



HIGH PERFORMANCE PLAN 2026-2036

Football Association of Wales

The background is a solid red color with several large, dark red geometric shapes, including triangles and polygons, overlaid on it. These shapes create a dynamic, abstract pattern. The word "AMBITION." is centered in the upper half of the image in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

AMBITION.

**AN ADMIRER AND COMPETITIVE NATION,
PREPARED TO PERFORM ON THE EUROPEAN
AND WORLD STAGE.**

INTRODUCTION

Whether a player is beginning their journey in the grassroots game, progressing through the academy system, competing domestically or representing Wales on the international stage, every high-performance journey is built on strong foundations. Our ambition over the next decade is to create an environment in which Welsh players can maximise their potential and consistently perform at the highest level of the game.

High performance is about more than producing individual talent. It is about creating a connected, ambitious and sustainable football ecosystem that identifies potential early, develops players effectively, challenges them appropriately and prepares them to succeed on the world stage.

Over the next ten years, Wales will establish a clear and integrated high-

performance pathway for male and female players. This pathway will connect grassroots football, talent identification, pathways, domestic competitions, professional clubs and the national teams, ensuring that talented players have access to a world leading environment and culture, coaching, competition, education, and performance services at every stage of their development journey.





Our ambition is to further increase the number and quality of Welsh eligible players capable of competing at the highest levels of the professional game. Modern football demands we prepare players who are technically excellent, tactically intelligent, physically robust, and mentally resilient who can perform consistently in high-pressure environments.

Delivery of elite performance is reliant on the people and environments that we create for players to flourish. Technology, data and innovation will increasingly shape high performance.

We will use performance data, video analysis, talent intelligence and emerging technologies to improve decision-making, personalise player development and identify opportunities for competitive advantage. Our approach will combine innovation with the expertise and judgement of outstanding coaches and performance practitioners developed through our world-recognised coach education system.





“

Our goal is not simply to identify and develop talented players. It is to create the people, environments and performance culture that enables Welsh talent to succeed on the world stage. ”

HIGH PERFORMANCE IN NUMBERS & RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS



SIXTEEN

Reached the Round of 16 in the Men's European Championship in 2020.



FIFA WORLD CUP
Qatar 2022

64 YEARS

Reached our First World Cup in 64 years in 2022 with our Men's National Team.



FIRST

Our First UEFA Women's European Finals in 2025 in Switzerland.



Reached our first back-to-back Men's U17 Finals Tournament.

UNDER-17

Graduated double the European average of players to our Men's National Team in the last...

5 YEARS



2 YEARS

In the last 2 years we have graduated 5 players to our Women's National Team.



Created the FAW Centre for Football Research and developed world leading insights across player development and coach education.



Recognised as world leading in the delivery and execution of

COACH EDUCATION

FIFA®

FIFA kitemark of excellence for our Girls Regional Programme.





THE FAW APPROVED FOOTBALL PATHWAYS

One game. Many pathways. Lifelong opportunities



FAW APPROVED PERFORMANCE PATHWAY



TALENT ID

Identify and support players with potential.



PROFESSIONAL CLUB ACADEMIES

Elite training and development for youth within professional clubs.



FAW ACADEMIES

Talent hubs to develop domestic players within our Welsh Way identity.



PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL

Compete at the highest level.



DOMESTIC COMPETITIONS

Compete in the domestic game.



REPRESENTING WALES
IN NATIONAL TEAMS



FAW APPROVED PARTICIPATION PATHWAY

FAW AFFILIATED CLUBS



EARLY YEARS

(2-5 years)

Fundamental movement skills and parental engagement.



SMALL-SIDED FOOTBALL

(6-13 years)

Make friends, develop skills and understanding. 6-11 yrs non-competition.



JUNIOR FOOTBALL

(14-17 years)

Develop potential, compete & prepare for adult football.



YOUTH & ADULT FOOTBALL

(16 years +)

Stay active, enjoy the game and support others.

FAW APPROVED FLEXIBLE FORMATS

Example formats available



FUTSAL

Small, sided, fast paced. Technical.



DISABILITY FOOTBALL

Inclusive football for all.



VETERANS FOOTBALL

Football for 35s, 45s, 55s and over.



WALKING FOOTBALL

Stay active, stay involved.



SMALL SIDED FOOTBALL

Health and wellbeing.



FAW PROGRAMMES

Non-competitive accessible & inclusive.



FOOTBALL
FOR LIFE



PEOPLE.



CORPORATE OBJECTIVE.

Identify and train high potential coaches and support staff to ensure we focus on being 'the best prepared team in the world'.

Embed a culture & environment ensuring Welsh identity is at the forefront of everything we do, who we represent, and how we represent the country.



PRIORITIES

- Recruit, inspire and develop high-performance coaches and practitioners across the eco-system.
- Increase the number of Welsh-educated coaches working in elite club and international environments.
- Develop specific initiatives that create greater opportunity and widen access for female coaches at all levels of the game.
- Develop an index or measure to ensure the delivery of our educational offers are developing impactful coaches.
- Strengthen accessibility and representation within the coaching system.
- Research & Innovation Output; Promote continuous improvement and adoption of best practice across national teams.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Identify x4 high potential Welsh-educated coaches per year who can transition from industry | education or playing into international or club environment. (Boys Pathway).
- Identify 8-10 Coaching her Forward Female game coaches who can be developed into domestic and national female game elite coaches.
- 50% coach participation in annual CPD and mentoring programmes (50% by 2030 & 60% by 2036)
- Achieve a 20% improvement in the Coach Education Impact Index by 2036.
- Year-on-year increase in coaches from under-represented groups completing FAW coaching qualifications
- Sport Science PhD Students across all Youth National Teams.



PATHWAYS.



CORPORATE OBJECTIVE.

Ensure the elite player pathway unites domestic clubs, professional clubs, and national teams to deliver a system that is inclusive, high quality, and sustainable.

Ensure a consistent playing and coaching philosophy across all national teams and aligned domestic programmes.

Identify, monitor, recruit and retain high potential players.

Utilise the power of analysis, data & insights to drive elite performance in match preparation & execution and talent development.

Continuing the strategic development of the Cymru Leagues and Adran Leagues and opportunities to develop elite disability teams' access and opportunity.



PRIORITIES

- Work in partnership to establish four elite academies across Wales to service the most talented Welsh eligible players across our men's and women's pathways.
- Pathway alignment: Measure consistency, clarity, and alignment of player-development pathways across Wales.
- Elite Transition Success Rate: monitor the effectiveness of supporting high-potential players into elite environments.
- High potential player tracking: ensure all eligible high-potential players are identified and monitored globally.
- Player Recruitment Conversion: to convert identified eligible players into committed Cymru players.
- Domestic Talent Development: Support homegrown development within the pathway to maximise potential.
- Identify potential talented goalkeepers across all domestic academies and facilitate development opportunities.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Deliver four elite academies across Wales that consistently graduate elite players into our boys and girls U15 National Teams.
- 75% of high-potential players achieving agreed development milestones annually. Guaranteed - 10 Caps annually contributing to >2.2 Senior debutants annually.
- Comprehensive tracking database covering 95% of known eligible high-potential players and goalkeepers (domestic & global).
- Present to 100% of targeted eligible High Performance players with the relevant National Team Head Coach & offer clear and obvious pathway.
- 4 x per season Foundation phase (7-11 yrs) events, Cymru Cup & Rep squads fixtures (x10 per season), Female exit strategy for 100% of our players.
- Bi-Weekly sessions for talented domestic academy goalkeepers in our north and south regional centres.



PLACES.



CORPORATE OBJECTIVE.

Provide world class facilities and environments with integrated performance services, medical frameworks and impactful data that maximises the potential of our national teams and players.



PRIORITIES

- **Nationwide Engagement Reach:** Strengthen the bond between national teams and communities across Wales through visible player and coach engagement.
- Create a consistent cultural experience across all age groups, ensuring identity and behaviours build progressively from U14 to senior teams.
- Embed Welsh language, history, symbolism, and storytelling into all camps and environments.
- **Cymru Information Platform:** Centralise performance data and reporting. Create an insights-led culture. Utilise our data to support team performance and accelerate progress of talented players through the pathway.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- 12 player/coach-led community engagement events annually across all regions.
- 85% alignment with cultural and environmental standards across pathway audits.
- 100% compliance with cultural integration checklist for every national team camp.
- 95% completeness and accuracy of data and reporting in the Cymru Information Platform.



SUCCESSING WITH STAKEHOLDERS



WELSH BASED PROFESSIONAL CLUBS

Working closely through working groups to best facilitate high-quality environment for our Welsh based elite players.

CYMRU PREMIER & ADRAN PREMIER

Engaging in a collaborative way to ensure regulations promote experiences for Welsh based talent to develop through senior exposure.

UNIVERSITIES

Further enhance our existing relationships with Universities to ensure opportunities in student placements, research & shared roles to enhance high performance knowledge sharing.

SPORT WALES

Work collaboratively with Sport Wales and the Welsh Institute of Performance Sciences to support effective research and innovation across our National Teams and coaching system.

ELITE ACADEMIES IN ENGLAND

Continue and build connection with the elite development environments to ensure all Welsh eligible talent is identified and monitored effectively.

FIFA & UEFA

Connecting with other national associations to share knowledge and learn from best practice.

GOVERNMENT

Work closely with the government to ensure aligned objectives and future development of elite facilities.

FAW CENTRE FOR FOOTBALL RESEARCH

Enhance our collaborations with multiple practitioners and universities to increase our research output and impact.



DIOLCH.