



Introduction

Your board of directors of WWS for the 2025 season have been:

Kevin Lochhead (chair)
John Radford (vice-chair)
Liz Anderson (secretary)
Calum Reid (Finance Officer)
Calum Gauld
Chris Heron
Karen Cornwall
Alan Yeoman

2024 was meant to be my last year as chair, I stayed on however in order to offer some continuity to our new Chief Operating Officer, Calum Gauld. After 5 years of managing change at a governance level our operational strategy called for a sustained push towards growth. With agreement from Sport Scotland, Calum was recruited under the role of “chief operating officer and head of growth”. This appointment has worked out very well for WWS. Calum refined our strategy and, with approval from the board, we presented this to the SportScotland funding review panel. Whilst no uplift in funding was achieved, we were able to secure a change in our funding pattern, moving from an annual assessment to a four year cycle. With this relative security in place and approval of our intent, a restructuring of the organisation was carried out in April of this year. The restructuring saw an uplift in operating hours at NTS (effectively doubling the on-water hours) together with an additional 3 days of development work per week. As you will read in the COO report and NTS summary, these changes have proved hugely successful, with a measured increase in all areas.

The activities which the board has been overseeing this year cover:

Continued strong governance with regular updating and implementation of policies and procedures as required

Regular cadence of contact and meetings with all our partner and affiliate clubs

Refreshing and driving the WWS strategy

The restructuring of NTS and additional development hours

Facilitating our development officers to build the wider waterski and wakeboard community

Overseeing the implementation of courses for driving throughout the year

Increased reach in waterski and wakeboard competitions

Working with BWSW to organise and run two, three event Rankings competitions at NTS

Building of relationships within the local community to widen the participation of those accessing our sport (HIVE / BRAG/ Fairway Fife etc)

Working with BWSW “Friends of Tournament”, to bring on younger skiers
Liaising with SportScotland , local council and town councils to better facilitate our sport
Continued production of online resources for wakeboarding and waterskiing
Overseeing the management of Town Loch National Training Site
Production of newsletters to keep everyone up to date
Accessing funding opportunities for our clubs and individual members

SportScotland Partnership & WWS

The funding that WWS receives from SportScotland is for governance and development of the sport, in effect paying the salaries of our operational team. At the end of the 2025 season the operational team comprises:

Calum Gauld - Chief operating officer and head of growth
Development Officer (full time) – Tegan Brady
Development Officer (part time) – Celine Grech

Celine only joined us towards the end of the season and will be looking to take on her own projects as well as some of the work that Tegan has built up over a very productive year.

Our partnership manager * changed mid-season from Derek O’Riordan to Barry Cook, whom we had the pleasure of working with a number of years ago.

*Each sport receiving funding from SportScotland is assigned a partnership manager who works closely with the operating team to ensure that the governments criteria for governance and development are being met and that in effect “value for money” is being achieved through the sports activities. In addition the partnership manager is an invaluable resource for advice and help. Their goal is very much to help the sports they are assigned flourish under the guidance. Confidence in our progress was achieved this year with SportScotland moving us to a 4 year funding cycle. Well done to the Calum and the operations team.

Whilst Calum has responsibility for overall management and driving growth through the restructuring and refinement of our strategy, the hard work and enthusiasm of Tegan Brady (now full time development officer) has been essential in pushing the uplift in engagement. Tegan has helped turn the plans and ideas in to reality, facilitating competitions across all disciplines and sites, managing the youth ski and wake development squads, together with building working relationships and friendships across the country. An inspiration in both the ski and wake community, Tegan has also ensured further stability by increasing her own qualifications in coaching and judging.

It’s difficult to over emphasis how good a year this has been for WWS, the community feel seems to have gathered pace over the last few years arriving us at a place where there is a shared enthusiasm for the future of our sports.

Even a year ago the idea of a 3-event “rankings” competition and “wake series” felt quite aspirational. This past season however has seen two 3-event rankings competitions, a 5 stop wake series, 5 -stop backyard series, “Loch Stock” wake and wake surf competition and just last week teams from 5 university’s gathered for a slalom / jump and wakeboard competition (the first inter-university competition of its kind in Scotland.)

The diary for 2026 is looking similarly healthy with plans for up to 30 competitions across all disciplines across our sites. With the possibility of another two new sites making an appearance for the back yard competitions.

NTS Town Loch

The Town Loch site is the show case for our sports, run as a “not-for profit” business the focus is to deliver great ski and wake experiences to as many people as possible, of all ages and diversity. The site also has a major responsibility as the custodian of three event waterskiing in Scotland, able to offer coaching and competitions at all levels with equipment and facilities to match.

From previous years, with limited opening hours, this year saw two full time staff at NTS (Michael Limonci and Kirsty Williams). They were supported by more volunteers than ever before, all working as a team to deliver the service at NTS.

It is a real challenge for our seasonal staff to be able to look after the wide range of skills and requirements they are met with. In order to address this, we implemented a system where our more experienced members were enlisted to the volunteer rota in order to coach directly and “coach our coaches” raising the level of coaching for everyone. This has been hugely successful especially with the additional challenge of being open for more hours.

Thanks go to Joe Waz for her knowledge and helping run clinics in trick skiing, jump and wake boarding, Guy Harrower running jump clinics and Andrew Haslam for his trick coaching.

My personal involvement in this was to analyse slalom skiing and create an 8 level plan to take a beginner from getting up on one ski to running the course. The concepts highlighted in the stages also being applicable to experienced skiers.

It has been hugely satisfying to see Micheal, Kirsty and our new younger volunteers embrace the technical knowledge and see them not only pass it on but also use it themselves. At the end of season competition many of our skiers achieved personal best scores, testament to the work of Michael, Kirsty and the volunteer team.

Last winter Matt Mills and Alistair Roger set about effecting repairs on our aged jump ramp. Very quickly it became clear that their sense of doing things correctly would call for more than a bit of paint; significant surgery on the metalwork, fabrication of whole new sections and re-gel coating saw the refurbished ramp take to the water in the Spring. Any concerns about the repairs not being justified quickly passed as visiting jumpers at the Town Loch triple trophy inspired our local skiers such that the jump has been in use most days over the season. Something we haven’t seen for many years. Despite a year of challenging weather conditions and lack of water at NTS restricting our activity, all numbers are up, which is testament to the new strategy and the drive of all involved.

If there is a challenge for NTS it is our lease with the council. This was up for negotiation when I became chair and doesn’t seem to have moved significantly in the last 5 years. With the lease resolved we would hope to be able to offer additional income sources at NTS, for now however we continue to be limited to towed watersports, which (with increasing costs) will only ever just keep us ticking over.

Looking forward

As I move on from being WWS chair, our sports are, I feel, in a good place right now. The strategy is focused on growth and the team of Calum, Tegan and Celine are committed to delivering it. The plans for 2026 are as this year, aspirational; with the same enthusiasm as last year however I’m sure they will be achieved.

As I mentioned in my report last year, whilst we are fortunate to benefit from the investment from SportScotland our future is only ever going to be secured by those involved and participating. There are many projects which Calum and the team would like to see through, limited mainly by financial resources. The ideal situation will be for NTS to produce surplus income that could service projects throughout the country. This however will not be possible until a favourable lease is achieved and more people come to the sport through the development strategy.

Donations (financial and equipment) as well as voluntary help are what really keeps our sports going (at all the sites). Through the winter the team will be costing the various Development projects for which funding will be required. If you can, please do contribute whatever you can afford as it will make a huge difference in 2026.

Whilst at times challenging, it has overall been a pleasure to be on the board of directors and chair of WWS for the past 6 years. I wish the new board all the best for the future,

Kevin Lochhead