

## ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



Dr Val Franklin

As ever we are committed to providing a comprehensive range of services to our clubs, to identifying and recruiting new players to the game and helping our most talented players fulfil their potential and are doing so with the continuing support of Sport Wales, the R&A, the PGA and the Golf Foundation. We have also committed up to 50% of our financial reserves over a 5-year period to ensure that all of our services remain of the highest quality. Following on from the appointment of the new Board in June 2016 a strategic review of G UW was carried out to ensure we are addressing the needs of Welsh golf in the best possible way. The outcomes of the R&A 10th International Golf Conference in April 2017 including a broad range of topics such as the Rules Modernisation to Worldwide Handicapping, Golf in the Olympic Games and the Health and Wellbeing of the Sport were reviewed and incorporated into the strategic review discussions to enable us to support Welsh golf and our clubs and players. The final outcome of the review and the new structure and brand for G UW/GDW as Welsh Golf will be launched at the AGM in September.

Richard Dixon continues to manage and support a dedicated team of staff whose hard work and commitment delivers the best possible programmes to support Welsh golf clubs and players. The G UW recruited a new Performance Director in December 2016, Gillian O'Leary who has joined us from the Irish Ladies Golf Union. Two new team members joined G UW these are Office Administrator Laurie Carvell and a new Championship Assistant Josh Haslam to assist with National Championships G UW run annually catering for all age groups and abilities both for teams and individuals. In particular, the success of the Junior Tour, launched in April 2016 and sponsored by PING has enabled us to introduce a fun competition for youngsters and the expansion of the number of events is gratifying. The R&A launched a nine-hole competition prior to the Open last year and qualifying events were held in North and South Wales earlier this year.

With the recent merger of the LGU and R&A at the start of 2017 we believe there will never be a better time for Wales and hopefully the whole of GB&I to make a concerted effort to improve the gender imbalance in golf club membership. The current membership statistics across GB&I are very poor with barely 15% female membership against a population gender split of approx. 50/50. Germany and Austria have the highest ratio in Europe with female membership reaching 35%. It is the G UW's opinion that there is massive potential in this area and increasing the number of women and girls playing golf and as importantly joining golf clubs will strengthen the game enormously creating positive knock on benefits including golf being able to market itself as a truly inclusive family orientated game. There is significant evidence from beginner and get into golf schemes that the game of golf is attractive to women e.g. the G UW's New2Golf scheme has 50% female membership. What we need to do now is translate this into golf club membership, but to achieve this in a sustainable manner it is essential that golf facilities become more inclusive across the board and especially in their offering to female golfers.

It will not be enough to simply expose more women and girls to the game, this has to be done in conjunction with facilities evolving accordingly. The G UW intends to allocate significant resources to help clubs with the transition and this will therefore be one of the key areas of focus for the G UW over the next few years.

During 2016/17 the G UW has maintained the direct interaction with clubs via our development arm, Golf Development Wales continuing to run numerous schemes and initiatives to the benefit of our clubs. Examples of these initiatives included the launch of Girls Golf Hubs in 6 pilot clubs which are progressing well with all recruiting significantly more girl members and Golf Development Girls clinics held in 2016 which we have continued in 2017 utilising the GDW's Ambassadors and local professionals to help inspire and motivate existing and new girl golfers to remain and progress within the sport.

The New2Golf/Back2Golf scheme will run over a few months (rather than just 1 month in previous years) and aim to continue focused efforts on recruiting new people to the sport with specific emphasis on women, girls and families. The success of these schemes in Wales in promoting golf was mentioned at the R&A Working for Golf Conference in April.

Based on the results of the Club Survey we would recommend that you focus on integrating your beginners into the club and increasing their confidence levels (buddy/mentor system; on-course lessons; appropriate competitions and social events; and to start listening to what beginners want). Cost/value needs to be taken into account at the transitional stage from trial to full membership. As word of mouth is so important, clubs need to ensure that their members are aware of and actively promoting New2Golf and club membership.

The G UW's Youth Panel continues to provide an important resource. Fifteen passionate and innovative young people from golfing and non-golfing backgrounds have been recruited to help shape future plans and ensure children and young people, from all backgrounds have access to a high quality golf experience. Their role includes supporting the staff team in monitoring and evaluating current initiatives and with the creation of new ones. The successful REPS meetings (Regional Partnerships) continue across Wales aimed at engaging all those supporting junior golf e.g. PGA pro's, junior organisers and local authority officers.

The G UW and R&A Level 2 Rules School held in November was fully subscribed with 24 of the 28 candidates achieving a pass grade.

The G UW's Club Services department ran a series of roadshows supported by the R&A and titled "Sustainable Solutions" across Wales in November 2016 achieving record attendances from club delegates and numerous positive reviews. The G UW and GDW websites continue to receive record hits indicating that online resources are being accessed. The GDW Club Governance matrix has been well received and is providing support for your club to develop. Handicapping & Course Rating workshops run during April 2017 to assist clubs with resolving any outstanding issues linked to handicapping and course rating administration were well attended.

The G UW's coaching system continues to evolve becoming more refined and streamlined focussing greater support on fewer players. The system offers an increasingly targeted and more personal approach to each individual while setting higher standards and benchmarks for players and coaches. The main focus for future coaching schemes will be on younger players. Earlier this year four of the G UW's elite squad were recruited as ambassadors for Golf Development Wales and have attended and helped deliver a number of GDW beginner initiatives.

Without detailing our squads and elite coaching programmes the highlights of the year were Wales' win in the European Nations Cup at Sotogrande with Llanwern Golf Club's Jack Davidson winning the individual title and then going on to win the Spanish Amateur another of Europe's major amateur events. Other Welsh players, at all levels, continue to achieve success both within Wales and internationally. Attending events and championships enables me to watch golf of the highest standard and I congratulate everyone on the spirit with which they play the game and on their achievements. This is truly inspiring and worth celebrating not only for the individuals but for all those who contribute to their success. Full details of these successes can be read later in this report.

We congratulate all the winners at the Welsh Golf Awards earlier this year which demonstrates the good work being done at club level by everyone involved. This event has been sponsored by Future Financials and we thank them for their support over the last eight years. We are delighted to announce that these awards will now be supported by One Golf Network. It's great to celebrate clubs and individual's successes. The event was truly memorable and it's great to see our GDW ambassadors Jordon Rosser and Stewart Harris providing such inspiration as to what can be achieved as a result of a sport like golf that promotes health and well being as a sport for life for all.

The financial challenges the game faces are still apparent in our Treasurer's, Andrew Emery, report which demonstrates the need for prudent financial management to enable us to deliver the best possible outcomes for golf whilst balancing the budget. We are grateful for the on-going support of Sports Wales, the R&A, PGA, Golf Foundation and all our sponsors. Subscriptions also make a significant contribution to the budget and we are well aware that we must provide value for money for everyone.



Neil Niblett

On behalf of the Board, Council and all Welsh clubs I would like to thank our outgoing President Neil Niblett for all his support both personally and to Welsh golf during his association with the G UW and welcome Jeff Harries as our President for 2017/8. The same thanks must also be extended to all our volunteers in the clubs and counties, the Board, Council and staff all of whom make extremely valuable contributions to the success of Welsh golf.



Jeff Harries

**Dr Val Franklin**  
**Chairman**

### **TREASURER'S STATEMENT**

Financial results for the 12 month period April 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2017.

Before commenting on the first set of financial statements that I have been involved with, I would like to thank my predecessor, Gareth Davies, for the very positive contribution he has made over the last three years to the G UW, providing the new Board with the financial information it required to make informed decisions about the best way to progress the game in Wales. Having joined the Board at the end of last year, I have been incredibly impressed by the quality of the team that works on behalf of Welsh golf, and with continued sound direction from the Board of Directors I believe they will be able to meet the challenges faced by the game and maintain the positive impact they are currently having.

After the change to a March year end this is the first set of accounts reporting on a twelve month period. The loss for the financial year is £81,843 which is in line with the budget set by the Board in 2016. This is represented by a deficit of £46k within the G UW whilst the equivalent loss for the GDW element is £29k and the balance of the loss is a provision for taxation on our investments.

The bedrock of our income is the subscriptions received from our member clubs and this has continued to decline, although the reduction has been lower than was budgeted for and in absolute terms was lower than it has been in recent years at 3.2%. This may indicate that the decline in membership has started to bottom out but it cannot disguise the fact that much work still needs to be done in this area, particularly amongst the groups that are heavily under represented, being females and juniors, and more generally the family unit. We are not the only body within golf that believes this is a key area for the development of the game and targeted investment here will be important in widening the appeal of the game and introducing it to those who have never played.

As reported last year, our main funding partner, Sport Wales, have reduced their grant payments to golf as they come under pressure to better manage their limited resources. This is likely to continue at least in the medium term but the reduction is at the lowest end of what we could have anticipated. More importantly, we continue to enjoy a very positive and supportive relationship with Sport Wales which must continue as we strive to meet the challenges ahead of us. Our other major funding partners, the R&A, the PGA and The Golf Foundation also continue to provide much valued financial support and guidance and we look forward to continuing to work closely with them in the future. Whilst we will always be reliant on our subscription and grant income for the bulk of our funding, it is crucial that other revenue streams from commercial partners are developed. I am pleased to see progress occurring in this area which should prove beneficial in future periods.

The running of our high quality championship programme continues to operate on a break even basis and other overhead expenditure has also been managed in line with the budget set for the period.

The funds invested following the merger of the Unions have enjoyed another very positive year with double digit returns. This means the balance sheet and the reserves remain in a strong position but I remain committed to the strategy instigated by the Board which will see investment in targeted areas to continue to develop the game in Wales

which means we will be budgeting to operate deficits in the medium term. In 2017/18 there is a budgeted deficit of £93k as this programme continues. Obviously as reserves are depleted to the level at which they are required to be held to provide a contingency we will move to a more balanced budgetary position.

In conclusion, there is no doubt that substantial challenges face the game, not just in Wales but for all golf governing bodies. However, I do believe that with the high quality team we currently have in place to support both grassroots and elite level golf, Wales is in as strong a position as any country to meet these issues and progress the game we love.

**Andrew Emery**  
Treasurer

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

The following report details our work 2016/17

### GOLF DEVELOPMENT WALES (GDW) – Developing the game in Wales.

It has been another successful year for Golf Development Wales based on the 2020 Vision “Golf for all, for life”. Some of the key successes are:

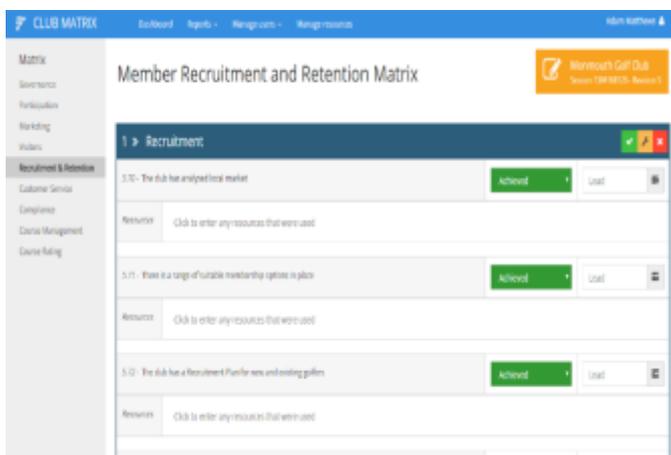
- The annual number of participants in GDW related schemes increased by 2% to 67,809, with a total of nearly 300,000 since the Ryder Cup.
- GDW New2Golf members increased by 7% to 1800, which were 50% female, with the number of girls up from 16% to 21% and boys up from 21 to 38%.
- A positive trend in junior girls membership with an increase of 7%
- Over 30 clubs are using the club development tool the Strong Club Matrix to assess the needs of their club.
- Nearly 30 clubs have achieved the new Junior GolfCert Accreditation

### Business Support Scheme (BSS)

There is now a more flexible approach to the BSS based around the needs of each club. Clubs and the development team utilise the Strong Club Matrix (a club development tool – for more info see below) to assess the support needs of the club. As part of the support the clubs also have access to the mystery shopper service and customer satisfaction survey tool, soon to be CFT (Customer Feedback Tracker).

Support is a combination of consultancy, cluster workshops on key themes, guidance from the regional club development officer, as well as, access to a bank of templates and resources. Additional support can also be accessed through grants and/or clubs self-funding.

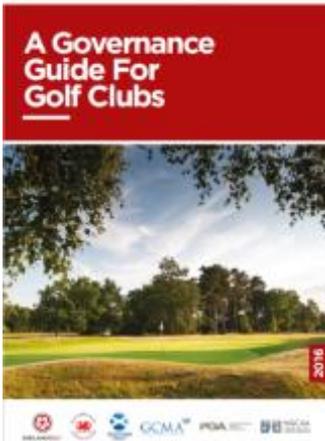
### Strong Club Matrix



This is a development tool which clubs and committees use in conjunction with their Golf Development Officer to help identify the strengths and areas for improvement of the club based around 9 key areas. These areas are: Governance, Participation, Marketing, Visitors, Membership Recruitment and Retention, Customer Service, Compliance, Course Rating and Course Management.

Over 30 clubs have used the tool with the development team. It also enables clubs to show improvement over time, assess membership trends in the club and to benchmark themselves against a national average.

## Business Support Scheme Workshops



Governance Workshops took place in October 2016 on key emerging themes of Strategic Planning and the Roles and Responsibility of the Management Board.

### Club Governance Resource

The new 'Governance Guide for Golf Clubs' (pictured to the left) was produced in partnership with ourselves, England Golf, Scotland Golf, GCMA, NGCAA and the PGA. One free copy is available for clubs through the development officers. Clubs who have been on the Business Scheme workshops and who have applied for BSS will also be supplied with a copy.

**New2Golf/Back2Golf Month** (supported by the R&A), continues to be an integral part of the golfing calendar in Wales. New2Golf/Back2Golf month provides a unique chance for GDW to target individuals outside of traditional communication channels.

The campaigns focused on the social side of the game and targeting the segments that are likely to be attracted to the sport. Marketing resources were produced for each campaign and targeted the following segments:

Groups of females - All you need is Golf, Friendship and Laughter #sheplays2

Social couples - New experiences, new skills, together #loveisgolf

Families – Family fun time #golffamilyfun

Girls – Fun, Friendship and Laughter #sheplays2



## New2Golf Beginner Scheme and New2Golf Membership

**104** schemes have been delivered by 57 clubs. 1785 took part in lessons and 991 converted to trial membership (56%). There were 1800 New2Golf members. Over 50% were female, with an increase in junior boys and girls.

All New2Golf members are communicated with each year so GDW can learn from their experiences.

- Feedback from previous New2Golf cohorts showed that new golfers value the friendliness and social aspects of a golf club, as well as the availability and quality of coaching. The results indicated clubs which focus on integrating beginners into the club, while also increasing their confidence on the golf course, are more likely to attract them into membership.

- The majority of clubs who responded to our New2Golf survey reported that the scheme had been highly beneficial for their clubs in attracting new golfers, recruiting them into membership, and raising their club's profile.

### The New Golfers Journey resource



New2Golf focus groups took place to investigate, from the participants themselves, how to recruit and retain individuals in membership and run effective beginner schemes.

A club resource has been developed based on the insight. Free copies are available on request.

### Junior Club Accreditation (Junior GolfCert).

This award has been developed to recognise those clubs attempting to increase the number of young people playing golf by providing a quality and fun experience. It also acts as a model for a junior section to strive towards. The application process is fully online and combines the Disability Sport Wales' *insport* accreditation. Since the launch of the new scheme in 2016, nearly 30 clubs have achieved the award.



The Junior Golf Guide resource (an accompanying resource) is available to download from the GDW website free of charge, or a club can order hard copies at a cost of £10.

**Safeguarding Children.** GUW / GDW have achieved (and have now retained for the last 3 years) the NSPCC Safeguarding Advanced Level 3 standards. GDW is continuing to support clubs with cases, developing safeguarding policies and procedures, advice and education. Sian Simmons, GDW Administrator is the GUW/GDW Safeguarding Co-ordinator and is the main contact for clubs requiring Safeguarding support.

**Insport: Disability Sport Wales Standards.** GUW/GDW in 2016 achieved Insport Silver (one of the first Governing bodies to achieve this level) and over the next 2 years we will be working towards the Gold standard. Over 50 inclusive PGA professionals have now been trained (of which 8 have achieved level 2) to provide inclusive coaching at their clubs and within the community.

**Disability Coaching Hubs.** There are a total of 22 Disability Golf Coaching Hubs in Wales. Hubs receive a grant of up to £450 to deliver taster sessions, low cost group coaching (inclusive, pan or impairment specific) and trial membership for individuals with a disability.

**Girls Golf Development Hubs.** This is a new, focused initiative that aims to take the development of girls' golf to another level. 6 pilot girls' golf development hubs have been selected. The scheme aims to support the selected clubs to develop a 3 year programme and create an environment where girls are able to thrive, flourish and develop in golf. We provide focused support in attracting and retaining larger numbers of girls to the club, which in turn should aid further recruitment and retention. Non golfing activities will also be used to engage and retain more girls such as beauty and fashion. The campaign posters focus on the social side using the words and hash tag - Fun, Friendships and Laughter...#sheplays2

The clubs have the following targets over 3 years:

- To recruit 30 – 60 girls to participate in regular coaching and social activities
- 50% to convert to club membership with a number achieving a club handicap

*Girl's affiliation in these clubs showed a 60% increase in 2016.*

### **New2Golf Summer Swing**

This is a social gathering combined with a fun, relaxed competition. This includes a 36 flag comp, a nearest the line comp, Amy Boulden or another professional takes their first tee shot for a nearest the pin comp. Local volunteers are used to walk with the groups and assist with scoring etc. Local companies sponsor the event as well as Clogau Gold, The Principality, Ladies European Tour and Mercedes Benz. In 2016 there were 60 participants, 36 females 24 males

### **Youth Panel**

15 young people with a wealth of experience, from Sport Wales young ambassadors to junior club golfers, have been recruited to form the GDW/ G UW Youth Panel. The panel aims to give young people a voice and an opportunity to shape the future of Welsh golf. The Panel meets regularly and each member is given opportunities to take on project responsibilities. The 5th youth panel meeting took place in January 2017. 50% of the youth panel members are female and 2 are golfers with a disability.

### **Inclusive Ambassadors**

Stewart Harris and Mike Jones have been recruited as our 2 inclusive ambassadors. They are representing GDW and G UW at events, assisting with inclusive projects through-out Wales, spreading the word that golf is an inclusive sport and inspiring people to get involved in golf who have been through similar experiences.

- **Stewart Harris** is a former soldier who was blown up in Afghanistan. His injuries resulted in damage to the frontal lobe of the brain, visual impairments, hearing impairments and damage to his legs. He didn't play golf before his injury and now plays at Rhyl Golf Club. Stewart believes golf has helped him with his rehab both mentally and physically and that 'golf has helped save him'.
- **Mike Jones** lost a leg in a motorcycle accident. Since his accident he won the EDGA Spanish Open for Disabled Golfers, as well as, the WDA Welsh Open and Scottish Disabled Open plus more. He played off 2 before his accident and like Stewart, believes that golf has helped him through his rehab both physically and mentally.

**Customer Service – Mystery Shopper.** A small team of volunteers have been recruited and trained to act as mystery shoppers for clubs who have participated in GDW schemes and wanting to use the service. The shoppers are given a questionnaire to complete pre, during and post visit linked to customer service and the customer journey. The results are then fed back to the club to help them to improve with the main outcomes of recruiting and retaining more members and visitors and improving the customer journey.

We continue our strong links with our partner The Golf Foundation and gained increased support in 2016. There were 5 Golf Roots plus projects for 2016 – Urdd (Bridgend and Newport), Wildmill Youth Club, Milford Haven Golf Club and Young Carers, Urdd Bangor, Llangefni in Anglesey linked to clubs. We had 31 funded HSBC Golf Roots Centres with 5889 participants, 1710 in club coaching and 171 converted to membership. West Park Primary, Bridgend was awarded a Tri Golf Course grant to build a course on the school site. Wales also won the National Street Golf Final through the Bryn Meadows team. Well done Bryn Meadows.

### **Initiatives to look out for in 2017**

The **CFT** (customer feedback tracker) an online survey tool for clubs is in the process of being developed. This is a simple survey tool for clubs that can be sent to their customers. It collects the findings (which are measurable in each section) in an easy to read report, so golf clubs can use to information for planning and improving the customer journey over time.

A bank of committee presentation tools will be produced which will include: Strategy and Business planning, marketing, social media, running an effective New2Golf scheme, equality and inclusion. There will also be a variety of club workshops to take place in the Autumn and Winter.

For further information on the above please contact the development team.

## ELITE PERFORMANCE AND COACHING

The past 12 months have seen many performance and representative highlights across all levels of Welsh Golf.

The main team highlight came in March of 2017, with Wales winning the European Nations Cup at Sotogrande in Spain. This is widely regarded as the most significant achievement for Wales Golf in recent times as the event is contested by teams of 4 and attracts entries from the top European golfing nations. The Welsh team of Jack Davidson (Llanwern), David Boote (Walton Heath), Owen Edwards (Kendleshire) and Joshua Davies (Celtic Manor) claimed the title in impressive fashion, winning by 11 shots over nearest challengers and defending champions Ireland. David and Owen finished in the top 10 with Jack Davidson (Llanwern) also winning the individual title and receiving the “yellow jacket” to add to the Spanish Amateur



title which he won earlier in the year at El Salar.

Home advantage helped to add another Wales team highlight with the Ladies finishing in a highly credible 2<sup>nd</sup> place at the Ladies Home International matches hosted by Conwy but disappointing results were posted at the World Amateur Team Championships with the Welsh Ladies team finishing in 40<sup>th</sup> place and 18<sup>th</sup> place at the European Team Championships. There was also disappointment for the Welsh Boys

team at European level as they finished 14<sup>th</sup> resulting in relegation to Division 2 for 2017. However, our European Men’s team did regain Division 1 status via finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Division 2 event in Luxembourg. David Boote was the stand-out performer by ending the stroke play qualifier in 1<sup>st</sup> place and remaining unbeaten throughout the match play phase. David also lead the way for team Wales at the World Amateur Team Championship, which took place in Mexico, finishing in 9<sup>th</sup> place individually. Owen Edwards and Joshua Davies joined David on the Welsh team which finished 16<sup>th</sup> overall.



Additional highlights for David Boote (Walton Heath), included his selection for GB&I team at the St Andrews Trophy in July 2016. The event was halved with Europe which meant GB&I retained the title, it was fantastic to see David hold his nerve to sink the putt that retained the title. David is pictured with the trophy and his teammates.

This and his many other achievements across the year resulted in him being named as “Welsh Amateur Golfer of the Year” for 2016.

Chloe Williams (Wrexham) once again shone on the international scene in 2016, posting top 3 finishes at both the Irish Women’s Open Strokeplay Championship and the British Ladies Open Strokeplay Championship. At underage level, Ffion Tynan (Minchinhampton) impressed through claiming a win at the English Girls U14 Open Championship.

Further highlights and notable performances on the international stage this year included:

- Lee Jones 5<sup>th</sup> at Welsh Open Championship
- Chloe Williams 3<sup>rd</sup> at Irish Women’s Open Championship
- Lucy Jones 10<sup>th</sup> at Welsh Ladies Open Championship

- Jack Davidson 9<sup>th</sup> at Scottish Open Championship
- Joshua Davies 1<sup>st</sup> at South of England Amateur
- Ffion Tynan Winner at English Girl's U14 Open Championship
- Chloe Williams 2<sup>nd</sup> at British Ladies Open Strokeplay Champ
- David Boote 9<sup>th</sup> at Eisenhower Trophy
- Evan Griffith QF at Australian Men's Amateur Championship
- Jack Davidson 3<sup>rd</sup> at South American Amateur Champ
- Bethan Morris 4<sup>th</sup> at South American Amateur Champ
- David Boote 4<sup>th</sup> at Portuguese Amateur Championship
- Jack Davidson 7<sup>th</sup> at Portuguese Amateur Championship
- Jack Davidson Winner at Spanish Amateur Championship
- Jack Davidson Individual Winner at European Nations Cup

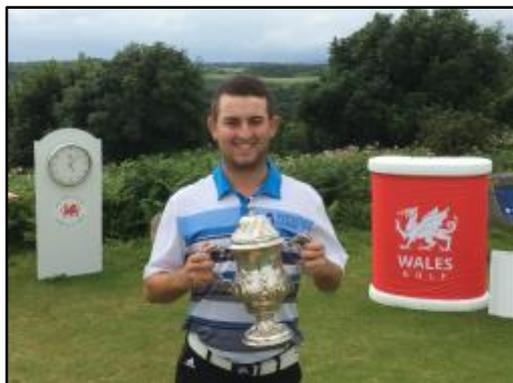
The 2016 Order of Merit winners were ...

- Oliver Brown (Vale Resort) Boys Order of Merit
- Lucy Jones (Wrexham) Girls' Order of Merit
- Joshua Davies (Celtic Manor) Men's Order of Merit
- Chloe Williams (Wrexham) Ladies Order of Merit
- Nigel Evans (St. Mellons) Senior Men's Order of Merit

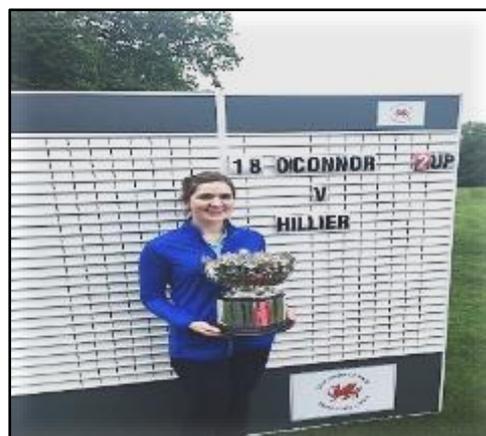
### CHAMPIONSHIP REVIEW

Congratulations to all our Champions, both individual and team. Katherine O'Connor (West Byfleet) retained her Ladies Amateur crown at Cardiff GC whilst Zach Galliford (Borth & Ynyslas) triumphed in a great 36 hole final at Southerndown GC to win the Welsh Amateur.

In the Team Championships, Radyr won a thrilling final over Championship hosts Wrexham and Newport beat St. Pierre to retain the Ladies Team Championship at Wenvoe Castle.



In our Open Strokeplay Championships, we had winning representation from all four home unions, including victories for ex-tour professional Barry Hume (Haggs Castle, Scotland) in the Men's Open Strokeplay and the highly promising Olivia Mehaffey (Royal County Down Ladies, Ireland) in the Ladies equivalent.



Welsh winners in the Open Seniors & Ladies Open Seniors came from Andrew Williams (Newport) & Jane Rees (Minchinhampton).

Once again the Championship Team ran a wide range of championships from junior through to seniors' events some catering for elite amateur players and others for the enjoyment of club players across Wales. A summary of the winners of our national championships and Home International Team events is shown below:

INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIPS	WINNER (CLUB)	RUNNER UP (CLUB)
Ladies' Open Stroke Play	Olivia Mehaffey (Ireland)	Jessica Ross (N. Ireland)
Ladies' Amateur	Katherine O'Connor (West Byfleet)	Lauren Hillier (Newport)
Welsh Open Stroke Play	Barry Hume (Scotland)	Craig Howie (Scotland)
Welsh Open Youths	Bailey Gill (England)	Jake Bolton (England)

Welsh Seniors	Colin Jones (West Sussex)	Nigel Evans (St. Mellons)
Welsh Open Seniors	Andrew Williams (Newport)	Stephen East (England)
Welsh Boys	Oliver Brown (The Vale Resort)	Liam Pritchard (Mold)
Welsh Girls	Nicola Wainwright (Rhuddlan)	Lucy Ellen Jones (Wrexham)
Welsh Amateur	Zach Galliford (Borth & Ynyslas)	Owen Edwards (Llanwern)
Welsh Boys' U15	Abe Forysth (Haverfordwest)	Tom Peet (Pyle & Kenfig)
Welsh Boys' U13	Matthew Sandoz (Wrexham)	Reuben Bather (Llandudno/Maesdu)
Welsh Open Senior Ladies	Jane Rees (Minchinhampton)	Sharon Roberts (Cradoc) Ann Lewis (Royal St. David's)
G UW Medal	Liz Law (Monmouthshire)	Christine Harries (Llanwern)
Australian Spoons	Edna & Ann Morris (Carmarthen)	Annette Griffiths & Kathy McGibney (Pontardawe)
Challenge Bowls	Margaret Medlow (Pontypridd)(Silver)	Grace Edwards (Builth Wells)(Bronze)
Centenary Greensomes	Cheryl Western & Claire Morris (Pyle & Kenfig)	Barbara Flanagan & Lynda Evans (Borth and Ynyslas)

<b>TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS</b>	<b>Winners</b>	<b>Runners Up</b>
Welsh Ladies' Team Championship	Newport Golf Club	St. Pierre Golf Club
Welsh Team Championship	Radyr Golf Club	Wrexham Golf Club
Welsh Handicap Team Champ	Builth Wells Golf Club	Clyne Golf Club
Welsh Junior Inter Club Challenge	Pyle & Kenfig Golf Club	Mold Golf Club
Ping Welsh Mixed Team Challenge	Carmarthen Golf Club	Radyr Golf Club
Victory Shield	Conwy (Caernarfonshire) Golf Club	Llanwern Golf Club
Boys' Home Internationals	England	Scotland
Girls' Home Internationals	Ireland	Scotland
Men's Home Internationals	Ireland	England
Ladies' Home Internationals	England	Wales
Senior Men's Home Internationals	England	Wales
Senior Ladies' Home Internationals	England	Ireland

### Rules Schools & Information

Jeff Harries (Carmarthen) joined the R&A Championship Committee at the 145<sup>th</sup> Open Championship at Troon on behalf of the G UW. Jeff was one of a number of referees from all round the world officiating at the Open Championship and represented the Union superbly.

Lesley Brown & Ashton Bradbury attended the R&A Tournament Administrators & Referees School course in February 2017 on behalf of the G UW and both obtained distinctions in their level 3 exam.

The G UW hosted the bi-annual Rules School at Celtic Manor Resort in November 2016 alongside the R&A. The course was fully subscribed with 7 participants achieving the Distinction grade.

## Welsh Junior Tour

The Welsh Junior Tour was launched with 4 events plus a grand final taking place across 2016. After the success of the inaugural year, a further event is planned for 2017 and a three-year sponsorship deal with PING has been agreed. The age group winners are listed below:

Age Group	Winner	Runner-Up
Under 8's	George Ledsham (Mold)	Harry Edwards (Builth Wells)
Under 10's	William Pontin (Rhonnda)	Brodi Lewis (Pyle & Kenfig)
Under 12's	Zak Baker (Llandrindod Wells)	Jack McKinney (Abergele)
Under 14's Boys	Sean Hazelby (Carmarthen)	Iwan Fullick (Caerphilly)
Under 14's Girls	Megan Vineall (Newport)	Darcey Harry (The Vale Resort)

## CLUB SERVICES

Club services is an all encompassing area of our operations with the key areas focusing on educational opportunities, golf course management services/resources whilst ensuring we maintain a strong link with partners and the work carried out by Golf Development Wales (GDW).

The website remains key for clubs with information available on all schemes, services and resources available via the GUW. The website is regularly updated ensuring it is the first port of call for all affiliated clubs should they require details on what is available. Club Services now integrates within the Club Matrix programmes delivered via Golf Development Wales (GDW) for which further information is available later in the report.

Our flagship event of the year was once again the GUW Roadshows. As with previous years the roadshows took place at three venues throughout Wales with magnificent support from affiliated clubs. The theme focused on golf course management and in particular looking at sustainability. The audience heard presentations from: STRI, Pencoed College, Coleg Cambria, GEO, BIGGA along with case studies from Langland Bay and Castle Stuart Golf Clubs.

Greenkeeper training grants were once again awarded to a number of affiliated clubs helping to contribute to the further education and development of the greenkeeping workforce in Wales.

2017/18 sees our focus switch more towards educational opportunities as we bring the Club Managers Association of Europe (CMAE), Management Development Programme 1 (MDP1) to the Vale Resort. MDP1 offers a comprehensive training programme to support Club Secretaries/Managers in areas such as: club governance, financial management, strategy, leadership, membership, marketing and facilities management.

We continue to forge strong relationships with key partners across the sector and have some exciting projects planned for the coming year.

## HANDICAPPING & COURSE RATING

Handicapping and course rating (HCR) remain at the heart of the core services offered to affiliate golf clubs throughout Wales. Handicapping plays a hugely significant role in ensuring that golf can be played between golfers of all standards on an equitable playing field. An often complex system, we at the Golf Union of Wales, are continually looking to help educate those responsible for the administration of handicapping at club level whilst always seeking to improve our processes to be more engaging and user-friendly.

Over the past twelve months the handicapping and course rating department has completed the following:

- Handicap audit
- Category one handicap allocations
- Amateur status applications
- Preferred lies submissions
- Provided support and expertise on a number of club queries via club visits, meetings, telephone and email
- Management and implementation of changes to the CONGU Unified Handicapping System (UHS)

We now have a dedicated HCR email address ([handicapping@golfunionwales.org](mailto:handicapping@golfunionwales.org)), which has ensured that all queries are answered in an effective and efficient manner.

In addition to the above HCR hosted seven educational seminars throughout Wales with once again a record number of delegates in attendance. The seminars focused on three topical issues; CONGU changes, Course Rating and the roles and responsibilities of the Club Manager and Handicap Committee. Audience engagement is forever improving and the feedback was positive in line with previous years.

The CDH remains a priority for the GUW and we will continue to develop the system to ensure it can deliver on its objectives whilst offering support and guidance to clubs, administrators and golfers alike. Over 95% of clubs are now registered on the CDH.

The new and improved Course Rating service has been a success this year. Clubs are regularly communicated with and better informed of the processes involved with course rating as well as understanding how and why we conduct Standard Scratch Score (SSS) reviews. The course rating team has received further training and we look forward to welcoming new raters to the team next year. 9 hole and short course SSS requests are more popular than ever demonstrating the changes in how golf is currently digested.

The R&A / USGA released a statement in April to say that they were working with golf's handicapping authorities to develop a single World Handicap System for the sport. The aim of the system is to adopt a universal set of principles and procedures that will apply all over the world. We are expecting further details to be made public towards the end of the year.

The GUW has retained the status of having three members on various CONGU Committees. This is important to us as a union as we look to shape the future of handicapping.

We would like to offer our sincere thanks to the committee members, course raters and other volunteers who have kindly given up their time to help us achieve our goals within HCR.

## **THE FUTURE FINANCIALS WELSH GOLF AWARDS**

### **Welsh Golf Club of the Year**

The 2016 winner was Pyle & Kenfig Golf Club a club which has submitted strong applications over a number of years. The outstanding progress the club made during 2016 ensured that it deservedly ended up at the head of a very strong list of shortlisted candidates including Bryn Meadows, Clyne, Lakeside, Garthmyl, Milford Haven and Pennard. Highlighted below are a number of areas where the club has excelled:



- Increased membership across all categories with 65 new adult members, 47 new junior members, 20 of which were girls.
- Increased green fee income by £10,000 year on year.
- Focused on developing a brand for the golf club along with being very customer focused
- Extensive marketing plan put in place with a focus on attracting ladies, juniors and lapsed members
- The club has a history of holding prestigious championships including pre-qualifying for the British Senior Open 2014 and again in 2017, co-hosting the Amateur Championship in June 2016 and in 2017 they host the Ladies British Open Amateur Championship
- Installation of a new chipping area to enhance the practice facilities for members, visitors and to aid tuition
- Achieved the GDW Junior Golf Cert in 2016 and developed a junior workforce that includes key members of staff and members of the club
- Delivery of a number of community outreach programs including links to local primary schools and the Girl Guides
- Creation of affordable junior memberships aimed at making the game accessible for all ages
- In partnership with the Golf Foundation secured funding to develop a Tri-Golf course in the grounds of a local primary school
- The Clubs Junior team won the GUW Junior Inter Club Team Championship.

### Welsh Volunteer of the Year

This award goes to a club volunteer that has shown passion, commitment and drive in golf in a Welsh club. Winner of the 2016 award was Julia Den Hartog for her phenomenal work at Cardigan Golf Club. Some of Julia's achievements are listed below:



- Developed a New2Golf pathway for adults and young people
- Recruited a number of volunteers and attended training courses to enhance her knowledge
- Worked with the local authority to identify outreach opportunities for young people to start playing golf
- Organised regular coaching and competition nights
- Was the driver for the development of a short course and the development of the clubs practice area.
- Instigated a presentation evening to celebrate juniors achievements
- Has helped grow the junior section to nearly 50 juniors involved in regular coaching or playing.

One Junior from the club said 'Thank you for your support, especially when I started playing golf. You helped my confidence grow by encouraging me and helping golf become part of my life.'

### Welsh Amateur Golfer of the Year

In 2016 the Amateur Golfer of the Year award was David Boote. David is a former Welsh Junior International and Captain of the GB&I Boys' Team. He won the Welsh Boy's Championship in 2011 and the Welsh Amateur Championship in 2015. He has recently completed his studies at Stanford University where he achieved American NCAA honours in 2014 & 2016 & Academic All American honours in 2015/16. Some of David's many achievements during the year are listed below: -

- Made a strong contribution to a winning European Team against Asia Pacific in the Sir Michael Bonallack Trophy winning 3 out of 4 games.
- Represented Europe in the winning Palmer Cup side against the USA
- Represented GB&I in the St Andrews Trophy, winning the last match on the course against Europe to ensure GB&I retained the Trophy
- Reached the quarter final of the 2016 US Amateur Championship at Oakland Hills
- Finished 9<sup>th</sup> in the individual scoring at the World Amateur Team Championship in Mexico
- Was medalist in the stroke play qualifying rounds of the European Team Championship Division B
- Finished 4<sup>th</sup> in the South American Amateur Championship

### Welsh Tour Professional of the Year

The 2016 recipient was Lydia Hall. As well as her many playing achievements Lydia has provided tremendous support to the G UW by volunteering her services as an Ambassador of the Women & Girls schemes, attending introductory sessions at clubs and local schools. Lydia is a former Welsh Amateur International who turned professional in 2007, she won the British Masters in 2012 when she finished 16<sup>th</sup> in the Ladies European Tour (LET) Order of Merit. Following an injury hit season in 2015 Lydia came back strongly in 2016 with the highlights including: -



- 3 top 10's on the LET from 11 events
- Finishing 19<sup>th</sup> in the LET Order of Merit
- Highlight of her LET season was a 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish in Qatar Ladies Open
- Won the Women's PGA Order of Merit
- Won the Wales National PGA Championship at Tenby and in so doing she became the first female to ever win a PGA National Event, the field included Philip Price and Stephen Dodd (former winners include Ryder Cuppers: - Ian Woosnam, Stephen Dodd, Philip Price and Brian Huggett)

### **Golf Development Wales, Professional of the Year**

The very worthy winner in 2016 was Joe Vickery. Joe is a former Welsh Amateur International and British Amateur Championship semi-finalist who has a passion to provide fun, inclusive golf opportunities for all. Some of his achievements are listed below: -

- Delivering golf to over 6500 people in the local community of which over 2000 were individuals with a disability
- He is one of only 8 PGA Inclusive Golf Level 2 trained coaches
- He delivers weekly sessions to several groups of adults and children with varying disabilities.
- Has led the BME project with Newport Live with nearly 500 participants and trained nearly 20 coaches from the local community.
- Has worked alongside Junior Leaders at Mountain Ash Golf Club to help increase junior participation from 1 to 64.



### **Junior Club of the Year**

This was a new award in 2016 and the first winner was Mold Golf Club. The Golf Development Officer who works closely with the club said “It is always a pleasure to work with the club on any junior project, the enthusiasm of the Junior Organisers and their team of dedicated volunteers is always evident. Their hard work is greatly appreciated by the youngsters and their parents and the club's junior section and structure is often used as an example of best practice. The club is always willing to offer their encouragement and support to other golf clubs in the region.” Some of the club's achievements are listed below:

- One of the first Clubs in Wales to attain the JuniorGolfCert and it has retained the highest level of award since.
- Is a Golf Foundation HSBC Starter Centre, a GDW Girls Hub and G.U.W. Coaching Centre
- Has a thriving junior section with 65 Junior Members, with a further 28 involved in non-member coaching.
- It ensures that every single junior member actively participates in the weekly Coaching sessions.
- It has a full calendar of progressive competitive opportunities for juniors from fun 5 hole comps to full scale competitions.
- It has a network of volunteers who attend every coaching session and assist with all matters including on-course supervision for the younger players.
- It has produced 3 County Champions and the club are 2016 County Junior Champions.
- 6 boys and 6 girls from the club represent their respective County teams, 3 boys and 4 girls from the club represent North Wales Teams.
- A junior member won the Central Wales Boys championship and the South Wales Boys Championship whilst another junior member was runner-up in the Welsh Boys Championship, both have gone on to represent Wales.
- The club were the first Welsh Junior Golf Tour venue and 16 juniors from the Club participated.



### **CONCLUSION**

Our Chairman highlighted in her report that the G.U.W. is continually reviewing its strategy and working practices and with this in mind the G.U.W. will be launching a new strategy at the 2017 AGM which will include a re-branding. Our overriding objective is to allocate our resources in the most effective way to take Welsh golf forward. We will remain focused on helping clubs to improve, encouraging greater numbers of participants and increasing club memberships particularly across female and family categories where the game has a massive opportunity to make significant progress.

We firmly believe that our best chance of achieving success across all areas of the game in Wales is to engage with and encourage the commitment and support of all golf's stakeholders.

**Richard Dixon**  
Chief Executive