

## ANNUAL REPORT 2015

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



Dr Val Franklin

Following on from the adoption of the Governance and Electoral procedural review last year and GUV's commitment to Sports Wales Governance Framework we advertised Board and Chairmen of Committee vacancies. The number and calibre of applicants was gratifying and has resulted in the appointment of a group of people with a diverse range of skills that will enable us to continue to build on the excellent foundation and progress achieved by GUV since its inception in 2007. A strategic review of GUV will be held shortly to ensure we are addressing the needs of Welsh golf in the best possible way.

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. It's always sad to lose members of any such team but we wish Gavin Reen, Stuart Stenhouse and Ben Waterhouse all the best in their future careers and thank them for their contributions during their time with us.

Challenges remain for golf globally in terms of participation, particularly in the area of male and female golfers for which the levels of players remain at 85% and 15% in Wales respectively, and retention of members but adopting flexible approaches to being part of a club, playing the game and encouraging families should hopefully help to redress this balance. GUV's programmes are available to support clubs and players and its encouraging that more clubs are engaging in these programmes as reflected in case studies on the GDW web site but clubs do need to fully commit to using and implementing these resources to maximise their impact and sustainability of change.

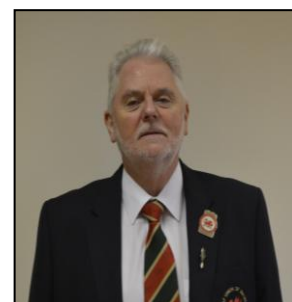
These challenges are also apparent in our Treasurer's report which demonstrates the need for prudent financial management to enable us to deliver the best possible outcomes for golf whilst balancing the budget. We are grateful for the on-going support of Sports Wales, the R&A, PGA, Golf Foundation and Future Financial 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.

Welsh players, at all levels, continue to achieve great success both within Wales and internationally. Attending events and championships enables me to watch golf played to the best of people's ability 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.

I would also like to thank everyone who has worked to achieve the recently awarded Intermediate level of the Equality Standard in Sport and Disability Sport Wales' insport development silver standard. GUV/GDW have now retained the NSPCC Safeguarding Advanced Level 3 standard. Such awards are a testament to the on-going work to make golf accessible, encourage and support participation and enjoyment of golf at all levels.

The President Neil Niblett and I would like to thank the all the retiring Board members, Rob Holt, Chairman of GDW and Gareth Davies GUV Treasurer for their tremendous hard work and support during their periods of service. The same thanks must also be extended to all our volunteers in the clubs and counties, the Council and staff all of whom make extremely valuable contributions to the success of Welsh golf.

On behalf of the Council and Board we thank you for your continued support and look forward to continuing to work with you to achieve success for Welsh golf in terms of increased participation in the game resulting in increases in club membership and success at all levels of the sport and a thriving network of clubs able to face the on going challenges of the playing, promoting and supporting the game.



Neil Niblett

**Dr Val Franklin**  
**Chairman 2015**

## TREASURER'S STATEMENT

### Financial Results for the 15-month period ended 31 March 2016

It has been well documented that membership of golf clubs across Wales has been declining for several years and unfortunately, this period is no different, with a further 5% reduction from 49,500 to 47,000. Whilst, predictably, the largest decline (by number of members) represents adult males (c.1,500/3.6%), it is the decline in junior members (c600/14%) that causes me most concern. Whilst income for both G UW and our members is predominantly driven by adult males, it is the junior section of clubs that will ensure the future progress and success of our clubs and golf in Wales.

The G UW continues to strive to attract juniors to the sport and the inaugural Junior Tour has raised considerable interest and it would be a great achievement if this interest could be converted into memberships in future years.

Declining membership is not restricted to Wales but also reflected in England, the rest of the developed golfing nations in Europe and America. However, it remains firmly my view that without the excellent work undertaken by Golf Development Wales ("GDW"), the reduction in membership would be considerably greater than that presented today. Their work is also key to attracting people to play golf and whilst club membership declines, New2Golf membership continues to rise and it is extremely positive that the number of people participating in golf in Wales has also increased, with there now being in excess of 100,000 casual pay and play type golfers in Wales.

Club membership is fundamental to our income and if we are to continue to significantly invest in the sport, it is my expectation that membership subscription levels will need to increase over future years. That said, it is also important that the G UW continue to search for alternative methods of generating income, particularly considering the increasing numbers of nomadic golfers across the country.

Our funders are also not immune from income reductions and Sport Wales have previously confirmed that G UW should expect to receive reduced grant support in future years. This further supports the necessity to generate income through both existing and new sources wherever possible.

Sport Wales' funding period has recently changed from calendar year to the year between 1 April and 31 March. Given the importance of their funding to us, we have adopted this as our financial year and as a result, I report below on a 15-month trading period to 31 March 2016.

The statutory financial statements for the 15-month period to 31 March 2016 show a loss for the financial year of £22,285 compared to loss of £20,141 in the previous year. This reflects a small surplus of c.£5,000 generated within G UW and deficit of c.£27,000 in GDW.

Income and costs from domestic championships broadly matched during the period at c£75,000, breaking even. Total other income, principally comprising subscriptions and grants exceeded £1.5m for the 15-month period (£1.275 in prior year) and with costs being closely managed against the appropriate consideration of investments made during the period, a small deficit has been generated overall.

At present, grant funding accounts for in excess of 50% of all G UW income and we are extremely privileged to receive such strong support from all our funders, including Sport Wales, the R&A, the PGA and the Golf Foundation. That said, it is recognised that reliance on grant funding in a challenging economic environment presents uncertainty and as such we will work over the coming months and years to try to better balance this position with other sources of income.

The balance sheet remains healthy albeit with reserves at levels slightly higher than I would have hoped for given the current strategy. It is the intention of the Board to invest significantly into golf in Wales, through a targeted approach, with a focus on specific projects and programmes ensuring the best possible outcome

for those who wish to play golf in Wales, regardless of ability. The investment of our funds held over from the merger of the Unions has continued to increase in value and currently rests at £269,000.

In 2016/17 we plan to continue reinvesting our reserves and as a result, the aggregate (GUW and GDW) budget deficit for 2016/17 is proposed at c.£113,000 (GUW £78,000 and GDW £35,000). Future deficits, albeit at reducing levels, are predicted over the coming years, ensuring that appropriate investments are made alongside measured cost control.

As some of you will be aware, this will be my last AGM as Treasurer of the GUW as I look to spend more time with my family. The last three and a half years have been thoroughly enjoyable and I would like to thank all those who I have worked with over my term in office. With the new Board in place and a fantastic team putting the strategy into action, the GUW is in good shape to ensure that anyone in Wales who wants to play this great sport, can.

**Gareth Davies**  
Treasurer

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

The following report details our work during 2015/6.

#### **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:

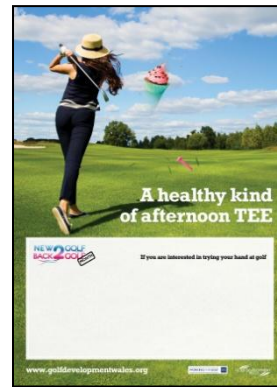
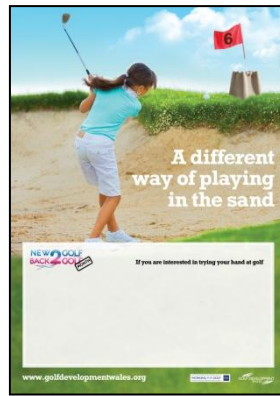
- The School Sport Survey (Sport Wales) highlighted an increase of 8.7% of Primary School Pupils (years 3 - 6) who had participated in Golf to 20.1% and Secondary School pupils (years 7 -11) an increase of 2.5% to 11.8%.
- The annual number of participants in GDW related schemes also increased by 20% to 66,229 participants.
- GDW New2Golf members increased by 55% to 1682, which were 54% female.
- Plus, other highlights outlined below.

**Business Support Scheme (BSS).** After the review of the BSS in 2015, the roll out of the NEW PILOT Business Support Scheme's 'Governance Element' has taken place. This is an intensive Governance Support Scheme led by Amanda Bennett the GDW/GUW Governance Consultant and the GDW team. 15 clubs applied and 6 were selected. Clubs were selected by a panel based on criteria such as past engagement with GDW.

The scheme consists of a 1-day workshop based on the (S&RA) first 4 principles of governance and leadership (acting as the guardians of golf in Wales; defining and evaluating the role of the committee/board; Setting the vision, mission and purpose; and recruiting a balanced, inclusive and skilled board). As well as this, the club receives a scoping meeting, a members or committee workshop, plus additional remote and face to face support on areas of need. Template resources are also provided, plus additional workshops based on key themes available to ALL clubs.

**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 2015 campaign utilised industry research to identify key target areas for promotion. These included juniors, families and ladies. See examples below.



**New2Golf Beginner Scheme and New2Golf Membership.** Over 60 clubs ran 117 schemes which consisted of beginner group coaching, additional lessons, trial membership. Participants also sign up for a GDW New2Golf member benefit pack. 1848 participants took part in the group lessons and 967 participants signed up to club trial memberships (52% conversion). 1682 became GDW New2Golf members and received a benefit pack of which 54% were female.

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 last year 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.

**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. Since the start of 2016 the application process has been fully online and combine Disability Sport Wales' Insport accreditation.



The Junior Golf Guide resource (an accompanying resource) is complete. It 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.** G UW / GDW have achieved (and have now retained) the NSPCC Safeguarding Advanced Level 3 standards (one of only 3 sports to achieve). GDW is continuing to support clubs with cases, developing safeguarding policies and procedures, advice and education. Sian Simmons, GDW Administrator is also the G UW/GDW Safeguarding Co-ordinator and is the main contact for clubs requiring Safeguarding support.

**Insport Disability Sport Wales Standards.** G UW/GDW successfully achieved Insport Silver. 45 PGA Professionals are trained with additional courses planned for 2016 to up skill these coaches. Wales is leading the way in this regard.

**Disability Coaching Hubs.** There are a total of 22 Disability Golf Coaching Hubs in Wales (see below map). There were 12 in 2014. 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.

**Community Officers** continue to have a huge impact on delivery across Wales. The contracts have been extended for a further 2 years from January 2017. The Golf Foundation has contributed additional funding to the posts moving forward.

In year 1 of post (2014)

- 73% of clubs in Wales delivering Community Outreach, Golf Roots and or New2Golf Beginner Schemes
- 54 Mass Audience Festivals attended using GDW equipment (nets, and Mascots etc.) – 22 more events than in previous year
- 55,315 participants in Golf Development Wales / Golf Foundation related schemes (34% increase from previous year)
- 33 more beginner schemes in 2014 (total 145 schemes by 84 clubs)
- 18 Clubs running Disability Specific schemes
- 27 Golf Roots Centres
- 10 pop up Street golf clubs
- 19 of 22 Local Authorities worked with
- 1087 New2Golf Members

In year 2 of posts (2015)

- 84% of clubs in Wales delivering Community Outreach, Golf Roots and or New2Golf Beginner Schemes (over 2 years 124 out of 152)
- 85 Mass Audience Festivals attended (31 more events than in year 1) using GDW equipment (nets and mascots etc.)
- 22 clubs running Disability Specific Schemes
- 66,000 participants in Golf Development Wales / Golf Foundation related schemes
- 60 clubs running the Junior Golf Passport
- 60 clubs ran 117 New2Golf beginner schemes, 1848 participants, over 1682 New2Golf members, 55% converting to introductory or full club membership (less schemes but higher number of participants and New2Golf members)
- 27 Golf Roots Centres
- 16 pop up Street Golf Clubs
- 22 of 22 Local Authorities worked with
- 1682 New2Golf members

### **GDW 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 3 times a year and each member will be given opportunities to take on project responsibilities. The 3rd youth panel meeting took place in January 2016. 50% of the youth panel members are female and 2 are golfers with a disability.

### **BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) Project Newport**

GDW received £10,000 Kick Start funding from Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) through Sport Wales to develop a project in with BME groups in Newport.

The project consisted of golf sessions which took place at a variety of venues including schools, community centres and parks. Some sessions were organised, such as the school sessions and those during the School Holidays, but others were “Outreach Sessions”. These sessions are where the coaches arrive at an area known as a “Hotspot” for anti-social behaviour, open up a bag full of golf equipment and engage with the young people to decrease the opportunities for distraction.

The club linked to this project was The Parc Golf Club in Newport. In total the project consisted of:

- 46 sessions delivered with a total of 1199 attendances (460 individuals).
- 49 hours of Pop-Up golf sessions delivered in a variety of schools and community venues within Communities First areas of Newport.
- 78% of participants were from BME backgrounds.
- 21% of young people engaged were NEET (Not in employment, education or training).
- 2 adult groups have also been set up for follow on sessions at the park golf club
- Workforce - 18 Street Golf Activators (10 BMA) 13 Junior Leaders (7 BME), 6 registered for ASQ Level 1 (6 BME)
- Community Membership set up at the Parc Golf Club with the 4 community first clusters

Local BME role models helped to promote the sessions.

This project is an excellent example of partnership work with Sport Wales, Newport Live and Golf Development Wales. It has also been used as a case study at the Sport Wales Equality Lead Officers Workshop.

**New2Golf Summer Swing.** All New2Golf participants were invited to the New2Golf Summer Swing in August. It was a fun social gathering combined with a competition. This included a 36 flag comp, nearest the line comp, Amy Boulden took their first tee shot for a nearest the pin comp. Local volunteers were used to walk with the groups as assist with scoring etc. Local companies sponsored the event (serving 'mocktails' and pies on some of the holes and a BMW for the weekend as a prize). There were 58 participants (50 females and 8 males). All New2Golf participants will be invited using the New2Golf database.

**Regional Partnerships (REPS).** The 3rd set of Regional Partnerships (REPS) ran across Wales in March consisting of people involved in the delivery of junior golf. In the last REPS meeting The Junior Golf Tour was heavily promoted along with updates relating to Junior Golf. Over 100 clubs have been involved with over 200 participants.

**Street Golf** (a Street Games Sport) is an adapted form of equipment which helps take golf to the doorstep in disadvantaged communities and enables young people to have activities to divert their attention from anti-social behaviour and develop life skills. 16 pop up Street Golf clubs were set up in 2015 and additional 13 during 2016.

#### **SOME INITIATIVES TO LOOK OUT FOR IN 2016**

**Customer Service – Mystery Shopper.** A small team of volunteers have been recruited and trained (April 2016) 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.

**Member Visitor Satisfaction Survey analysis.** Our research officer has also worked with 3 clubs on compiling results from Member and Visitor Satisfaction Surveys. Survey templates are also available from Golf Development Wales.

**The Strong Club Matrix.** The Strong Club Matrix (as outlined below) is an online resource for the development officers to use with clubs and lists the key areas a club needs to impact on to be a sustainable and strong club.

It lists the strong club criteria within the following sections, the lead organisation and also the supporting resources available. The key areas are:

1. Club information
2. Governance
3. Participation
4. Membership Recruitment and Retention
5. Marketing
6. Visitors
7. Customer service
8. Compliance
9. Course Management
10. Handicap and Course Rating

The Club and Development Officer indicate if they are red, -amber or green against criteria which fall under the above key areas. The percentage of each colour for each key area can be calculated. Improvement and the impact of the development team and GUW services can be assessed over time and the club manager can utilise the results with their committees to look at areas to improve on within the club.

Future support areas can be highlighted and planned based on the needs of clubs and clubs can benchmark themselves against a national average.

**GB and I Communications Group** This Group is set up by the R&A which includes key organisations involved in the promotion of golf, such as ET, LET, PGA, home unions, Sky, plus more. The aim is to create consistent marketing messages across the organisations. 2 key areas of focus are women and girls golf and the health benefits of golf. A themed marketing and communication plan linked to key events will be developed. A 9-hole golf 'time to play nine' campaign was released the end of April 2016.

**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 will 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 will 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

#### **ELITE PERFORMANCE AND COACHING**

The past 18 months have seen many performance and representative highs. We are incredibly proud to have seen 5 players named in various GB&I and European teams; this included a record 3 Boy's selected in the victorious Jacques Leglise Trophy. Details of these honours are below:

**David Boote (Walton Heath)** – selected for the GB&I team at the St Andrews Trophy. 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 below.



**Chloe Williams (Wrexham) and David Boote** – both players were picked to represent Europe vs Asia-Pacific in the Bonallack Trophy and Patsy Hankins Trophy respectively. The Men's team successfully retained their title with a score of 21.5-10.5 with the Ladies just missing out 17-15.

**Ben Chamberlain (Padeswood & Buckley), Tim Harry (Vale Resort) and Tom Williams (Wrexham)** – selected for GB&I to compete against Europe, this is the first time Wales has had 3 players selected for the event. The result was 12.5-12.5 which meant GB&I retained the trophy. The winning team are pictured below.



In recognition of this achievement, plus their other successes in 2015, the Golf Union of Wales jointly awarded Ben, Tim and Tom "Welsh Amateur Golfer of the Year" for 2015.

2015 and 2016 saw our team's produce strong performances at the European Nations Cup. This event is contested in teams of 3 for the Ladies and 4 for the Men and attracts entries from the top European



nations. In 2015 our Ladies team of Chloe Williams, Bethan Morris (Tenby) and Lauren Hillier (Newport) finished in 4<sup>th</sup> place overall, with Williams 3<sup>rd</sup> individually. In 2016 a team of Owen Edwards (Llanwern), Joshua Davies (Celtic Manor), Evan Griffith (Conwy) and Jack Davidson (Llanwern) finished in 3<sup>rd</sup> place, with Edwards 2<sup>nd</sup> individually.

Unfortunately, these successes did not translate in to similar results at the European Team Championships in 2015 or 2016. In 2015 our teams finished Men 14<sup>th</sup>, Ladies 17<sup>th</sup>, Boy's 12<sup>th</sup> and in 2016 the Ladies were 18<sup>th</sup> and Boy's 14<sup>th</sup>. There are a number of areas which need to be addressed for Wales to regularly challenge in larger team events, these will become part of the G UW's ongoing organisational strategy to improve golf across Wales in all areas.

2016 did see our European Men's team 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. Boote is now ranked in the top 30 in the world and is due to play in the US Amateur at the time this report was compiled.

As in previous years, we punched well above our weight and exceeded our targets in GB&I and European level events. Highlights of these included:

- Joshua Davies 1<sup>st</sup> at Duncan Putter
- David Boote 4<sup>th</sup> at South American Amateur
- Richard James (Aberystwyth) tied 5<sup>th</sup> at the South Beach International in Florida
- Tim Harry finished tied 6<sup>th</sup> at the Portuguese Amateur
- Richard James 2<sup>nd</sup> at Lytham Trophy
- Evan Griffith 5<sup>th</sup> at Irish Open
- Ben Westgate (Treose) 2<sup>nd</sup> at Welsh Open
- Ben Chamberlain 7<sup>th</sup> at McEvoy Trophy
- Tom Williams winner of Welsh Youths
- Becky Harries (Tenby) 6<sup>th</sup> at Welsh Open
- Owen Edwards finished tied 4<sup>th</sup> and Tom Williams tied 11<sup>th</sup> at Portuguese Amateur
- Lee Jones (Conwy) 5<sup>th</sup> at Welsh Open
- Chloe Williams 3<sup>rd</sup> at Irish Open
- Lucy Jones (Wrexham) 10<sup>th</sup> at Welsh Open
- Jack Davidson 9<sup>th</sup> at Scottish Open
- Joshua Davies 1<sup>st</sup> at South of England Amateur
- Ffion Tynan (Minchinhampton) 1<sup>st</sup> at English Girl's U14 Open Championship

The 2015 Order of Merit competitions were won by:

- Boy's winner – Tom Williams (Wrexham)
- Girls' winner – Ella Griffiths (Vale Resort)
- Ladies winner – Katherine O'Connor (West Byfleet)
- Men's winner – David Boote (Walton Heath)
- Senior Men's – Jeff Thomas (Royal Porthcawl)

Away from the course, the G UW has appointed a number of new faces to the Captaincy positions. These include Christine Rossiter (Girl's Captain), Richard Hendicott (Senior Men) and Vicki Thomas (Senior Ladies). We have also welcomed Chloe Rogers (pictured below) as Ladies Captain, Chloe is currently working towards her PGA coaching qualification and was part of the bronze medal winning GB&I Olympic hockey team from 2012.



Improvements across Teams & Performance are continually being sought to move Welsh golf forwards and to make the best use of our resources. We remain extremely grateful for the financial support we receive in this area from both Sport Wales and the R&A.

### CHAMPIONSHIP REVIEW

Congratulations to all our Champions, both individual and team. Katherine O'Connor (West Byfleet) won the Welsh Ladies' Close Championship at Monmouthshire GC whilst David Boote (Walton Heath) was crowned the Welsh Amateur Champion at Prestatyn.

In the Team Championships, Parc edged out host club The Glamorganshire in the final of the men's event and Newport beat Royal St David's in the Ladies Team Championships final at Builth Wells GC.

We run a genuinely 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. As always we are extremely grateful to our member clubs for making available their courses and enabling us to stage so many popular championships.

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 (Royal County Down)	Olivia Winning (Rotherham)
Ladies' Amateur	Katherine O'Connor (West Byfleet)	Chloe Williams (Wrexham)
Welsh Open Stroke Play	Jimmy Mullen (Royal North Devon)	Ashley Chesters (Hawkstone Park)
Welsh Open Youths	Thomas Williams (Wrexham)	Alister Balcombe (Clevedon)
Welsh Seniors	Jeffrey Thomas (Royal Porthcawl)	David Frazer (Pennard)
Welsh Open Seniors	Michael Mercier (Jupiter Hills)	Richard Partridge (Wildernesse)
Welsh Boys	Ben Chamberlain (Padeswood & Buckley)	Luke Harries (Tenby)
Welsh Girls	Ella Griffiths (The Vale Resort)	Jordan Ryan (Newport)
Welsh Amateur	David Boote (Walton Heath)	Elis Lewis (Borth & Ynyslas)
Welsh Boys' U15	Harry Bartley (Clays)	Archie Davies (Carlisle)

Welsh Boys' U13	Thomas Peet (Pyle & Kenfig)	Samuel Peet (Pyle & Kenfig)
Welsh Open Senior Ladies	Jane Rees (Minchinhampton)	Sharon Roberts (Cradoc)
GUW Medal	Christine Watkins (Pontypridd)	Gwenfair Aykroyd (Bala)
Australian Spoons	St Athan (Steph Bonnar & Ruth O'Carroll)	Maesdu (Viv Edwards & Gwenda, Newton)
Challenge Bowls	Silver; Robbie Lee (Brynhill) Bronze; Lesley Mountjoy (Greenmeadow)	Silver; Sue Bridle (Dinas Powis) Bronze; Olivia Davies (Celtic Minor)
Centenary Greensomes	Wrexham (Pam Shaw & Jill Williams)	Pyle & Kenfig (Cheryl Western & Sue Forbes)

### WELSH CHAMPIONS 2015



**DAVID BOOTE**



**KATHERINE O'CONNOR**

<b>TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS</b>	<b>Winners</b>	<b>Runners Up</b>
Welsh Inter Counties	Flintshire	Gwent
Welsh Ladies' County Champ	Monmouthshire	Denbighshire & Flintshire
Welsh Girls' Inter Counties	Glamorgan	Monmouthshire
Welsh Ladies' Team Championship	Newport	Royal St David's
Welsh Team Championship	Parc	The Glamorganshire
Welsh Handicap Team Champ	Conwy	Mountain Ash
Welsh Junior Inter Club Challenge	The Vale Resort	Greenmeadow
Ping Welsh Mixed Team Challenge	Haverfordwest	Cottrell Park
Victory Shield	Conwy	Padeswood & Buckley
Boys' Home Internationals	Scotland	England
Girls' Home Internationals	England	Ireland
Men's Home Internationals	Ireland	Scotland
Ladies' Home Internationals	England	Ireland
Senior Men's Home Internationals	Ireland	Scotland
Senior Ladies' Home Internationals	England	Ireland

## **RULES SCHOOLS**

The Rules Sub-Committee continues to stage bi-annual Rules Schools. The next G UW/R&A level 2 Rules School will be held at the Celtic Manor on 15-16 November 2016.

The G UW's new Championship Manager David Wilson was successful in obtaining a merit grade at the Level 3 Rules School held at the R&A in February.

## **WELSH JUNIOR TOUR**

Plans for the Welsh Junior Tour were formalised during 2015 and launched in March this year with 4 regional events followed by a Tour Final. The events are targeted at players aged between 6 and 14 who are at an early stage of their development in golf. The Welsh Junior Tour aims to build on the excellent work being done to encourage junior golf across Wales by clubs, counties and Golf Development Wales. The participation of in this tour has been tremendous with fields of 56-94 players.

## **STAFFING**

Gavin Reen left the G UW Championship Department towards the end of 2015 to take up a position with Cardiff City Football Club and we wish him well in his new role. Incoming Championship Manager David Wilson started his post in January of 2016. David is a PGA professional and prior to joining the G UW was a Tournament Controller for the PGA. Laurie Evans also joined the team in June as Administration Officer assisting the Teams and Performance Department. Ben Waterhouse has recently left the G UW Teams and Performance Department to take up a position with The Football Association in England.

## **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)
- Issued new CONGU UHS manuals to all affiliated clubs and qualifying authorities

In addition to the above we hosted six educational seminars across three venues at the start of year with a record number of delegates in attendance. The seminars focused on three topical issues; CONGU Changes, Course Rating and the Central Database of Handicaps (CDH). Feedback was fantastic and as a result of the seminars we now have CDH user-friendly guides available via the website and have recently completed a cleansing process of the CDH to remove all duplicate entries. The CDH remains a priority for the G UW 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.

Course Rating has undergone substantial change this year with new and improved processes in place to fulfil our obligatory requirements as well as dealing with ad-hoc club requests. Clubs are now better informed of the processes involved with course rating as well as understanding how and why we conduct Standard Scratch Score (SSS) reviews. New raters have been certified via in-house G UW training seminars along with our more experienced raters attending the USGA Calibration Seminar to further improve their knowledge and understanding. This year has seen a huge increase in 9 hole SSS requests demonstrating the changes in how golf is currently digested.

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

### **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. The most notable addition to the services on offer is a sector specific e-learning portal. The online portal, a new feature of the Xact services, developed in partnership with all home unions and BIGGA, offers e-learning health and safety courses for golf club staff, offering a variety of online courses on clubhouse topics and greenkeeping matters.

The flagship 'Roadshows' were once again a huge success in 2015. As with previous years the roadshows took place at three venues throughout Wales with great support from affiliated clubs. In partnership with Golf Development Wales the theme focused on governance with industry expert and Sport Wales board member Amanda Bennett delivering on four main principles of governance (acting as the guardians of golf in Wales, setting the vision, mission and purpose, defining and evaluating the role of committee/board and objectivity: balanced, inclusive and skilled board). Amanda's knowledge and expertise coupled with an extraordinary ability to deliver to the different audiences in attendance made for an insightful series of roadshows. The impact of the roadshows has been visible to see with a number of clubs currently undergoing governance changes on the new GDW Business Support Scheme (BSS).

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.

Finally, the Club Services department has had significant input into the strategic review of the Greenkeeper Training Committee (GTC) thus ensuring that the level of education, quality assurances of qualifications and the various services on offer remain at the standard required for the industry.

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

The 2015 Future Financials Welsh Golf Awards were presented at a luncheon at the Celtic Manor Resort in early February 2016 and we were delighted to have among our guests Ryder Cup star Philip Price and European Tour Player Stuart Manley and victorious Walker Cup Captain Nigel Edwards.

These awards would not be possible without the support from sponsor Future Financials. 2015 was the sixth year they have sponsored the awards and they have already committed to 2016. Future Financials is a Cardiff based Welsh company which provides Golf Clubs with a facility that enables their members to pay their annual subscriptions by monthly direct debit payments, rather than in one large annual payment.

### Welsh Golf Club of the Year

The 2015 winner was Cottrell Park Resort a club which has submitted strong applications over a number of years but the outstanding progress the club made during 2015 ensured that it finally finished on the top of the pile. Highlighted below are a number of areas where the club has excelled:



- During the last twelve months Cottrell Park Golf Resort has welcomed over 20,000 golf visitors meaning visitor numbers have remained buoyant and increased from 2014.
- The clubs playing membership has seen an impressive upturn of 11% within the same period; an encouraging indicator for the club considering the general downward trend of golf membership.
- The club offers 11 different membership packages catering for all different golfing requirements and ages and it offers free membership to all juniors
- Cottrell Park Golf Resort holds Twitter and Facebook accounts that are regularly updated and are used to respond to customer questions.
- 2015 was an excellent year for the Junior section with over 60 members who regularly take part in the clubs coaching programme, competitions and social activities.
- In March 2015 the facility became a GUW Certified Coaching Centre implementing the programme which is designed to give a clear pathway from complete beginner right through to the National Squad.
- At the other end of the age scale the club has a very strong senior's section with over 180 active members.
- Through Golf Development Wales' 'New2Golf' scheme, Cottrell Park Golf Resort have created and promoted ladies coaching sessions. Participants are only being charged £5 per session, with all profits being donated to Velindre Hospital. Gareth Bennett one of the club's coaches gave his services for this project FOC.
- The Open week in July welcomed well over 500 entrants.
- Currently the Resort offers two 18-hole championship-maintained golf courses, a bar and restaurant, a snooker room, indoor golf simulators, a driving range, a nature trail, team building training and activities, a 400 capacity marquee, conference and function rooms, a sports bar, a golf shop and changing rooms.

### Welsh Volunteer of the Year

Winner of the 2015 award was Simon Nicholas for his unstinting work at Milford Haven GC. Some of Simon's achievements are listed below:

- He ensured that his club Milford Haven bucked the current trend of declining junior memberships thanks to his forward thinking, dedication and enthusiasm
- Within 2 years the junior section expanded from 20 to 61
- Coaching sessions are held 3 times a week as well as 6, 9 or 18 hole competitions for juniors on a Saturday
- Last year 35 new junior golfers were introduced to the club with a view to them eventually formally feeding into the Junior Section, 10 of this group were girls.
- Simon has helped develop a mini course as a stepping stone to the full course.
- The average age of the 6 hole members is 10, whilst there are 3 girls of between 9-10 year-old girls who now have official CONGU handicaps
- Simon firmly believes that regular competitions coupled with fun sessions at all levels is the key to maintaining the successful growth of the junior section.



**Welsh Amateur Golfer of the Year** – In 2015 the Amateur Golfer of the Year award was shared by 3 very talented young players - Ben Chamberlain, Tim Harry, and Tom Williams. For the first time Wales had 3 boys selected to represent GB&I (in a 9 strong team) for the Jacques Leglise Trophy which sees GB&I take on the Continent of Europe. The Welsh trio collectively contributed 5.5pts of the GB&I total of 12.5pts. some of the individual achievements of the 3 recipients are listed below;

**Thomas Williams (Wrexham)**

- Winner of the Welsh Boy's Order of Merit in 2015 and 2014
- Winner of the Welsh Open Youths in 2015
- 3rd at Clwyd Open
- Semi finalist at Welsh Amateur
- Represented the full Welsh Men's Team in the Home Internationals at Royal Portrush

**Ben Chamberlain, (Padeswood & Buckley)**

- Welsh Boy's Champion 2014 and 2015
- Winner Central Wales Boys in 2015
- 7th at Peter McEvoy Trophy
- Top 20 in the Duncan Putter

**Tim Harry (Vale of Glamorgan), currently in college in the USA**

- Represented GB&I in the 2014 Jacques Leglise Trophy as well as 2015
- Semi finalist in the 2014 British Boys Championship
- 6th at Portuguese Amateur Championship
- Represented the full Welsh Men Team at the Home Internationals at Royal Portrush.

**Welsh Tour Professional of the Year** – the 2015 recipient was Amy Boulden a former multiple winner of the Welsh Amateur of the Year Award some of Amy's achievements are listed below;

- Finished 12<sup>th</sup> in the Ladies European Tour (LET) Order of Merit after being 18<sup>th</sup> in 2014 when she was Rookie of the year
- Achieved 4 top 10 finishes on the LET
- Finished in 9<sup>th</sup> place finish in the Ricoh Women's British Open at Royal Birkdale her first top 10 in a major championship.
- Amy got to the Final stage of the LPGA Tour Q School in the US just missing out on her tour card.
- Amy continues to give freely of her time as an Ambassador for Golf Development Wales.

**Golf Development Wales Professional of the Year**

The 2015 winner was Lewis Jones of Cardiff Golf Club, listed below are some of the reasons he was selected:

- Against a national trend of declining junior memberships Lewis has been largely responsible for Cardiff's junior numbers increasing from 50 in 2011 to 125 in 2015
- Lewis has helped Cardiff create a very child centred environment and every junior member has access to free weekly coaching.
- He has taken advantage of Golf Roots funding to deliver schools sessions and the club professionals set up their own junior brand the City Golf Academy to help develop golf in the local communities and encourage children to join other clubs in the locality as well.
- Since the City Golf Academy's inception they have visited sixteen schools, delivering golf to over 1,000 children in the Cardiff area and working in collaboration with Golf Development Wales and Sport Cardiff they have engaged with a variety of different communities.



## Outstanding Achievement Award

2015 is the first time this award had been presented and the deserving winner was 2002 Ryder Cup hero Phillip Price, some highlights of Phil's career are listed below;



- Represented Wales a number of times as an Amateur including at the 1989 Mens' European Team Championship at Royal Porthcawl.
- First got his European Tour Card in 1989 and retained a full playing status for 22 consecutive years up to and including 2012.
- During his career he won 3 European Tour events the Portuguese Open in 1994 and 2001 and the European Open at the K Club with a stunning wire to wire performance in 2003.
- He was runner up 9 times and achieved over 30 top 10's.
- In 2000 he was runner up to Tiger Woods in the WGC Bridgestone a World Golf Championship event
- Phil played in 19 Major Championships including, the US Masters where he made the cut in 2004, 10 Open Championships where he finished in the top 10 in 2003 having played with eventual winner Ben Curtis in the final round.
- The highlight for most Welsh golf fans was his fantastic performance in beating Phil Mickleson the then World number 2 in the 2002 Ryder Cup at the Belfry, it was a pivotal match in Europe's victory and no-one will ever forget the putt he holed across the 16<sup>th</sup> green.

## CONCLUSION

As our Chairman mentioned in her report the G UW is continually reviewing its strategy and working practices. We have been extremely fortunate in recruiting a very talented and diverse board which is currently overseeing a full strategic review. It is our aim to publish an updated Strategic Vision early in 2017. 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 encourage the commitment and support of all golf's stakeholders.

Golf has been experiencing a difficult time and it is more important than ever that moving forward we remain ambitious in setting our future targets and totally focused on achieving them.

**Richard Dixon**  
Chief Executive