

16 December 2025

Annwyl Carolyn,

Petition P-06-1561 Close the gender gap in Welsh women's football fund a national equality plan

Many thanks for your letter dated 10th December 2025. We at the Football Association of Wales very much welcome this petition which aligns closely with our own dedication to tackling inequality, which is really important to us not only across the women and girls' game, but across all areas of football.

The Football Association of Wales (FAW) remains firmly committed to expanding opportunities for women and girls across all levels of football. Since the publication of the "Our Wales: FOR HER" strategy in 2021, we have made significant progress in developing all aspects of the women's game; enhancing structures, improving equity, and creating an environment where women and girls can thrive.

As participation continues to grow rapidly, new opportunities have emerged to further strengthen the female player pathway. Key developments include the establishment of the Girls' Regional Programme, now recognised by FIFA, the creation of the National Academi (Girls), and exploratory work to expand age-group national teams in the coming years. The pathway is now supported by full-time coaching staff across all age groups, ensuring consistency, excellence, and professionalism in the development of future talent.

Investment in the women's national teams and pathway programmes now mirrors provision within the men's game. The FAW has further strengthened the girls' pathway by appointing six full-time positions to deliver the Girls' Regional Programme (U12–U17) in both North and South Wales. This investment ensures a world-class, high-performance environment that prepares elite female players for success on the international stage.

Over the past four years, the FAW has achieved a number of important milestones in women's and girls' football. Participation has reached a record 20,000 players across Wales, surpassing our strategic target ahead of schedule. The Women's National Team has qualified for its first major tournament, UEFA Women's EURO 2025 in Switzerland, offering an unprecedented platform to showcase Welsh culture and Welsh women's football to new global audiences. We have consistently broken attendance records at women's national team fixtures, including a significant travelling fan base in Switzerland this summer. In addition, our legacy work, supported by Welsh Government, received global recognition at the World Football Summit Awards for *Best Initiative for Women's Football*.



Throughout the UEFA Women's EUROs, the FAW delivered extensive promotion and coverage of the women's game utilising innovative and creative approaches to engage audiences - from the squad announcement alone, the coverage reach was 3.6 Billion. The cumulative reach from socials, broadcast and media throughout Cymru's journey at UEFA Women's Euro's 2025 was 33.88 billion. The addition of initiatives such as The Cwtsh connected by EE, and support through commercial partners the awareness of Cymru's participation at UEFA Women's Euro 2025 increased from 58% to 70%, with 1 in 4 people now more likely to attend a Cymru Women's football match. This extensive work has supported in elevating visibility, inspiring participation, and deepening engagement with the public.

Looking ahead, the FAW will launch a new long-term strategy in 2026: a 10-year vision that will prioritise sustainable growth across the women's game. This strategy will build strong foundations for participation and development while delivering an ambitious, holistic, and inspiring performance programme for the next generation of players. Alongside growing the game, we are actively working to bring world-class women's football events to Wales; including hosting the UEFA Women's Champions League Final in 2029 and co-hosting the FIFA Women's World Cup in 2035. These events would significantly enhance Wales' international profile, increase tourism and economic activity, and provide a powerful platform to showcase Welsh culture to global audiences.

To realise these ambitions, our key ask is for continued and enhanced government support to make football, and sport more broadly, as accessible as possible for women and girls across Wales. Ensuring equal access to football in schools is essential to promoting healthy lifestyles, building confidence, and developing the next generation of Welsh female leaders. We are passionate about empowering women and girls to choose sport, and ensuring they have the right opportunities, environments, and experiences to feel confident and comfortable participating in physical activity.

We would be happy to accept an invitation to present our progress, priorities, and future ambitions to the committee, and to continue working collaboratively to deliver genuine, lasting change for women and girls across Wales.

Cofion cynnes,

Alys Carlton

Alys Carlton

Football Association of Wales – Independent Chair



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