



COO Annual Report 2025

Introduction

This past year has been one of strong and deliberate growth for Waterski & Wakeboard Scotland (WWS). Building on the foundations established in previous seasons, our focus has been on expanding capacity, improving delivery, and strengthening the pathways and opportunities available to participants across Scotland.

The 2025 season has seen real progress in both scale and quality – with growth across participation, competition, and development activity. The atmosphere around the organisation feels more connected and energetic than ever, reflecting the hard work of our staff, volunteers, and partner sites who continue to deliver outstanding experiences on and off the water.

None of this progress happens in isolation, and I'd like to acknowledge the collective effort from everyone involved – from those delivering on the ground to those supporting strategically through governance, funding, and partnership work.

Restructure and Increased Capacity

A key milestone this year was the organisational restructure implemented in April which has significantly enhanced our operational and delivery capacity across both the Development Team and the National Training Site (NTS).

Through this process, total weekly delivery increased from around 60 hours to 140 hours during the season, allowing WWS to offer a much greater range of activity, outreach, and support.

Two new dedicated full-time, fixed-term seasonal roles were created at the NTS, filled by Michael Limonci and Kirsty Williams, providing consistent on-site support and operational continuity throughout the season.

In parallel, development capacity was strengthened through the appointment of Tegan Brady (full-time Development Officer) and Celine Grech (part-time Development Officer) – both funded through the continued investment from SportScotland.

Together, these changes have transformed our ability to plan, deliver, and evaluate effectively, ensuring that both national and local delivery are better resourced, more visible, and more sustainable.

Development and Community Engagement

The expanded staffing structure has enabled WWS to strengthen community engagement and broaden the reach of our programmes.

This season included a one-day introductory session with Fettes College, which provided students with the opportunity to experience the sport in a safe, structured, and enjoyable environment. This also allowed us to explore the potential for schools delivery and large group bookings as part of our future planning – valuable insight for how we can make the sport more accessible through education settings.

We also continued our successful collaboration with **Fairway Fife**, building on previous years to deliver another impactful programme for participants with additional support needs. This has become a real highlight of our community work, and it was especially rewarding to see several of the Fairway Fife participants take part in the Wee Board Bash competition at Town Loch – an important and inclusive milestone for all involved.

Alongside these initiatives, improvements in data capture have allowed us to better understand and report on participation. In previous years, membership figures alone didn't accurately represent the number of people engaging with the sport. Through improved tracking methods, we can now effectively record the true scale of engagement across programmes, sites, and events – ensuring both existing and new participants are properly represented in our reporting and planning.

Competitions and Events

Competition delivery has continued to grow in both scale and reach this season, helping to create a stronger pathway from grassroots participation through to elite-level performance.

The **Backyard Waterski Series** once again proved hugely successful, bringing together skiers from across Scotland in a friendly, supportive environment. This year saw Loch Ken added as a new host site – an exciting development that broadens the geographical spread of the competition opportunities and gives us new ideas for future collaboration in the south-west.

The **Scottish Wake Series** was relaunched and delivered five stops across Scotland, providing accessible, regional-level competition opportunities for both cable and boat riders. The series was well received by the community and has re-established a structured and inclusive pathway for riders to develop and progress.

At the national level, Town Loch proudly hosted the first ranked three-event competition in Scotland since 2009 – the **Town Loch Triple Trophy**. The event served the wider UK elite competition community and placed Scotland firmly back on the map at that level. The hope is that this success will pave the way for hosting larger ranked events in the coming years.

In addition, Loch Lomond hosted its annual **Loch Stock competition**, which this year was recognised as a WWA-ranked event. This further highlights the quality of competition delivery and the ongoing appetite for high-level events across Scotland.

The season concluded with the **Scottish Waterski Festival** at Town Loch – a new and inclusive celebration of the sport that brought together skiers from all levels. The festival helped to bridge the gap between grassroots Backyard Series and full ranking events, creating a shared celebration of the sport and its community.

Development Programmes and Workforce Pathways

Development activity has continued to expand and diversify this year, creating more opportunities for people to access the sport at every level – from first-time participants to developing athletes and club volunteers.

A major highlight was the creation and launch of **Little Ripples**, a new introductory programme designed for children **aged 1 to 10** and their families. The sessions have been hugely positive and well-received, introducing young participants to the water in a fun, safe, and supportive environment. We are excited to explore how this model can be rolled out to the other sites and clubs in the future to help widen access and grow the next generation of skiers.

The Women & Girls Project, funded by BWSW, was another standout success. Delivered at the National Training Site (NTS), the programme welcomed participants **aged 9 to 72**, creating an inclusive and supportive environment for women and girls to learn, progress, and connect

through the sport. The enthusiasm and feedback have been excellent, and we're keen to explore how similar Ladies Nights or tailored sessions could be delivered at other clubs and sites next season.

This season also saw a renewed focus on athlete development through enhanced coaching and knowledge-sharing. We were delighted to host guest coaches Glen Campbell and Arron Davies, both of whom brought their expertise to Scotland and worked directly with our skiers to support progression and inspire performance.

The Ski and Wake Development Squads have expanded significantly this season, offering tailored coaching sessions across multiple host sites to ensure accessibility for participants throughout the country. The Wake Squad, covering both cable and boat disciplines, has been particularly successful in supporting developing riders to gain experience and progress their skills – with invaluable input from Loch Lomond Wake School, Loch Earn Wake School, and Foxlake.

A huge thank you goes to all the coaches and volunteers who gave up their time and shared their experience as part of these programmes. Their continued commitment and passion play a vital role in progressing the next generation of skiers and riders.

A particular note of appreciation goes to Kevin Lochhead, who has invested considerable time in creating and sharing his personal coaching programme and expertise. His work will form the catalyst for developing a dedicated WWS Coaching Framework – a key focus for the upcoming off-season.

It has also been encouraging to see continued growth in driver training. Across the year, several SBD2 courses were delivered under the guidance of John Radford, resulting in **15 new qualified drivers**. This represents a significant step forward in building capacity and ensuring clubs across Scotland have the skills and confidence to support safe and consistent delivery.

Together, these programmes have strengthened both the participation and performance pathways, supporting new entrants while providing clear routes for learning, leadership, and long-term engagement. They reflect WWS's commitment to building an inclusive, skilled, and sustainable community around our sports – one that is better connected and better resourced than ever before.

Students and Emerging Talent

A standout highlight of the past year has been the development of the WWS Student Society, launched in 2024, which now connects around **130 engaged members** across universities in Scotland. Since its creation, the society has built strong relationships with sites and clubs across the country, enabling students to access sessions, competitions, and training opportunities at multiple venues.

The society also organised its annual overseas trip to 313 Cable Park in Lithuania, providing an opportunity for students to develop their skills, gain experience on world-class facilities, and strengthen friendships within the wider community.

Throughout the winter months, efforts were made to maintain engagement and connection through off-water activities, including a flip clinic at a trampoline centre and climbing socials – helping sustain enthusiasm and club culture during the off-season.

In addition to regular sessions and social events, this year saw the first **Scottish Student Open Competition**, which attracted strong entries and enthusiasm from the university community. The success of this event marks another milestone in re-establishing a vibrant student pathway and supporting the next generation of volunteers, leaders, and competitors across Scotland.

Partnerships and Funding

Our partnership with SportScotland remains central to our success, providing vital investment and guidance that continues to underpin our growth. The ongoing support and positivity from their team throughout this period of development have been invaluable.

Although WWS did not receive an uplift in the most recent investment cycle, we gained greater security through our transition to a four-year investment agreement, providing financial stability and confidence in our ability to plan strategically.

This year has also seen our partnership with Children 1st continue to strengthen, providing expert guidance and support around safeguarding and inclusion. Their input has been instrumental in helping WWS embed best practice and ensure a safe, positive environment for everyone involved in the sport.

We are also deeply grateful to all the clubs and host sites that have supported our development work, community projects, and competitions throughout the year. The continued collaboration and communication between these sites and our Development Team have been essential to delivering opportunities across Scotland and maintaining strong regional connections.

A notable development this year has been the change in ownership at Glasgow Wake Park, now rebranded as The Wake Yard. We are excited about the opportunities this brings and look forward to developing a strong and productive partnership in the seasons ahead.

Participation and Impact

Overall participation across Scotland has **increased by 251%** compared with last year. This growth largely reflects improved data capture and reporting – helping us better identify and record people who are engaging with the sport, alongside those who are new to it.

The expansion of projects, programmes, and competitions has also contributed significantly to this rise, ensuring that opportunities are available across a wider range of locations and participant groups.

While this progress is encouraging, we recognise that there is still more work to do to refine how participation is tracked and measured. Enhanced data tracking and insight gathering will remain a focus for the coming year, allowing WWS to more accurately demonstrate reach, growth and impact.

Looking Ahead

As we look toward the 2026 season, our priorities will focus on sustaining growth, strengthening delivery, and securing long-term sustainability.

Key areas of focus include:

1. **Programme and Participation Growth**
 - Continue to expand development programmes such as Little Ripples and the Women & Girls Project, supporting other sites and clubs to replicate successful models.
 - Pilot schools engagement activity and explore a sustainable approach to large group delivery.
 - Strengthen student pathways, building on the success of the Student Society and Scottish Student Open.
2. **People, Pathways and Performance**
 - Continue development of the WWS Coaching Framework, recognising this as a longer-term 18–24-month project.

- Invest in workforce and volunteer development, including new training opportunities and mentoring for emerging leaders.
- Support competitive pathways by maintaining Scotland's position on the UK ranking calendar and growing accessible events such as the Scottish Waterski Festival and Backyard Series.

3. Sustainability and Strong Foundations

- Broaden funding and sponsorship opportunities to diversify income and reduce reliance on core investment.
- Continue to work closely with SportScotland and Children 1st, ensuring robust governance, safeguarding, and inclusion practices.
- Strengthen the relationship between WWS and host sites, supporting long-term stability, collaboration, and facility development.

The progress made this season demonstrates what can be achieved through collaboration, creativity, and commitment. With the solid foundations now in place and the continued dedication of our staff, volunteers, and partners, WWS is well-positioned to keep building momentum and deliver another successful year ahead.

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