

CYMRU  
FOOTBALL  
FOUNDATION



# CLOSER TO THE GAME AGOSACH I'R GÊM

Cymru Football Foundation Strategy: 2026-2030



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# From the Chair

## Rhagair gan y Cadeirydd

**I am proud to introduce our strategy for 2026–2030, which sets out an ambition that is bold, practical, and deeply rooted in the needs of communities across Wales.**

Football is a common language that brings people together, builds confidence, and strengthens communities. Yet we know that too many people still face barriers to taking part, whether because of the quality of local facilities, the cost of participation, or simply a lack of opportunity close to home.

We want every community in Wales to have quality football facilities within 15 minutes, with priority given to those who need it most. That ambition excites me because it speaks to football's unique power. From towns to villages, from schools to clubs, the game connects people, lifts communities, and inspires pride. When we combine that power with the right facilities, we unlock benefits that go far beyond sport. We create healthier lives, more inclusive opportunities, and stronger, more resilient communities. This is a promise with transformative potential.

The Cymru Football Foundation is ready to lead this change. We will work with funders, partners, and communities to deliver facilities that are sustainable, inclusive, and built to last. We will also ensure that every pound invested generates real value, measured not just in pitches or buildings, but in the lives improved and the opportunities created.

I want to thank our Board, staff, and partners for their commitment and belief in what we can achieve together. This strategy is our collective promise to Wales. By 2030, we aim to be recognised as the nation's most impactful sporting charity, delivering facilities that allow everyone to get closer to the game.

**Kelly Davies**

Cadeirydd, Cymru Football Foundation



# From the Director

## Rhagair gan y Cyfarwyddwr

**Across Wales football is part of our shared identity, a source of pride, and a way for people to connect with one another. Research shows that football clubs have long been among the strongest institutions for building collective identity and belonging. They give people a sense of community that goes beyond results.**

We are determined to build on that tradition. This strategy sets out a bold ambition to put quality football facilities within 15 minutes of every community in Wales, with priority given to those who need it most. Achieving this will mean creating spaces that improve health, bring people together, and give communities greater resilience in the face of social and economic challenges.

From our work so far, we know that football has a unique power to reach people who are too often excluded. Communities tell us time and again that what matters most is not the financial value of clubs, but the friendships, sense of belonging, and community spirit that their local club provides. That is the impact we want to multiply.

Delivery will be practical and disciplined. We have a clear roadmap, with milestones

to 2030. We will secure anchor investment and grow diverse funding streams, work in partnership with local authorities, health boards, and community organisations, and measure our success not only in participation numbers, but in the social value our facilities create.

This is an exciting moment for the Foundation. By combining football's unmatched reach with a commitment to inclusion, sustainability, and partnership, we can make a lasting difference to every community in Wales.

**Aled Lewis**  
Cyfarwyddwr, Cymru Football Foundation

# Executive Summary

## Crynodeb Gweithredol

The Cymru Football Foundation (CFF) is working to become **Wales' most impactful sporting charity.**

Our ambition is to put **quality football facilities within 15 minutes of every community in Wales, giving priority to those who need it most.**

**By 2030, we will ▼**



**Invest in facilities that support health, inclusion, and community resilience.**



**Focus on increasing access to facilities for women and girls, people with a disability & ethnically diverse communities.**



**Convene partners across health, education, housing, & climate so that football facilities deliver wider social value.**



**Secure long-term funding while diversifying income through corporate partnerships, social investment and fundraising.**



**Expand our impact by serving more communities, engaging more people, & building stronger, more connected places across Wales.**

# Our impact

## Ein Heffaith

In just a few years, we have helped transform the landscape of grassroots football in Wales.

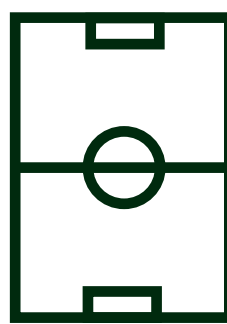
Our track record shows not only what is possible, but what can be scaled in the years ahead.



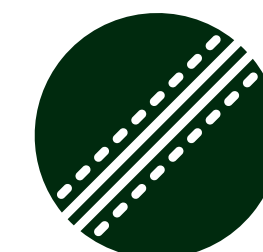
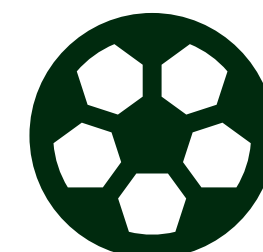
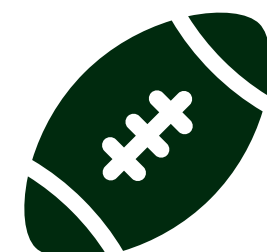
Benefitted over **35,000** players



Created **56%** more access to facilities for women and girls.



Usage of funded pitches and clubhouses has increased by **93%**.



Directed **£9m+** towards multi-sport projects that benefit both football and at least one other sport.

We've invested into **41** new or upgraded artificial pitches, **19** new grass pitches and **34** clubhouses and changing rooms.

Leveraged a further **£15 Million** in funding contributions towards supported projects.



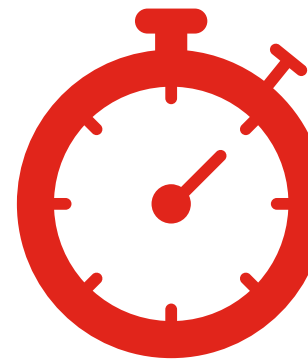
# Case for Change

## Yr Achos dros Newid

Football is the most popular and most accessible sport in the country, yet too many communities still lack the facilities they need. Quality and access remain inconsistent, particularly in rural areas and in communities facing the highest levels of deprivation.



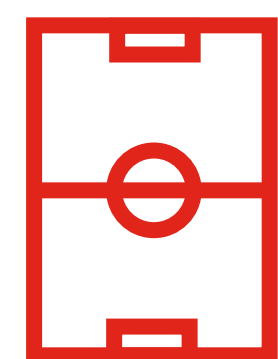
## Health



Inactivity remains a persistent and deeply entrenched issue in most deprived communities. People living in these areas are significantly less likely to meet the Chief Medical Officer's physical activity guidelines, with fewer than half achieving the recommended 150 minutes of moderate activity each week.



The latest Sport Wales data shows that adults in the most deprived areas are almost twice as likely to do no exercise at all compared with those in the least deprived areas.



**Football facilities provide affordable and inclusive opportunities for people to be active and improve wellbeing.**

This disparity reflects wider inequalities in access to safe, affordable and welcoming opportunities to be active – from limited local facilities and transport links to financial and social barriers that make regular participation more difficult.





# Inclusion

Investment is needed in inclusive, safe and age-friendly facilities, targeted outreach, and programmes that meet people where they are - ensuring everyone has the chance to be active and connected.



**Barriers to participation remain.** Data from Sport Wales shows clear inequalities in participation linked to gender, disability, and age. **Only 56% of women** in Wales are active at least once a month, compared with 64% of men, with many citing safety concerns, poor lighting, and a lack of private, welcoming facilities as barriers.



For disabled people, **22% report doing no physical activity**, compared with 14% of non-disabled adults, reflecting limited access to pitches, changing areas, and adaptive equipment.



Participation also declines sharply with age: just **43% of adults aged 55+** are active each month, often due to health concerns, confidence, and a lack of suitable community offers. These gaps show that access to sport & physical activity in Wales remains uneven.



FOR THE LOVE  
OF THE GAME



# Community Resilience

By investing in inclusive spaces, Wales can unlock wider benefits - supporting wellbeing, local enterprise, and environmental action - while helping communities stay connected & resilient in the face of ongoing change.



At a time of economic pressure, climate change, and demographic change, **sport and community facilities provide safe, trusted spaces that bring people together, strengthen local networks, and promote wellbeing.**



According to Sport Wales' State of the Nation 2022-23 report, **70% of adults say sport helps them feel part of their community & 64% report improved mental wellbeing through being active.**



In many areas - especially rural or deprived communities - **sports clubs now act as essential social infrastructure**, offering volunteering, education, and youth programmes where other public assets have been lost. Many are repurposing as warm hubs, foodbanks, or community learning centres, while new investment programmes are embedding renewable energy and energy-efficient design into facility upgrades.



# Our Vision

## Ein Gweledigaeth

To put quality football facilities within 15 minutes of every community in Wales, prioritising those who need them most.

# Our Mission

## Ein Cenhadaeth

To invest in, develop, and sustain football facilities that improve health, promote inclusion, and strengthen communities.

This vision sets a clear national goal. The mission explains how we will reach it, ensuring that every investment makes a lasting difference to people and places.





# Strategic Goals

## Nodau Strategol



To achieve our vision, we will focus on **four strategic priorities**. Each represents a commitment to how we will deliver impact across Wales: **building from place, innovating in how we work, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring that every facility contributes to a more sustainable future.**





# A Place-Based Approach

## *We will invest where it matters most.*

We will prioritise communities that face the greatest disadvantage, while ensuring that every local authority in Wales has a baseline level of football provision. This approach recognises that opportunity is not spread evenly. By focusing investment in the 30 per cent most deprived communities, and by engaging local communities, clubs, and partners, we will co-create facilities that meet real needs, break down barriers, and ensure everyone - wherever they live - has the chance to participate.

### Measures of success

- Local Football Facility Plans completed for all 22 local authorities.
- At least 50% of investment directed into the 30% most deprived communities.
- Increased facility usage by women and girls, disabled people, and ethnically diverse communities.
- Growth in the number of participants engaged annually across priority groups.





## Pushing the Boundaries

***We will be bold, innovative, and efficient.***

We will pilot new delivery models, adopt emerging technologies, and share best practice across Wales. By rethinking design, procurement, and maintenance, we will deliver greater value and better results for communities. We will champion creative solutions that improve performance, sustainability, and user experience, setting new standards for grassroots facility delivery.

### **Measures of success**

- Net Promoter Score of 8+ from community users.
- Improved efficiency through faster project timelines and reduced administration costs.
- Increased partner funding leveraged through smarter procurement.
- Expanded partnerships with clubs, funders, and community organisations.
- Measurable improvement in grass-pitch quality through the GMA partnership.

# Cross-Sector Partnerships

*We will connect investment, ideas, and impact.*

We will act as a trusted convener, bringing together public, private, and philanthropic partners to deliver and sustain community football facilities. By aligning investment across sectors - health, education, housing, and environment - we will maximise shared value. We will develop co-investment models, secure long-term funding agreements, and support multi-sport projects that amplify social and economic outcomes.

## Measures of success

- Total investment secured from anchor funders and co-investors.
- Number of long-term funding agreements and co-investment partnerships established.
- Increase in multi-sport and cross-sector projects delivered.
- Growth in the volume and diversity of external funding sources.





# Sustainable Community Development

***We will build for the future.***

Our facilities will be environmentally responsible, financially resilient, and owned by the communities they serve. Sustainability will run through every aspect of design, construction, and operation - from energy-efficient infrastructure and climate-adaptation measures to inclusive business planning and community ownership models. These facilities will strengthen social connection, local enterprise, and community pride for generations to come.

## **Measures of success**

- 100% of projects meeting sustainability and community consultation criteria.
- Adoption of green building practices and climate-resilient design across all major capital projects.
- Community-ownership pilots delivered through new funding models.
- Demonstrable Social Return on Investment exceeding £30 million.

# Enablers

## Galluogwyr

Delivering this strategy will depend not only on what we do, but how we do it.

We will strengthen our capacity, culture, and systems through three key enablers:

These enablers will ensure we remain effective, evidence-based, and connected to the communities we serve.



**People**



**Engagement**



**Data & Insight**





## **We will invest in our people to deliver lasting impact.**

Our success depends on the talent, values, and commitment of our staff, board, and volunteers. We will continue to foster an inclusive, collaborative, and high-performing culture where everyone is supported to grow and contribute. Investment in leadership, professional development, and wellbeing will ensure our organisation is equipped to deliver.

### **Our focus will be:**

- Developing the skills and capacity of staff, board, and volunteers.
- Building a culture rooted in integrity, collaboration, and continuous learning.
- Supporting wellbeing, inclusion, and professional growth.
- Ensuring our structure and governance are fit for purpose as we scale.



## We will build awareness, advocacy, and trust.

We must communicate clearly, celebrate impact, and inspire others to join us. We will deliver a high-profile communications strategy that strengthens our national visibility and builds our profile as Wales' most impactful sporting charity. Through digital channels, storytelling, and strategic partnerships, we will connect with funders, clubs, and communities across the country.

### Our focus will be:

- Delivering a compelling national communications strategy.
- Expanding our digital reach and online visibility.
- Showcasing the social impact of CFF-funded facilities through real stories and data.
- Strengthening relationships with funders, clubs, and community partners.





## **We will use evidence to guide every decision.**

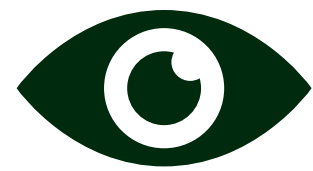
Data and insight will underpin our work - helping us identify where need is greatest, track our impact, and make smarter investment choices. We will strengthen our systems for collecting, analysing, and sharing data to demonstrate value, influence policy, and support continuous improvement across the sector.

### **Our focus will be:**

- Embedding insight and evidence at the heart of decision-making.
- Measuring social value and community outcomes in real time.
- Using data to guide investment priorities and demonstrate accountability.
- Sharing learning with partners to drive sector-wide improvement.

# Funding the Strategy

## Sut Rydym yn Ariannu'r Strategaeth



Delivering our vision will require a shift in how we secure sustainable funds. Our target is to secure long-term, large-scale investment while also diversifying income sources to create stability and resilience.

### Our focus will be:

- Every pound invested should deliver measurable social value.
- Income streams must be diverse enough to reduce vulnerability.
- Partnerships will be transparent and long-term.
- All fundraising activity must reflect our values and have the trust of communities.



By 2030 we aim to leverage at least **£50 million** in direct funding into more than **£100 million** of facility investment across Wales.

# A Road Map

## Cerrig Milltir

### 2025 - 2026

#### Building the platform

- Secure funding agreements from anchor investors.
- Publish local facility plans for all local authorities.
- Launch targeted investment prioritising those who need it most.
- Establish new fundraising streams.

### 2027–2028

#### Expanding our reach

- Deliver first wave of community-owned facilities.
- Pilot sustainable design principles.
- Expand co-investment partnerships.

### 2029–2030

#### Achieving scale and legacy

- Ensure every community has access to quality facilities within 15 minutes.
- Reach 100,000 direct beneficiaries each year.
- Deliver 100 new or upgraded artificial pitches.
- Achieve measurable participation increases in under-represented groups.
- Generate at least £30 million in social return.
- Establish CFF as Wales' most impactful sporting charity.



# Conclusion

## Casgliad

**This strategy sets out a path to 2030 and makes clear how this vision will be realised. It describes the mission that drives us, the priorities that will shape our decisions, the funding that will support our ambitions, and the methods by which we will measure our progress, holding ourselves to account for what we achieve.**

It identifies the enablers that will make delivery possible and the milestones against which success will be judged, ensuring that our ambition is matched at every stage with discipline and delivery.

We cannot achieve this, however, on our own. The scale of our ambition depends on enduring partnerships – with funders who share our vision, with local authorities who understand the needs of their communities, with clubs that provide the heartbeat of grassroots football, and with the communities themselves, whose

commitment and ownership will turn investment into impact. Only by working together in this way can we hope to transform facilities on the scale that Wales requires.

Football has the power to connect people, strengthen communities, and inspire pride. With the right investment, that power can reach every corner of Wales bringing people closer to the game.

**We are committed to making it happen.**



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**DIOLCH**