

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE WELSH NETBALL ASSOCIATION

The Welsh Netball Association Board of Directors would like to formally thank our members, staff and stakeholders for the wonderful support given to the Association over the past 12 months. Strong relationships and good understanding of our sport are the reasons for our continued success as well as the enthusiasm and enjoyment of everyone concerned.

The Association's Priority Areas For 2006/07 were:

- **Membership & Pricing Policies**

Membership figures have shown a slow increase over the past few years, it is pleasing that the trend is still upwards. Participation levels are soaring but conversion in to actual members is still often more difficult than it really should be at club level. Affiliation growth is vital if we are to continue to receive funding from the Sports Council for Wales, clubs are encouraged to affiliate all their players next year to help with our membership drive.

Our pricing policy for affiliation is much better than many other sports and fees have not increased at all since 2003. The Board is delighted that this has been possible, but plan a review for the 2008 affiliation rates in December 2007. Additional members benefits including options on medical cover, improved insurance with hospital payments, eye treatments and broken bone cover as well as free use of the Sport'ers Club package this year means that affiliation to Welsh Netball is excellent value for money. Affiliation of playing members is exempt from VAT however, non playing members are deemed to attract VAT according to the Customs & Excise, so for every non-playing affiliation that we have 17.5% of the fee goes to the tax man. The Board has decided that for the 2007/08 season this amount will continue to be absorbed by Welsh Netball and no additional cost will be passed on to members.

- **The Coaching Plan, Coach Education and UKCC Development**

A significant initiative for 2006/07 was the implementation of the new Coaching Plan, supported by the Sports Council for Wales, which has resulted in the employment of local community coaches, grants for student bursaries and continued professional development opportunities for our talent centre and high performance coaches. Ultimately it is about improving the performance of teams whilst providing good support mechanisms for volunteer coaches.

The 2006/07 season has been a strange one for Coach Education in so much as the old style level 1, 2 & 3 courses were suspended in March 2006 in preparation for the new UKCC courses. Our Starting Out beginner course remains very popular with local courses taking place on a regular basis, 301 people have attended from September 06 to April 07.

Development of the new UKCC has moved on and our staff and volunteers have been part of the driving force on the netball group. Welsh Netball working in conjunction with England Netball and Netball Scotland has seen the development and endorsement of the new UK Coaching Certificate at levels 1 & 2 for netball. This now means that we have access to an excellent educational and training package for coaches across the UK and plans for new and exciting ways that coaches can improve their knowledge and understanding of the game. The Level 1 was launched in Wales in September 2006 with 20 members attending and subsequently qualifying. Unfortunately the course set for North Wales had to be cancelled due to snow but it has now been rearranged plus an additional one to be held in July in time for next season. These new UKCC courses are far longer than our previous ones and

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considerably more expensive. The Level 1 is currently £170 pp with Level 2 closer to £300. Members wishing to attend courses can access financial assistance. Clubs need to apply for Coach Education funding through local Community Chest applications with which we are always willing to assist.

We have continued to work with Netball Scotland and England Netball and have set up a new group to progress coaching both for UKCC and other initiatives. Netball "ON-SIDE" will develop ideas and turn them in to practical ways to help coaches at all levels throughout the three countries. This is a very exciting opportunity from which all our members will benefit.

• **Umpire Education Courses held**

Welsh Netball continues to provide Umpire Education throughout Wales, 27 courses have been held with 348 participants on them since September 2006. In addition to the courses many umpires have been receiving mentoring on a regular basis to help them progress to the next level. The umpire mentors who have worked throughout Wales deserve special recognition as it is a volunteer role often overlooked but none the less very important. Well done to all our members who have qualified as an umpire this year and a big thanks to those who have run the sidelines week in week out at local leagues and events, without you the games would not take place. Keep up the good work!

We have continued to run the High Performance Umpires (HPU) group this year with 8 umpires selected in to it. It is aimed at developing our top umpires, providing support and opportunities for them to umpire at the highest level. An additional group of Development Umpires were also selected to work towards their "B" awards and potentially towards being selected for the HPU group. Congratulations to all those selected into these groups and special mention to the following who received invitations to umpire at International events:

Claire Tyler	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• England – Australia Test Series (Australia, July 2006)• Americas Qualifying Event for World Championships (Barbados, August 2006)
Debbie Morgan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Netball Europe Open Championships (Belfast, February 2007)
Maria Webber	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Netball Europe U17 Championships (Malta, March 2007)• Netball Europe U19 Championships (Cardiff, March 2007)• Wales vs. Australia – reserve (Cardiff, May 2007)

We are also pleased to announce Diane Morgan has successfully passed her FENA "A" Theory paper.

• **Club Development**

- The Unitary Authority staff have a huge task as they are the link between our organisation and the local club members. The varying, mostly part-time contracts that they work mean that detailed work programmes must be followed to maximise the impact that they can have on our development. This season changes have been made, some at our request others due to financial restraints on the numbers and areas worked for these officers. This is a huge investment in staffing costs for Welsh Netball but one that delivers for our members to improve netball locally.
- The Club Mark scheme has been extended and improved with special benefits for clubs that attain bronze, silver or gold. Currently 36 clubs are working with our development staff to attain Club Mark recognition.

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- This last year Welsh Netball has become involved for the first time with the Millennium Volunteer scheme, the UK's largest volunteer initiative. The scheme allows young people to stand out from the crowd, learning and developing skills and qualities valued by colleges, universities and future employers. So far 32 young people have come on to the scheme, giving them an opportunity to turn their own interests into a volunteering activity that benefits their local school, club or community while gaining Welsh Netball recognised awards along the way; but most importantly having fun whilst being involved in sport. There are still places available and member clubs are encouraged to get in touch if you have youngsters who might be interested.

● **Competition Structure & Results**

In September 2006 five members were invited from each Area Association to a competition review day that looked at three main topics:

- The Role and Purpose of WNA competitions - do they provide a service to members and what are the main purposes of each competition?
- The Structure and Output of Competition – are the competitions achieving what members and the Association want from them?
- Organisation and Competition – the when, where, who and how questions.

The review was a great success and all of the suggestions put forward were considered and, where possible, have been put into effect for the 2006-07 season. As part of the ongoing review process, Welsh Netball hopes to continue to improve and provide appropriate and enjoyable events for the Membership.

Welsh Netball's mission of making netball a game for all has taken the next step this year with the successful inclusion of mixed netball in several of our national events. A total of 3,480 individuals have played in the WNA organised national events this season. This number increases vastly if the preliminary rounds were added in plus the local primary school festivals, fun days and mixed tournaments. More people have participated in netball in Wales this year than ever before!

RESULTS for NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Open & U21 Inter Area		Age Group Inter Area	
Open Div 1	NE Wales	U14	Glamorgan Valleys
Open Div 2	Cardiff & District	U16	Glamorgan Valleys
U21	Glamorgan Valleys	U18	SE Wales

Ann Smart	Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr	Presidents Cup	St Teilos Church in Wales
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Veterans	ANTS 1
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2007 National Clubs	Age Groups National Clubs	
Deeside Netball Club	U14	Mold Netball Club
	U17	Treharris Netball Club

BIG weekend of Netball			
Open Clubs	Llandaff Athletic Netball Club	Mixed Netball	Llantrisant

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SOME OF THE PICTURES TAKEN AT 2007 NETBALL EVENTS ...



**LLANTRISANT
BIG WEEKEND OF NETBALL
MIXED NETBALL WINNERS**



**Treharris Netball Club
U17 National Club Winners**



**NORTH EAST WALES
OPEN INTER AREA WINNERS**



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Leckwith Men
Runners Up Mixed Netball



**SOME OF THE PICTURES TAKEN AT
2007 NETBALL EVENTS ...**

Cardiff & District
Open 2 Champions



DEESIDE NETBALL CLUB
NATIONAL CLUBS CHAMPIONS



WELSH NETBALL EASTER FUN DAYS
Colcot Leisure Centre, Barry

Glamorgan Valleys
U21 Inter Area

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- **Talent Identification & Performance**

- **New Performance Standards**

In May of last year a new Performance Standards Structure was piloted at the trials for Tiers 3 and 4. The Performance Standards describe the athletic and skill competencies required at each stage within the Talent Development Pathway. The competencies are slightly different for each stage of the pathway as would be expected as players mature.

In summary the Performance Standards cover:

Movement skills	Body Management
Spatial awareness	Ball skills
Attacking skills	Defensive skills
Shooting skills (where appropriate)	Tactics

The simple matrix to evaluate the competencies enables selectors to

- make assessment more objective
- allow the strongest players to be identified more easily
- allow feedback to be given in a structured way
- allow areas for development to be better identified

- **Talent Centres**

The concept of the Talent Centres has been continued this season. Feedback from 2005/06 suggested that a more condensed timescale would be beneficial for both players and coaches.

Centres have been established in:

North East Wales	Wrexham	North West Wales	Conwy
Powys	Llandrindod Wells	West Wales	Carmarthen
Afan Nedd Tawe	Port Talbot	Glamorgan Valleys	Merthyr Tydfil
Cardiff	Cardiff	South East Wales	Risca

Every centre delivers 7 x 3 hour sessions, each session covering one of the Performance Standards. Each Centre has a Head Coach, Assistant Coach and Apprentice Coaches supported by a Team Manager. For every session the Head Coach is being supplied with a session breakdown which identifies:

- Overall Learning Objective for the session
- Detailed player learning outputs
- Evaluation matrix
- Suggested skills exercises that can be used to deliver the learning outputs

- **National Super League & Celtic Dragons**

Netball is at a dynamic and rapidly changing stage of its development in Wales. With the NSL including our franchise team the Celtic Dragons featured on SKY TV this season, the game has been delivered directly in to people's homes for the first time on a regular basis. This has brought netball to the notice of the general public as well as our usual supporter base. The majority of our Welsh players are linked to one of the eight franchise teams local to where they live and many are now seen

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regularly on TV with the Celtic Dragons having been involved in three full hour televised matches.

The Celtic Dragons were disappointed to finish bottom of the league in 2005/06, albeit on goal difference. This season has been far more positive, the team's performance in the same matches as last year has improved considerably and the Dragons have been involved in some very competitive encounters.

The current Dragons squad has several new members including England Senior player Clare Elsley, England U21 Chrissy Munro and ex Team Bath player Bianca Modeste. Real progress has been made this season, the Dragons winning two of their matches and coming very close to winning in several others, in fact losing three matches by only six goals or less.

Very significantly the team has a new coach Jess Garland, who brings an extensive playing and coaching experience to the role.

Following the review of last year the main priorities were established for 2006/07 season:

- Increase number of wins
- More match play opportunity
- Minimum of 1 weekly training session
- Improve adherence to training and attendance
- Adopt a long squad system for the future development of Celtic Dragons beyond the 2006/7 season

As already identified, all performances have showed evidence of improvement from last year, but this is not only in terms of results but also in performance and achievement of some of the process goals set for each game. It has been possible to set these goals because the squad is training weekly, which is dramatically different from last year.



The NSL League Management Committee has been reviewing its Governance and the structure of the League for next year. Agreement has been reached that the League will commence in October of every year and all other competition should be structured around this commencement date. This principle will increase the potential for TV coverage to continue which is important as this year's coverage has been so successful from SKY's perspective that they wish to increase the number of games they televise. Ways are being considered to increase the number of matches next season in the knowledge that there will be no increase in the number of teams.

Celtic Dragons Long Squad 2006-07

Jamilla Abbott	Jo Blanks	Emma Bliss	Bianca Modeste
Rochelle Modeste	Anna Mayes	Sophie Baxter	Amanda Trounce
Clare Elsley	Suzie Drane	Sian Carrington	Ffion Berry
Shenaide Blucher	Chrissie Munro	Elin Leyshon	Stephanie Williams
Sara Hale	Anna Joll	Cara-Lea Moseley	

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○ World Championships

As previously reported to members, Wales qualified for the World Championships by winning the Regional Qualification Championships in June of 2006. The original Championships were scheduled to take place in Fiji between the 10th and the 21st July of this year. Unfortunately because of a military coup and civil unrest, IFNA took the decision to cancel the Championships in Fiji and seek an alternative venue. A decision was made that the Championships would be hosted by Netball New Zealand with the tournament being held in Auckland between 10 and 17 November 2007.

○ Selection of Players

ELITE CYMRU ATHLETES 2006-07

Jamilla Abbott*	Sophie Baxter*	Josie Blanks	Shenaide Blucher*
Ursula Bowers*	Sian Carrington*	Joanne Davies	Suzanne Drane
Sara Hale*	Anna Joll*	Rebecca James*	Elin Leyshon
Beverley Lovatt*	Anna Mayes*	Bianca Modeste*	
Cara-Lea Moseley*	Nicola Szehofner*	Amanda Trounce*	

* denotes played for Wales during 2006/07 season

TIER 2 2006-07

Becky Neate	Leanne Lewis	Vicky Williams	Carlie Ennis
Katie Nicholson	Gemma Bain	Emma James	Sophie Henshall
Laura McCann	Kirsty Smith	Kelly Morgan	Sian Evans
Juliet Morgan	Jenna Cawthorne	Zoe John	

TIER 3 2006-07

Alice Appleton	Gemma Bamford	Judith Bennett	Hannah Brierly
Holly Coope	Amy Cooper	Sian Davies	Fran Dyer
Freya Holdaway	Nicola James	Stephanie Jones	Lauren Jordan
Hannah Lewis	Lucy Main	Hayley Parfitt	Kylie Paynter
Nia Rawlins	Anna Taylor	Stephanie Williams	

TIER 4 2006-07

Bekki Baker	Sarah Bell	Catrin Rose Blake	Christy Buckley
Rachel Evans	Imogen Evans	Nicola Halliwell	Tessa Hammond
Rhiannon Holdaway	Collette Johnson	Sophie Morgan	Steph Murphy
Amiee Phillips	Lyndsey Roper	Alex Rowlands	Jessica Sutton
Emma Thomas	Kelly Ward	Sammy-Jo Williams	
Angharad Williams			

○ International Results

Wales' senior squad had a busy year starting with a test match against South Africa in January 2007 held in Deeside North Wales, which was lost by only 3 goals. The European Championships in Belfast in February were to be the final preparation for the World Championships to be held in July 2007. However as reported earlier the coup in Fiji resulted in the event being moved to New Zealand in November. The season has therefore been extended and matches arranged against New Zealand, as a squad training game and versus Australia in a full test match in Cardiff.

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Netball Europe Open Championship 2007 ~ Belfast

	England	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Points	Final Position
England		5 60-34	5 55-33	5 46-41	15	1st
Northern Ireland	1 34-60		1 33-46	1 35-58	3	4th
Scotland	1 33-55	5 46-33		1 36-43	7	3rd
Wales	2 41-46	5 58-35	5 43-36		12	2nd

Netball Europe Under 19 Championship 2007 ~ Cardiff

	England	Gibraltar	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Points	Final Position
England		5 63-10	5 30-27	5 36-15	5 38-14	20	1st
Gibraltar	0 10-63		0 10-53	0 8-37	0 9-43	0	5th
Northern Ireland	2 27-30	5 53-10		5 35-16	5 35-25	17	2nd
Scotland	0 15-36	5 37-8	0 16-35		0 8-23	5	4th
Wales	0 14-38	5 43-9	1 25-35	5 8-23		11	3rd

Netball Europe Under 17 Championships 2007 ~ Malta

	England	Malta	Northern Ireland	Scotland	Wales	Points	Final Position
England		5 43-14	5 27-24	5 36-13	5 45-11	20	1 st
Malta	0 14-43		0 20-51	1 25-33	0 16-34	1	5 th
Northern Ireland	2 24-27	5 51-20		5 49-17	5 32-20	17	2 nd
Scotland	0 13-36	5 33-25	0 17-49		1 22-29	6	4 th
Wales	0 11-45	5 34-16	1 32-20	5 29-22		11	3 rd

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○ **Performance Planning**

In 2006 Welsh Netball submitted a 4 Year Plan for funding to the Sports Council for Wales (SCW). Every element of WNA's operation was referenced in this plan including everything relating to performance. Funding for this level is not taken from members affiliations but is supported by grants and international event income.

For several years the Sports Council has operated an Elite Cymru scheme for national squad athletes in virtually every SCW supported sport. This scheme has supported 16 named athletes in the Welsh Netball Senior Squad. As Elite Cymru athletes the nominated players have been able to access a range of services including:

- Sports Science support
- Nutritional Advice and support
- Physiological measurement, advice and support
- Sports Psychology advice and support
- Sports Medicine assessment, advice and support
- Sports Physiotherapy assessment, advice and support
- Lifestyle Management advice and support
- Strength and Conditioning planning and session organisation/delivery

This list is not exhaustive but highlights the key areas where support has been available. Significantly as Elite Cymru Athletes our nominated players were automatically insured. This cover enabled sports medicine assessment, diagnosis and treatment planning to be undertaken by a number of experts and usually as a matter of urgency. Unfortunately the structure of support for performance sport lead by UKSport throughout the UK has been changed in recent months and as netball is not an Olympic sport the impact of change is less clear for us. The changes impact on all sports and we are currently working closely with SCW to devise ways that we will be able to continue to support our elite athletes in the future.

• **Partnerships**

Sports Council for Wales

The support of SCW has been tremendous and much acknowledged. SCW grant aid increased to £298,232 for the financial year 2006/07 an increase of 5% on last year. This was largely due to the additional funds made available by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) for the Coaching Plan for Wales which has allowed us to initiate the Student Bursaries, local Community Coaches and coach development schemes. Welsh Netball would not be able to achieve at any level of the game without the funding that is provided by the Sports Council for Wales. Looking forward to next year the grant systems are changing to link directly with the WAG Climbing Higher strategy for sport and physical recreation. This will make it more of a challenge but we are confident that netball will continue to grow and develop in new ways that will allow continued access to funding.

Unitary Authority Staffing

Welsh Netball has partnerships with ten Unitary Authorities to employ local development officers. These individuals continue to be a crucial part of our staff and development team.

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Welsh Language & the Urdd

We have further extended our links with the Urdd this year; we have been actively involved in competition provision through the medium of Welsh as well as discussions about netball provision in and around Ceredigion. A partnership has been agreed for the employment of a local Welsh speaking netball officer to work with clubs from August 2007.

Agreements have been put in place to allow more and better translation services so that we can make better provision for members who wish to receive information and attend courses in Welsh. This is still in its early stages but is a milestone achievement for us.

NSPCC

Partnership with the NSPCC has enabled us to develop better support structures for clubs with regard to child and vulnerable adult protection issues. During the year we have been able to deliver courses to ensure that as much guidance as possible is offered to members and support given to issues that may arise.

International Federation & Netball Europe

As ever we retain a close working relationship with both our International Federation and European Federation.

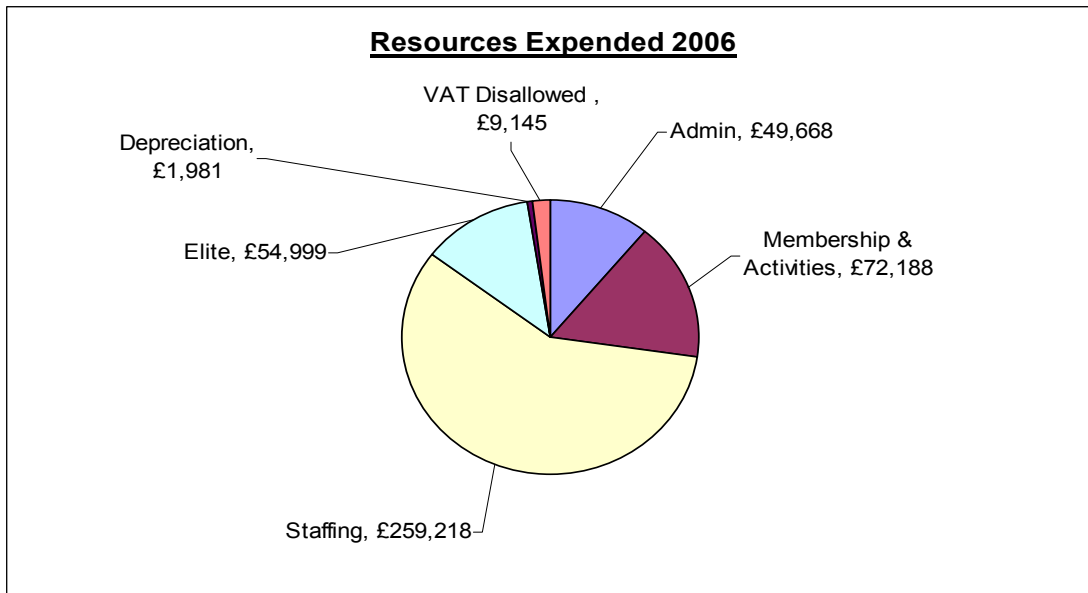
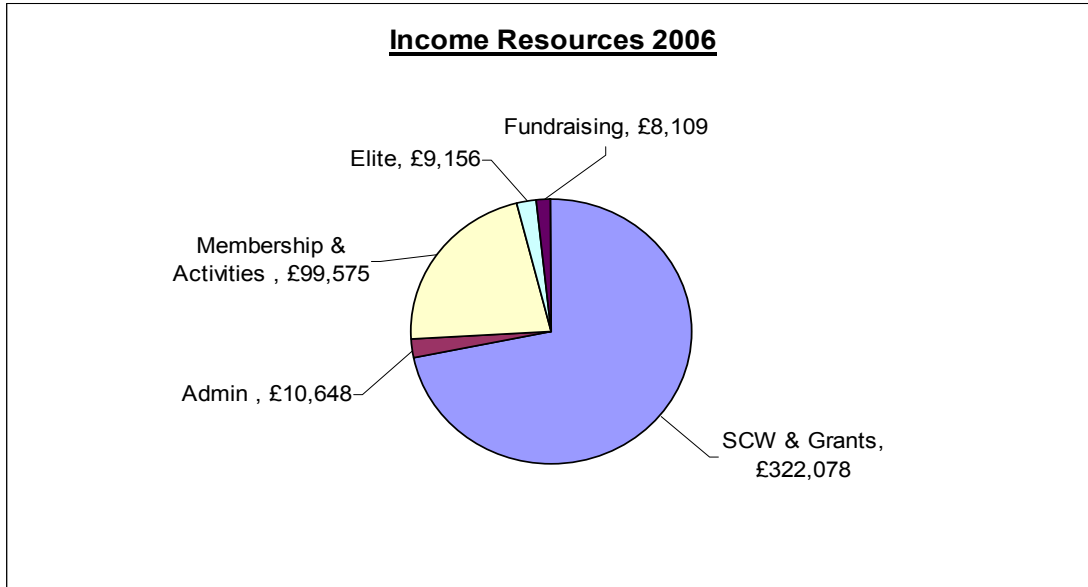
Physical Education in School Sport (PESS)

PESS is a Welsh Assembly Government initiative which allows our governing body to work closer with education to raise standards of school age children. Close links exist with the local PESS officers to enable best use of resources.

Sponsors

Welsh Netball continues to receive valued support from several sponsors who have had strong relationships with us over many years, these include **Kea Designer Sportswear (UK)**, **Grays of Cambridge (Gilbert Netballs)** and **Kukri**. This year two new sponsors have come on board, Pitman Training and Georgia-Pacific GB Ltd. We look forward to having good working relationships with them both now and in the future.

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As is evident from this report the year has been an exciting and challenging one both on and off the court. Ultimately though, our game still depends first and foremost on the exceptional dedication of our many volunteers, be they company directors, coaches, umpires, scorers, programme sellers etc the list is endless. It is their tireless efforts at all levels of the game that does the most to deliver a great sport for our players, spectators and partners.

The development and expansion of our organisation over recent years is a direct result of the continued outstanding work undertaken by our staff, those working from our office based in Cardiff and those working in the Local Authorities throughout Wales.

Netball's challenge moving forward is about not accepting the status quo – our challenge is to ensure Netball is attractive, relevant and inspirational at all levels throughout Wales and is truly a **“game for all.”**

Susan J Holvey
Chief Executive Officer

May 2007