Junior Nationals were held at Sport Wales National Centre on 15-16 November, attracting 74 entries; a 57% increase on 2024. The growth created long competition days due to players entering multiple events. For future events, we will explore spreading the competition across additional days to improve scheduling and the player experience.

Welsh International (WINT)

The 2025 Welsh International attracted 19 Welsh entries. Despite challenges recruiting line judges, a successful training initiative at the Junior Nationals enabled several volunteers to support the event, many of whom are keen to return. To aid recruitment for 2026, accommodation will be provided for all line judges. Sixteen umpires, including seven from Wales, officiated throughout the tournament, with Ross Blyth returning as Referee for 2026.

For the 2026 event, we are introducing a number of new initiatives to enhance the experience for players, members, and spectators. These include interactive badminton challenges running throughout the tournament, as well as a revised competition schedule with all finals taking place on Sunday. This dedicated finals day will allow each of the five championship events to be showcased individually, creating a better experience for competitors and spectators alike.

Senior Nationals

The 2026 Senior Nationals saw 86 entries, a 7.5% increase on the previous year. The introduction of line judges for the semi-finals and finals enhanced the event presentation, while changes to the schedule improved the flow of play. Following a small number of inappropriate communications from players, competition regulations have been updated to reinforce expected standards of conduct.

Masters Nationals

The 2026 Masters Nationals recorded a record 139 entries—a 54% increase on 2025—with 175 matches played across 33 events. Despite venue changes and an extended competition day, the event ran successfully thanks to clear communication with players. Given the continued growth, a two-day format is recommended for future editions.

Celtic Challenge & Quadrangular Junior Internationals

Wales continued to provide valuable international development opportunities for its young players during 2026.

At the U13 Celtic Challenge in Ulster, a team of six girls and six boys represented Wales under the guidance of Sharon Kite and Asmita Chaudhari. The squad showed great determination throughout the event, gaining valuable experience against strong opposition.

A further ten Welsh players represented the nation at the U15 Quadrangular event hosted by Badminton Ireland. Supported by Terrie and Alex Dalton, the team faced a challenging field and finished fourth overall, while delivering a number of encouraging individual performances that demonstrated significant potential for future success.

These events remain an important part of the player development pathway, helping young athletes gain international experience, build confidence and prepare for higher levels of competition.

4 Nations Graded International

The 4 Nations Graded International, took place on 8-9 August 2026 at Sport Wales National Centre. We welcomed around 120 players from across the Home Nations to Cardiff. The team event was played on the Saturday while a fun doubles event was played on the Sunday. This was the first time that the current team had run this event and overall, it was a great success.

Technical Officials



Recruiting and developing Welsh technical officials remains a priority. Following recruitment challenges at WINT, a new introductory training session has been piloted, a recruitment video is in development, and a revised technical officials' pathway is being created to support the long-term growth of officials in Wales.

At the end of the season, Chris Taylor is stepping down from his role as Technical Officials Coordinator. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Chris for his outstanding service, commitment, and support of our technical officials community. We are delighted that Simon Ewins, one of our current umpires, has stepped forward to take on the role from August, providing continuity and support for our technical officials programme.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND PARTNERS

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their support over the past year:

Sport Wales
Disability Sport Wales
Welsh Sports Association
NSPCC Sport
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Yonex
BWF
BEC
GB Badminton
Badminton England | Badminton Scotland |
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Solibad

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Fever Pitch

Thank you for your continued support and we look
forward to another year of badminton in Wales.