



---

## Introduction

We are now at the tail end of our 2022-2025 Strategic Plan delivery and have proudly achieved many of the outcomes and objectives set within that. Just prior to this AGM, our Chair, Kevin Lochhead, and I met with Sportscotland to update them on our progress and set out our Strategic Plan for 2025-2027, in the hope of securing a commitment for more support going forward. Our hope (at the time of writing) is that the increase in investment is a recognition of what has been achieved in recent years, will enable us to achieve the outcomes we have set out and for a strong future for our sport.

Our new strategic plan outlines four key focus areas for this period, including the delivery of accessible competitions for all, grow youth participation in our sports, grow the profile of our sports, and ensure the future of our sports and facilities. More on this later!

Over the last few years, our strategic focus has been on promotions & partnerships, coaching & development and support & advice. We also detailed the strategies we would use to deliver these for three key groups: our participants, our community, and our sports. Below, I have provided an update on what we have delivered for each of these groups.

## Our Participants

This year has again seen us deliver a meaningful programme of events to the calendar along with, where possible, making things bigger and better! The Backyard Slalom Series had another successful season with strong participation numbers once again. A huge well done to everyone who took part this year. A big thanks must go to the Town Loch National Training Site and Kyle Waterski and Wakeboard Club for hosting these events. Our ambitions as ever for the series in 2025 and beyond are to increase the hosting and take the series to new venues. The events programme culminated in our fantastic Scottish Slalom Cup held at Town Loch National Training Site, the first rankings event hosted in Scotland in over a decade. A massive thank you to Chris for his tireless work in the organising, planning, and overall project management of the day, but also to all the staff, volunteers, and participants for what was truly a great day and showed WWS and our community in Scotland in the best of lights. Plans are already afoot to host a 3-event competition in 2025, with ambitions to host UK nationals in the coming years.



Within wakeboarding, there has been a packed calendar of events across both cable and boat disciplines. There were great successes at Loch Earn's Summer Showdown, Loch Lomond's Lock Stock event, and Foxlake in hosting their annual competition along with Wake Park hosting just yesterday the King of the Canals competition. All of the event hosts deserve a special thank you. We look forward to building on all this success in the delivery of a coordinated competition calendar next season.

As we move into the new strategic plan, a focus again is our communications with our members, participants, and the wider community. We continue to do our best to keep our participants up to speed on everything that's going on in our sports. We would like to improve the connection between the governing body and our participants and are committed to getting out and meeting with people around the country in the coming year. During the winter we have plans to sit down and look at our membership offering, ensuring we are adding value and continually improving our offering to the membership. This will also include reviewing our membership structure with a view to how this could better include the fantastic work being done by our development team.

The value that we hold of "fun" will always be the aspect of our sport that creates the most joy, especially as we define this as "providing excitement and sharing success." This year has seen a huge amount of success with regards to competing on both a national and international level. There have been records broken, individual podiums, and team podiums achieved this season. We are incredibly proud of every single achievement that has been made by our members and participants, from achieving a personal best, trying something they haven't done before, or achieving success at a performance level. Well done to everyone, and we look forward to highlighting some of these brilliant achievements during our awards.

### Our Community

I would like to start by offering sincere thanks to Ali Brotherton for his fantastic work whilst in the post of Development Coach. For those that aren't aware, Ali has moved on from WWS, and his impact over the years cannot be understated. We hope to still make use of his knowledgeable, detailed, and enthusiastic coaching, as there are very few better! Further thanks must go to Ali for the creation and development of our online coaching resources in the form of booklets and coaching videos. This is a brilliant resource that can be found in the Members Zone on the website.



---

We are delighted to have Tegan Brady having taken up the Development Coach role, who has really hit the ground running since coming in to post in mid-August. We are really excited to see what she will be able to achieve in her new role with her endless energy, cheery nature, and passion for the sports.

We have continued to develop our offer of development opportunities for participants, staff, and volunteers across all clubs and sites. This has seen a series of coaching clinics, SDB courses, and development days. During the off-season we shall come together again to put together our plan for training and development for 2025, ensuring again that there are opportunities for participants, staff, and volunteers to progress and develop.

We have been delighted to widen our community throughly the hugely successful outreach work being done at Townloch National Training Site. This season has seen projects working with Fairway Fife (a young adult learning disability charity), Brag Group (community renewal), and The Hive Centre (an LGBT+ organisation). It has brought so much joy having these groups on site and introducing them to a new sport that otherwise they might not have engaged with. We are very excited to expand this development work both at NTS and at other sites.

Over the last couple of months, Tegan has been exceptionally proactive and productive in the initial launch of a university programme. Already we have engaged with over 70 students across a range of universities across various sites. This includes Edinburgh University's snow and waterski/wakeboard societies having sessions at both NTS and Loch Lomond; the University of Highland and Islands had a really successful trip to Loch Earn; and Glasgow University's society has also had a great weekend at Loch Lomond and regular sessions at Glasgow Wake Park. Over the winter period, we will look to keep the momentum going with this project, along with exploring a WWS Student Society and membership structure.

### Sports

Our Affiliated Club and Partner Sites remain at the core of our sport, and we continue to do what we can to develop our support offering to them. I have really enjoyed the visits I have had to sites and discussing how we can add value. We again shall be looking to hold an end-of-season club gathering as an opportunity to gain feedback on the season gone and get further input from clubs on what support they need.



---

I would like to thank all of the Town Loch National Training Site team led by Chris Heron for all their hard work, commitment, and dedication this season. It has been a real highlight for me since coming into the role, meeting all the staff and incredible volunteers. It has been a really successful season, as Chris has displayed in his report. The passion and love for the sports from all volunteers across Scotland is mind-blowing, and their support is truly invaluable.

I am really keen to continue the great work done by Calum Reid to build new partnerships with other national and local organisations. This includes widening our presence within the Scottish sporting landscape through exploring joined up working and co-creation of projects, along with having a voice across various panels and forums. We are still very committed to our project with Water Safety Scotland and a Fife Coast and Countryside Trust to bring groups from local primary schools along to Town Loch, which has been delayed due to funding challenges. At present, funding applications have been made with this being a dedicated focus in the off-season to fund schools and other development work.

I look forward to continuing to develop our relationship with British Water Ski and Wakeboard. As part of this, I am keen to continue to ensure we have representation and a 'Scottish voice' on various committees. I would like to extend heartfelt thanks to the Friends of Tournament for their continued support through funding secured by Chris for a range of activities such as our backyard series, development days, and funding for some of our community projects. This support has been vital and invaluable to our objectives and achievements.

### The Future

I want to thank everyone for their warm welcome and support since I have come in to post back in June. Looking back as part of the strategic planning shows the fantastic work that has been done over the last few years, which everyone involved can be incredibly proud of. Time has spent building a really stable and organised platform that will allow us to move into a really exciting period of growth in the coming years.

*Prepared by Calum Gauld*

*17 October 2024*