



# Equality Standard for Sport Preliminary Level Assessment Report Wales Squash and Racketball

19<sup>th</sup> March 2014

*sportwales*  
*chwaraeon cymru*

# The Equality Standard for Sport Preliminary Level Assessment Report

## Introduction

### Sport Wales commitment to equality and diversity

Sport Wales is the agency responsible for the development of sport and physical recreation in Wales. Our role is the increase participation, improve sporting performance, and to raise standards in sport and physical recreation amongst the Welsh population.

The Equality Act 2010 identifies nine categories which are known as protected characteristics. These are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender Reassignment
4. Pregnancy & Maternity
5. Ethnicity
6. Religion & Belief
7. Gender
8. Sexual Orientation
9. Marriage & Civil Partnership

People who belong to groups defined by any of these characteristics must have their needs taken into account by us and it is our duty, as a public sector organisation, to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

### A joined up approach

Our underpinning aim is to fully mainstream equality and diversity within our work, policy and planning. Our vision for Sport in Wales is to UNITE A PROUD SPORTING NATION, where EVERY CHILD is HOOKED ON SPORT FOR LIFE and Wales is a NATION OF CHAMPIONS. Our vision is supported by clearly defined priorities:

1. *Sporting Innovation*:- Wales has a sports sector that embraces collaboration, encouraging new ways of delivering opportunities to increase participation and improve elite performance.
2. *Skills for a Life in Sport*:- Every child and young person is provided with the skills and confidence from an early age to be physically literate through high quality, engaging sporting experiences.
3. *Sporting Communities*:- We have communities with sport at the heart of them, offering joined up opportunities for every child and young person to undertake at least five hours of safe, high quality sport every week and sustaining their engagement throughout their adult life.

4. *Sporting Excellence*:- We are a nation that excels in nurturing sporting talent and delivers on-going success on the international stage.
5. *Growing a Skilled & Passionate Workforce*:- All those involved in sport, whether in a professional or voluntary capacity, are supported to pass on their skills and passion for sport to the people of Wales.

We see our role as bringing partners and people together; local authorities, governing bodies of sport, communities, coaches, adults, young people, children and the entire nation to support, participate and excel in sport.

### **The Equality Standard for Sport**

The Equality Standard for Sport (the Standard) is a framework and vehicle for widening access and increasing the participation and involvement in sport and physical activity from under-represented individuals, groups and communities, especially women and girls, ethnic minority groups and disabled people. It assists sports organisations in developing equality-proofed policies, structures and processes and allows for performance to be assessed, ensuring continuous improvement in equality.

The Standard is owned by the five Sports Councils through the Sports Councils Equality Group (SCEG). The first ever equality Standard for sport was launched in November 2004. It was last updated by SCEG in June 2012 to ensure it remained fit for purpose and reflected the latest equality legislation.

The Standard is based around two broad themes: developing your organisation and developing your services and four levels of achievement:

- **Foundation** – your organisation is committed to equality.
- **Preliminary** – your organisation is clear about what it needs to do to achieve equality.
- **Intermediate** – your organisation is increasing opportunities for a diverse range of people.
- **Advanced** – your organisation offers fair and equal opportunities to its staff and the communities it serves.

We view the Standard as integral to meeting our Equality Objectives, and therefore contributing to the sectors Vision for Sport in Wales. 'The Standard' must not be viewed as a 'stand-alone' piece of work; through this process NGBs have the opportunity to identify and understand their personal challenges with respect to under-representation, and should set out objectives to overcome the challenges.

### **Assessment Report**

The NGB has been through a process of self-assessment supported by an independent Designated Support Lead to ensure that they meet the minimum requirements of the Standard including the relevant evidence. The NGB then attends a Sport Wales Equality Panel which is an opportunity to showcase their work in equality and identify priorities going forward. All the evidence is then independently evaluated by an Equality Standard Assessor who provides written feedback through this Assessment Report to demonstrate that the NGB has achieved the outcomes appropriate to that level of the Standard. This may include any recommendations for the NGB to consider going forward.

## Wales Squash and Racketball

Wales Squash and Racketball Ltd. is fully committed to the principles of the equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee, volunteer, child, young person, competitor or official receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, sex, gender reassignment, disability, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, religion, race, socioeconomic status or sexual orientation.

### What are the applicant organisation's overall vision, mission, aims and key objectives?

WSRB's vision is to:

- increase the popularity and profile of squash and racketball
- increase participation in squash and racketball – a child hooked on sport for life
- ensure coaches and referees are suitably qualified and receive continuous professional development
- continue to provide a system to nurture elite players so that they can mature and fulfil their potential
- achieve success on the highest stage – top 20 World ranked player
- produce players who are honoured to represent their country
- foster players who respect their sport, their peers, their family, their coaches and themselves

Goals – WSRB aims to achieve its vision by establishing key goals for:

- Stability, Independence and Governance - creating a robust governance, financial, commercial and management regime that will ensure the long term prosperity of the organisation
- Participation, Accessibility and Membership – encouraging more people of all ages and from all sections of the community to take part in our sports, and to be part of Wales Squash & Racketball
- World Leading Performance – ensuring that all players can achieve their full potential up to the creation of international champions

These key goals are underpinned by commitments to:

- Competition – developing opportunities for every squash and racketball player to play competitively at local, regional and national level (Domestic Competition/Player Pathway Plan)
- Coaching – establishing world class coaching resources to create the best coaches and comprehensive opportunities for all to receive the best possible coaching experience (Coaching Plan)
- Refereeing – developing and nurturing a system to recruit, maintain, assess and grade referees to a high standard to ensure that squash and racketball are well served and officiated at all levels (Referee Plan)
- Membership – retaining existing members and increasing members in all categories. The Action Plan which will be identified at the Preliminary Level of the Equality Standard will also shape our membership strategy (Membership Plan)
- Performance – formulating a plan to develop the best players in Wales and identify a World Top 20 squash player and a team to compete in the Commonwealth Games in 2014 (Back to Basics)
- Olympic Inclusion – supporting the World Squash Federation in its campaign for the inclusion of squash in the Olympic programme.

The WSRB has developed a Wales Squash & Racketball Strategy 2011-2014 to deliver on this in which it has identified that its priority is to devise and implement the strategic plan for:

- maintaining and improving existing standards (governance);
- expanding and developing partnerships (development);
- Developing and supporting elite players (performance).

### How many members of staff (please give separate figures for paid and unpaid) are there in the organisation?

WSRB has four full time staff and 11 (FTE) contracted staff.

### How many members does the organisation have?

702 logged onto data-base as at November 2013.

**Is the lead equality officer paid or unpaid and, if paid, what is their job title and what is the job title of their line manager?**

The Lead Officer is the Operations Manager, Jayne Owen, who is a part-time member of staff.

**Does the board have an equality champion?**

Alan James is the Board equality champion

**Does the organisation have any internal or external equality advisory groups and, if yes, give summary details of their role and responsibilities?**

Not at present.

**How are equality related decisions made within the organisation?**

The Board makes equality-related decisions and delegates them to the paid members of staff.

**Please provide brief details of all present equality related initiatives to address underrepresentation within the organisation or within the sport as a whole that are relevant to the organisation:**

**Extracts from WSRB Newsletter no 1 2013**

**Junior squash and racketball development activities**

**RHAYADER HOST DEVELOPMENT EVENT**

Rhayader LC in Mid Wales is proving to be vital in the development of Junior Squash in the Region. After hosting the 1<sup>st</sup> ever Powys Junior Open on October 20<sup>th</sup>; World Squash Day – it is also now home to the Central Wales Junior Development Forum. The Central Junior Development Squads are a welcome addition to the Welsh Player Pathway which has harnessed U13 & U17 local talent in the region. Coach Education is also the regional focus, with the pilot of the new SLUK that took place on October 29<sup>th</sup> 2012 with 9 participants. Level 1 – 2 Coach Education is also ongoing at the centre with Gareth Hughes Jones & Peter Bridgeman inspiring newcomers and experienced coaches alike. Clair Miles---Owen WSRB Development Officer said “Rhayader LC has some of the best facilities in the area and importantly local LC staff, management and volunteers are all willing to get involved in establishing, once again, Junior Squash and Racketball at the centre”. On the weekend of the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2012 over 25 young people came to a taster session at the centre, which was facilitated, by Centre Staff, Powys Sports Development and WSRB. As a result of the talent and enthusiasm – the centre now plans to run a Junior Club Night and further taster sessions!

**Newport Schools**



Junior squash players were encouraged to go down to Newport Squash Club on weekends and weekdays for junior coaching provided by WSRB Junior High Performance coach and Newport Squash Club full time coach Greg Tippings and assistant coach Chris Neye. Over a 6 week period during the first term of the 2012/2013 school year Newport Squash Club welcomed over 400 new juniors on to its courts, in partnership with WSRB, Newport City Council and its Sports Development unit. Six different schools took part bringing between 30 and 60 juniors each to the courts at set times on set days every week, with the help of WSRB Coaches and Newport Squash Club Coaches all the juniors were taught on the basics of squash. Juniors were hitting a forehand and backhand by the end of week 2 and by the end of week 5 were playing games like three quarters and full matches between each other. Well done to all the coaches who have helped over the 6 weeks, Greg Tippings, Chris Neye, David Haley, Tej Singh Saran, Chris Lovett, Damian Burgess, Dan Bergin and Chris Powell who have all enjoyed the 6 weeks and passed on their enthusiasm for the sport.

## JUNIOR LEAGUE KICKS OFF IN CARDIFF



This was the first ever junior team league event and despite lots of enthusiastic promises from players and coaches, we had no idea just how many children would turn up. We need not have worried. Over 60 junior players of aged 8 to 16 flooded into the Sport Wales national Centre last Sunday eager to be a part of the first ever junior team leagues. The players were divided into mixed teams of 3 and streamed into 3 Leagues of ability: League A for elite players; B for club players and C for absolute beginners. League A had 7 teams; B had 9 teams and C had 5 teams. All teams played in a round robin format from 10am to 3pm and no-one wanted to stop playing. This was a fantastic day and a wonderful success. We will meet again in January 2013 for another team league. In the meantime, the Junior Team League Organiser, Byron Lloyd Lewis, who was at the centre of this first event, has taken away all the results to formulate a league structure modelled on the Senior South Glamorgan Leagues that Byron has run so well for many years.

## **Meeting the Preliminary Level of the Equality Standard**

### **Your organisation is aware of its current profile and position in terms of equality**

Online surveys were provided to paid staff (4 FTE), contracted staff (11 FTE) and Board Members (6 FTE) via Survey Monkey and this was managed by the DSL to ensure confidentiality. Hard copy surveys were provided to members with the response representing 53% of those issued and 19% of the overall paid membership. The data collection of the audit took place between September and November 2013.

The lead officer has produced an equality profile audit, including a comparison with the Foundation Level, was presented to the WSRB Board on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2014 and this is evidenced in the Board minutes of that meeting. The report has highlighted similar findings to those from the Foundation Level audit report and WSRB has identified the continuing need to work on improving representation from girls and women, ethnic minority groups and disabled people. The DSL saw the audit report on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013.

### **Your organisation has a robust equality action plan to advance equality and increase participation. Staff (paid and unpaid) understand how this plan relates to their role.**

The Equality Action Plan has been developed by the Lead Officer for equality; it has been to the senior management team and presented to the Board for approval on 25th January 2014. The plan will be monitored by the Operations Manager and Finance and Office Manager and progress will be reported to the Board annually. The DSL saw a copy of the plan on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013.

The minutes of the Board meeting of 25th January show that the plan was approved.

The Equality Action Plan is realistic for a small governing body and has identified some key areas that need to be considered moving forward, in particular diversity on the board and positive action to improve participation by girls and women, ethnic minority groups and disabled people.

The WSRB publishes the Equality Newsletter on its website. It also publishes a WRSB newsletter and this is an opportunity to use this to promote equality work.

There is no mention of the WSRBs approach to equality on the website however the Equality Policy is published on this in the Policies section. The DSL recommends that it might be better to have an equality section (similar to the safeguarding section) where the WSRB's commitment to equality can be published along with the Equality Policy and the newsletters; this can also be used to publicise the Equality Action Plan and progress towards achieving the goals.

### **All board members and staff (paid and unpaid) within the organisation understand the general principles of equality and how it relates to their sport.**

The Operations Manager has developed the training plan which went to the senior management team and then to the Board for approval on 25th January 2014. This is evidenced in the Board minutes of that meeting. Going forward WSRB may wish to recommend that staff members undertake the free online equality training provided by ACAS.

### **Your recruitment practices and policies seek to advance equality.**

WSRB recruited a Development Officer in August/September 2013 and this was used to provide evidence for the following:

- Job specification/descriptions and the application process does not exclude any groups from applying
- Application material includes an equality monitoring form and other relevant equality information.

In addition the WSRB's Office Handbook December 2013 was used to provide evidence for the following criteria:

- Adverts should outline the organisations commitment to equality
- Adverts should be distributed to as wide an audience as practically possible
- Staff involved in the recruitment process should have received training on equality in recruitment
- Interviews are held at appropriate and accessible locations and times.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

WSRB has demonstrated its commitment to equality and the lead officer, supported by Sue Evans , has been instrumental in compiling the evidence for the Preliminary Level of the Equality Standard. It should be noted that the lead officer is part-time and is also the lead officer for safeguarding. Inevitably there have been times when safeguarding issues have taken precedence over equality and it is to her credit that Jayne Owen has ensured that WSRB has stayed on track with the submission.

Going forward the DSL would recommend that the WSRB:

- Addresses how the lead officer and Chair has the support of people who can advise the WSRB in areas of equality or in areas of partnership working (e.g. with lesbian and transgender groups) that it may not have specific expertise in.
- Undertakes a careful consideration of how disabled people can participate fully in all aspects of squash and racketball, and especially in the mainstream player pathway as well as whether there is a need for co-ordinated and planned disability-specific pathways.
- Establishes a section on equality on the website to ensure that the profile of equality is raised with members and the general public. This area can also be used to publicise the Equality Action Plan and progress towards achieving the goals.
- May wish to recommend that staff members undertake the free online equality training provided by ACAS.

### **EQSA decision and feedback**

Wales Squash and Racketball has spent a considerable amount of time developing a comprehensive submission to achieve the Preliminary Level of the Standard. It is very positive to see that the work is being driven by senior officers within the organisation, and fully supported by the Board. The nomination of the Equality Champion further demonstrates the NGB's commitment to equality.

Wales Squash and Racketball has collected their audit data using a variety of methods, including the annual membership audit, survey monkey and carrying out surveys at tournaments. This has allowed the NGB to produce a detailed equality profile and compare the findings to those collected at Foundation level in 2009' it is clear that the Lead Officer fully understands the current profile of the sport.

It is positive to see that Wales Squash and Racketball made a public commitment in their Strategy to achieve Preliminary Level and that the Equality Action Plan is realistic and focused, based on the size



and staff resources of a smaller NGB. Going forward, Squash and Racketball could consider developing an Equality Advisory Group with representatives from different equality organisations in Wales. This will help the NGB access wider networks and potential new participants. Training needs have been identified for staff and Board members, and a Recruitment and Selection Policy is in place.

The following feedback on key strengths and areas to develop is based on this submission and information presented at the Panel meeting.

### **Key strengths**

Wales Squash and Racketball has a number of key strengths and these include:

- The responsibility for equality is held at a senior level within the organisation.
- Improved data collection since Foundation level with a commitment to continue to collect quality data.
- An Equality Action Plan that is realistic and deliverable based on NGB resources with a focus on women/ girls, disability, ethnic minority communities and improving the diversity of the Board. The audit data has enabled the NGB to identify where there are pockets of activity by equality groups, which can be supported.
- A commitment to training through the training plan linked to the Equality Action Plan.

A key area of good practice that can be shared with other NGBs is the development of the Junior League and the offer of free equipment to encourage greater participation.

### **Areas to develop**

In addition to those areas identified by the DSL above, the EQSA would like to offer the following areas for Wales Squash and Racketball to consider going forward:

- Based on the current strategy running from 2011-14, ensure that equality is a key objective in the next 3-Year Business Plan.
- Consider developing links to equality partner who represent ethnic minority communities, girls and women, and disability, so that the evolving Equality Action Plan can identify when, where and how future programmes could be delivered.
- Continue to improve the quality and quantity of equality monitoring data, especially of members/participants, by collecting this on an annual basis.
- Establish an Equality Advisory Group with representation from equality partners to gain access to new groups of potential participants.
- Consider working towards In-sport Ribbon with Disability Sport Wales.
- Review what other Home Nations are doing with regards to modified equipment for participants with a disability.

### **EQSA decision**

Wales Squash and Racketball have met the Preliminary Level of the Equality Standard.

### **Wales Squash and Racketball**

**Name** Jayne Owen  
**Date signed off** 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014

**Designated Support Lead (DSL)**

**Name** Lucy Faulkner  
**Date submitted** 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2014

**Equality Standard Assessor (EQSA)**

**Name** Louise Tideswell  
**Date assessed** 14<sup>th</sup> March 2014

**Sport Wales**

**Name** Lowri Devey  
**Date decision communicated** 19<sup>th</sup> March 2014

**Appendix**  
**Preliminary Level requirements**

Outcome	Minimum requirement		Evidence for DSL Assessment	Evidence for EQSA Assessment
<p><b>1. Your organisation is aware of its current external profile and position in terms of equality</b></p>	1.1	<p>Conduct an equality profile audit of: Staff (paid and unpaid) and board members; Coaches, officials and members / participants.</p>	<p>A complete equality profile of the staff (paid and unpaid) and board to be conducted against all categories relevant to the legislation of the home country</p>	<p>A complete equality profile of the staff (paid and unpaid) and board to be conducted against all categories relevant to the legislation of the home country</p>
<p><b>2. Your organisation has a robust equality action plan to advance equality and increase participation. Staff (paid and unpaid) understand how this plan relates to their role.</b></p>	2.1	<p>Produce an evidence-based action plan for equality. This should be aligned to the work areas in the organisation's business plan, and should incorporate an analysis of the organisation's equality profile audit data. Guidance should be sought from appropriate equalities organisations and partners.</p>	<p>A copy of the equality action plan that has been agreed and endorsed by the board, along with an indication that the plan is being implemented.</p>	<p>A copy of the equality action plan that has been agreed and endorsed by the board, along with an indication that the plan is being implemented.</p>
	2.2	<p>Communicate / promote the equality plan internally.</p>	<p>The action plan to show how it will be communicated throughout the organisation e.g. inclusion in business plan; standing agenda item on board and operational meetings; staff updates. Evidence to show the action plan has actually been communicated.</p>	

Outcome	Minimum requirement		Evidence for DSL Assessment	Evidence for EQSA Assessment
<b>3. All board members and staff (paid and unpaid) within the organisation understand the general principles of equality and how it relates to their sport.</b>	3.1	Identify the training requirements for staff and key volunteers and create a learning development plan within the equality action plan.	Outcomes resulting from identifying training requirements and evidence that this is incorporated into the business plan / equality action plan.	Outcomes resulting from identifying training requirements and evidence that this is incorporated into the business plan / equality action plan.
<b>4. Your recruitment practices and policies seek to advance equality.</b>	4.1	Review, and enhance where necessary, all recruitment practise and policies; The review considers how equality can be advances, including the recruitment of unpaid staff and volunteers.	Adverts should outline the organisations commitment to equality Adverts should be distributed to as wide an audience as practically possible Job specifications/descriptions and the application process does not exclude any groups from applying The selection criteria is clear, relevant and inclusive; Staff involved in the recruitment process should have received training on equality in recruitment Interviews are held at appropriate and accessible locations and times Application material includes an equality monitoring form and other relevant equality information	