



# NORTHERN IRELAND SPORTS FORUM ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



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## ABOUT US & WHAT WE DO

The Northern Ireland Sports Forum is the recognised umbrella organisation for the voluntary sector of Sport in Northern Ireland.

The majority of all recognised sport and recreation in Northern Ireland has its own Governing or Representative body and it is for these organisations that the Forum works, in order to protect, promote and provide for their interests.

Our membership encompasses a huge range of sports and activities with member organisations ranging from elite sport to organised recreation. Through our membership and support services the NI Sports Forum benefits around 480,000 individuals involved in sport and recreation. It is the breadth of our members and representation that lies at the heart of the Northern Ireland Sports Forum and is what makes us unique.

***The NI Sports Forum is committed to the provision of services, benefits; and information for our members.***

# FOREWORD FROM CHAIRPERSON

In my third year as Chairperson of the NI Sports Forum it is good to see that Sport is making a progressive recovery from the pandemic, support is still needed for the NGB's and the clubs, but it is moving in the right direction.

Over the past 12 months, the Sports Forum has continued to support its members and the wider sector. Examples of these supports are the establishment of an NGB leadership network to enable the leaders of the NGB's to share and collaborate and provide peer support. The Board Recruitment Programme has been in high demand post-Covid with nine NGBs engaged in 22-23; three placements have been made and there are ongoing discussions with others. Processing AccessNI applications for our members has increased and we are currently processing applications for over 17 NGBs.

2023 saw the celebration of 25 years of the Good Friday Agreement and we looked to ensure that sport was recognised as a critical part of this. Thank you to the staff and particularly Niamh MacManus, who took a huge amount of time collecting information from Members on key events, achievements and policies in sport since April 1998 to ensure sport had its place.

The All Party Group continues to be an important platform for our members to raise issues with the political parties and local MLA's. Meetings this year have progressed solutions on the Road Closures Order, raised challenges including funding for schools' programmes, Good Relations funding and the Cost of Living crisis as well as highlighting positive impacts of the Commonwealth Games and facilities development. Advocacy and political engagement remain a priority and this year we have supported members to engage with local MLAs on matters affecting sport.

This work is carried out by the staff team led by the Executive Manager, Richard Honeyford, our Members Services Officer Niamh MacManus, the Inclusive Participation Officer, Natalie Niederman

and Finance Officer, Sharon Crossan. The staff team provide much needed support to our members and over the past year have developed relationships, delivered programmes, events and provided ongoing support and advice. I would like to thank Sport NI, The Department for the Communities and the Rank Foundation for the support for these roles without which we could not provide the same level of support and services.

Within the year, we saw the launch of the 3rd edition of the Code of Good Governance, with the NI Sports Forum representing on the working group and facilitating the funding through the Halifax Foundation NI. The code offers guidance and templates for organisations to review and progress their governance, ensuring correct processes are in place. Our thanks to NICVA and Volunteer Now who act as Secretariat of the group and prove how collaboration across the third sector is essential.

This year saw many athletes realising their goal of qualification for the 2024 Olympics in Paris. The preparation for Paris has been challenging with less time between the Tokyo Games but our athletes continue to achieve on the world stage. The selection opportunities are ongoing, and I wish the athletes hoping to qualify for Paris the very best of luck. I am also glad to report the IOC recently announced the inclusion of five sports for the 2028 Olympics, including cricket, squash, lacrosse, baseball and flag football, most of whom have representation on the NI Sports Forum. It is good to see the Olympic base expand and recognise these sports in an ever competitive field.

This is my last year as the Chairperson of the NI Sports Forum which I have thoroughly enjoyed. It has been a pleasure working with the Board members and the staff team to provide our services, raise issues and ultimately support the sports sector. I would like to thank my successor for taking on the role and I hope they will enjoy the role as much as I have, especially as the organisation looks to a new Strategy

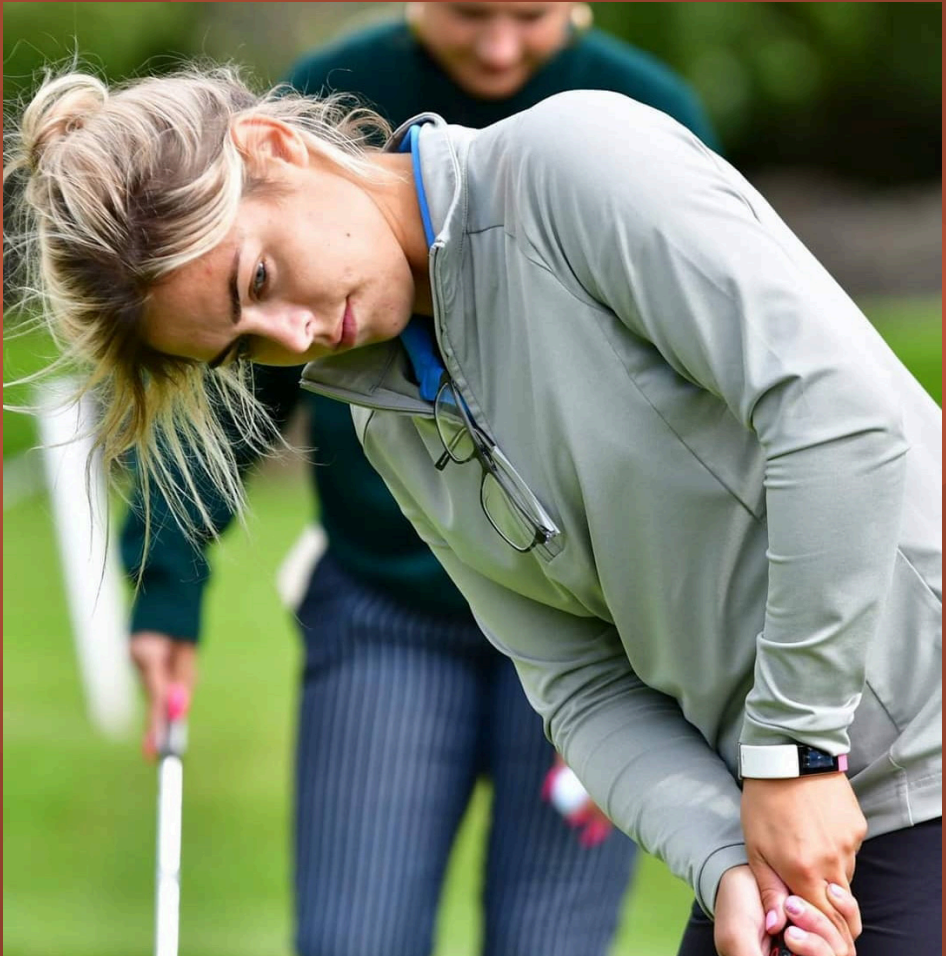
to take it forward over the next number of years.

I would like to express my thanks to SportNI for their support to the Sports Forum and to the sporting sector as a whole. Thank you also to Richard Honeyford and the staff team for their hard work and dedication to the NI Sports Forum and our members.

Yours in Sport

*Ashley Hunter*

**Chairperson**





# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

## COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIPS

NI Sports Forum aims to facilitate collaboration and develop relationships with our member organisations and the wider sport and activity sector. NISF will lead increased networking and engagement opportunities between members and relevant stakeholders across the sector.

## MEMBER SERVICES

NI Sports Forum will develop relevant services to empower and strengthen our member organisations relevant to their own needs and aspirations.

## REPRESENTATION

NI Sports Forum will act as a strong representative for members and the sector on various groups and committees including central and local government and impact on development of research and evaluation to ensure the best interests of the sport and physical activity sector are upheld.

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

NI Sports Forum will build capacity of the Forum through seeking new opportunities and to provide support to develop our members.

## LEADERSHIP

NI Sports Forum will invest in staff and board skill development for the growth of the organisation to enhance services and operations.





## OUR PURPOSE

“To guide, support and empower our members in their role to govern and promote sport and physical activity in Northern Ireland.”

## OUR VALUES

### LEADERSHIP

The NI Sports Forum will act as a strategic leader for the sport and physical activity sector and will be a strong advocate for members and stakeholders.

### INTEGRITY

The NI Sports Forum is committed to acting with strong principles and engaging with stakeholders with honesty and respect.

### INDEPENDENCE

As a membership body, the NI Sports Forum expresses its freedom to represent the interests of member organisations and the sector without influence.

### INSPIRING

The NI Sports Forum is committed to supporting our members to be progressive organisations and assisting them to realise their full potential.

### INCLUSIVE

The NI Sports Forum strives to embed inclusivity in its own operations and promote best practice with member organisations and the wider sector.

### PARTNERSHIP & COLLABORATION

The NI Sports Forum is committed to developing partnerships which will benefit our members and facilitating collaboration to allow members achieve their aims and objectives.

# EXECUTIVE MANAGER'S REPORT

After starting the role of Executive Manager in May 2022, it has been a privilege to engage with members, discuss challenges and help bring in key roles to support the work of the organisation. The overview of our work and activities best details how we look to support our members, engage with stakeholders and represent the sector on key matters.

As Secretariat to the All Party Group for Sport and Physical Recreation, we reconvened in person in June 2022. The Group remains key to raising local issues and challenges such as the NW200, Road Closures Order and Cost of Living as well as highlighting aspects such as the sporting success of Team NI at the Commonwealth Games. Members are encouraged to raise issues and matters to help steer the work of the Group and highlight where policy and decisions are affecting sport and recreation in NI.

Our Member Services continued to remain in high demand with AccessNI Checks up by 14% and our Board recruitment programme supporting 9 Members. We were delighted

to have Niamh MacManus join us as Member Services Officer to support current services and expand our services to the identified needs in sport. The role has been pivotal in our communications and ongoing engagement with the likes of the NI4Kids monthly articles and the creation of the 25th Anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement Sports Edition, something that captured as much as possible of sports evolution in this time. Over 2022 we also worked with our colleagues at the Welsh Sports Association to allow access for NISF Members to the Procurement Portal; allowing NGBs to establish better financial potential from the likes of energy contracts, insurance or stationery.

We ran a number of workshops and events on recruitment, a Members Forum that included updates for NGBs on insurance challenges and procurement, as well as our annual Sports Law Conference, that celebrated its 10th anniversary. Our thanks go to all the speakers, Ken Nixon for his continued support as Chair of the Sports Law Conference and Keith McGarry for his continued support to the Forum.





We would like to welcome the Ulster Rifle Association and Irish Waterski and Wakeboard Federation as new members of the Forum. Our website has been updated and provides significant information on the benefits of becoming a member of NISF, the steps about how to do so and the costs associated with membership. Membership for the forum is a vital part of our work, ensuring we represent and support the sector as much as possible.

Our thanks to the Rank Foundation and DfC who re-established support for the Female Sports forum through the Start Here Programme. We welcomed Natalie halfway through the year who immediately got to the task of reinvigorating the Female Sports Forum after two years with no funding.

Corporate Partners and funders are key in supporting the work of the NI Sports Forum, including SportNI, the Department for Communities, Sports Law NI, Cathedral Eye Clinic and Kingsbridge. This investment and resource ensure the ongoing work of

the Forum and the provision of service to our members.

I would finally like to thank the NISF Board for their continued support and advice, helping shape the direction of the Forum. Thank you also to our Bookkeeper, Sharon Crossan, subcommittee members and staff who put in such hard work and commitment in support of the Forum's work.

Yours in Sport

*Richard Honeyford*

**Executive Manager**

# OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR'S WORK & ACTIVITIES

## REPRESENTATION

The work of the All Party Group for Sport and Physical Recreation continued throughout 2022 and into 2023 with APG meetings discussing matters including sports redevelopment projects, social return on investment, the Commonwealth Games, Road Closures, rates relief and cost of living. Further meetings were also facilitated on specific issues including engaging with the Department of Infrastructure and PSNI on Road Closures.

We met with parties on matters affecting wider sport and highlighted where support could be focussed in the future. In October 2022, we met with the Minister for Communities, highlighting key issues and asks of the sector, including improved and consistent funding for sports infrastructure, increased investment into sports, and support for event bids and women's sport. These remain key priorities in our ask to government alongside new challenges such as the cost of living and support for sport in schools.

A key aspect of the year was (and remains) the cost of living and how this was impacting sport. We launched a survey that was completed in November 2022 and used this, alongside feedback from members to highlight issues being faced by the sector to SportNI and via the All-Party Group. We lobbied for relief schemes being announced in the UK to have the consequential brought to Northern Ireland. Sadly, the lack of an Executive meant limited powers and possibilities to affect change.

We engaged in 16+ Consultations, whether through sharing with member organisations or direct returns made including; Period Products provision, the Department of Education Corporate Plan, the Devolution of Fiscal Powers (conjunction with Ulster Rugby), Department of Education Corporate Plan, Belfast City Council and CCNI of particular interest.

## ACCESS NI

The NI Sport Forum completed 232 Access NI checks at from 20 bodies with 2 new members joining the list in year. The requirement for checks has increased year on year overall and in particular following a return to activity. If this is a service that your organisation may benefit from, please contact us.

## MEDIATION AND DISPUTES

Work in mediation and disputes has been both proactive and reactive with the delivery of mediations by Sports Resolutions at the Sports Law Conference 2022. We had some engagement and questions on potential disputes resolution issues and remain in support of members.

## GOVERNANCE

We remain as part of the Developing Good Governance Group, alongside colleagues in NICVA, Volunteer Now and the wider voluntary sector. Following extended engagement in developing the 3rd edition of the Code of Good Governance, we worked with SportNI and Charity Commission NI to deliver a sport-specific launch in December 2022. We remained engaged with members on Governance advice and support.

## BOARD RECRUITMENT PROGRAMME

NI Sports Forum engaged with 9 organisations seeking Board positions. Towards the end of March 2023, we had helped find placements for Ulster Hockey, Basketball NI and DSNI with more engagement taking place into the spring of 2023. If this is something your organisation wishes to access or if you are aware of individuals who may wish to provide an expression of interest for potential positions, please contact us.



## FINDING FUNDING

We continued to highlight and promote relevant funding for sports organisations throughout the year through our website and social media channels. We also developed and maintain a funding database that is available for members when seeking potential opportunities.

We promoted the Rank Foundation Start Here Scheme and explored means to widen applications for the 25+ sporting roles. Working with Rank Foundation, we ran a recruitment workshop and provided 1:1 support in recruitment.

## SAFEGUARDING SUPPORT

The Sports Forum has engaged with Paul Stephenson of the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit to provide support for non-funded members. We also remain engaged in Safeguarding Strategic Group and attended AccessNI workshops and DBS meeting on vetting standards in NI.

We provided advice to 7 members on Safeguarding requirements with one proceeding to have a Safeguarding workshop delivered by CPSU and another undertaking their minimum standards with CPSU.

## BUILDING CAPACITY

We advertised over 84 sport-related jobs advertised in the year. Direct intervention

was given to 2 NGBs to support the recruitment and retention of a member of staff and engage them with aspects happening in the Sports sector. 5 workshops were delivered across the year on elements affecting member organisations and the wider sector e.g. Governance, Insurance, Recruitment and retention

The NI Sports Forum has spent considerable time providing advice, guidance and support to members as they re-establish work coming out of Covid 19, often some with new boards and have been working on a resource library for member-only access.

## PROCUREMENT PORTAL

We have worked with Welsh Sports Assoc. to gain access for NISG Members to the Procurement Portal. This allows NGBs to establish better financial potential for likes of energy contracts, insurance or stationery.

## MEMBER SERVICES

We now have a Member Services Officer in place looking to expand our services to the identified needs in sport. Already we are engaged with 2 NGBs on potential short-term alleviation of administration (such as minute-taking or social media support). We have also explored potential new social media support, graphic design and media engagement for NGBs. The role is also engaged with NGBs with monthly NI4 Kids articles to highlight sports opportunities.

# NORTHERN IRELAND SPORTS FORUM PARTNERS

The ongoing work of the NI Sports Forum is thanks to multiple partners, who help fund and support the ongoing delivery of services and advocacy for the sports sector. Our partners include:

## SPORT NORTHERN IRELAND

Sport NI is a leading public body for the development of sport in Northern Ireland. Their vision is 'a culture of lifelong enjoyment and success in sport which contributes to a healthy, fair and prosperous society.'  
[www.sportni.net](http://www.sportni.net)

## RANK FOUNDATION

The Rank Foundation is driven by social purpose and with a distinctive and engaged approach. Rank is a pioneering organisation of both engaged philanthropy and place-based work; a highly regarded foundation, big enough to make a significant impact and small enough to be agile and responsive.

## THE HALIFAX FOUNDATION NI

The Halifax Foundation for Northern Ireland is one of four independent grant-making trusts, covering England & Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands. They are shareholders in Lloyds Banking Group and together receive 0.5% of the Group's pre-tax profits. The Foundation is independent of the Group. Its policies are determined by a Board of Trustees.

## SPORTS LAW NI

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## ATTIS SPORTS DIVISION

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## REPRESENTATION

Northern Ireland Sports Forum represent our members on a number of groups and committees. We act as the voice of sport and recreation. Here are some of the groups and committees.

- Secretariat to All Party Group on Sport at Stormont
- Active Living Monitoring Group Strategy task group
- Developing Governance Group
- Active Living No Limit's Forum
- Northern Ireland Wellbeing in Sport Forum
- Home Countries Sports Associations
- Sport Resolutions UK
- Female Sports Forum
- Safeguarding in Sport Strategic Group
- Belfast City Council Sports Award
- Antrim and Newtownabbey Council Sports Awards
- NI Sport & Human Rights Forum
- UU Employers Advisory Board
- AccessNI Stakeholder's Forum
- Stranmillis Physical Education & Sport (PES) External Stakeholders Group





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\*when both eyes are being treated, otherwise £50 per eye



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# COMPANY INFORMATION

- Ashley Hunter** (Chairperson)  
**Marc Scott** (Vice Chairperson)  
**Kelly McVeigh** (Company Secretary)  
**Catherine Quinn** (Treasurer)  
**Katrina McCaughan**  
**Chris Morrow**  
**Marc Mulholland**  
**Dr. Paul Donnelly**  
**Karen Rollo**  
**Amina Martin**



**Northern Ireland Sports Forum,**  
House of Sport,  
2A Upper Malone Road,  
Belfast, BT9 5LA

Email: [info@nisf.net](mailto:info@nisf.net)  
Twitter: [@NIsportsforum](https://twitter.com/NIsportsforum)  
Tel: 028 903 83825  
Website: [www.nisf.net](http://www.nisf.net)

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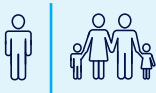
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# MEET THE BOARD

## CHAIRPERSON

### Ashley Hunter

Ashley joined the board of the NI Sports Forum in 2014 and was Company Secretary from 2017-2020.

Ashley has been involved in the sports sector for over twenty years and has worked for charities and governing bodies in director and chief officer roles. Ashley is currently Head of Participation with Swim Ireland. Ashley is also an active canoe and kayak coach and sports tutor. Ashley enjoys a wide range of sport but mainly outdoor adventure sports.

## VICE CHAIRPERSON

### Marc Scott

Marc is currently the CEO of Ulster Hockey. Prior to his current role Marc has gained significant experience in the sports sector in various roles: Governance and Management Consultant with Sport NI (2009 - 2018), Development Officer with Scottish Hockey (2008-2009) and Programme Manager with the Scottish Institute of Sport (2003-2008).

## HONORARY SECRETARY

### Kelly McVeigh

Kelly joined the board of the NI Sports Forum in 2015. Kelly is currently Head of Corporate Affairs at Open Strategic Communications which specialises in integrated communications, strategic PR and Media Relations, Public and Corporate Affairs, Crisis and Issues Management, Sustainability and Digital Communications.

Kelly currently sits on the Board of the Southern Area Hospice Services, providing strategic advice and guidance. An Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR), a member of the Northern Ireland Government Affairs Group (NIGAG) and The Association of Professional Political Consultants (APPC). Kelly also sits on the Department for Communities Sport Matters Monitoring Group.

## TREASURER

### Cath Quinn

Cath Graduated from Queen's University Belfast in Accounting and completed her

Accountancy charter with the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants. Cath started her Accountancy training in the Construction and Facilities Management Industry and was subsequently employed there as a Company Accountant. Currently, Cath works as an Accountant in Financial Management and Budgeting in the Department for the Economy.

Outside of work she has been a member of the Ulster Hockey Union Management Board as Treasurer & Chair of Finance (2016) and was a player and volunteer at her local club. Recently Cath has become involved in the disability sports sector as a player and volunteer with Wheelchair Basketball.

### Chris Morrow

Chris joined the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NI Chamber) in March 2009 and leads on all policy and communications activity for the organisation. As part of the senior management team, he works closely with the Chief Executive, President and NI Chamber Council to ensure that the interests and needs of business are fully understood and appreciated throughout government.

He also represents the NI Chamber on a number of forums and panels across key policy areas such as Brexit, skills and infrastructure. He is also responsible for all aspects of NI Chamber communications including public relations activity, marketing and external publications (Ambition magazine) and is a member of the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR). As a father of three young children, Chris is passionate about creating an environment for local sports to continue to thrive into the future.

### Katrina McCaughan

Katrina has worked within local government as a Sports Development Officer for 12 years with Ballymena Borough Council and currently with Mid and East Antrim Borough Council.

Outside of work Katrina has been involved in Camogie both as a player and as an administrator with McQuillan's Ballycastle. Katrina takes a keen interest in several other

sports and is a mum to 3 young girls and wants to ensure that children and young people get access to a wide range of sporting opportunities from an early age.

### **Marc Mulholland**

Following a lifelong involvement in Basketball, Marc is now a Board Member for Basketball NI heading up their Return to Play, Strategy and managing their Marketing and Communications. Marc represented Ireland in Junior Men's European competitions and played across the US in several Scholar-Athlete Games. Following on from coaching roles with Lisburn Scorpions and Andersonstown Tigers, Marc also enjoyed a coaching stint as Basketball NI's, Team NI Head Coach for U16 & U18 Men's teams.

Marc has worked with the Sport Changes Life Foundation where he helped showcase the prestigious Victory Scholar program through their Award Winning EHOOPS programme that helps disadvantaged youth engage with education through sport. Marc was the first Executive Director and Executive Producer of Broadcasting for the Basketball Hall of Fame Belfast Classic in 2017 & 2018, held at the SSE Arena Belfast, helping to bring the first Division 1 NCAA College Basketball tournaments to Europe.

With wide-ranging experiences in media, digital content, strategy and commercial law, Marc now works as Executive Director for Inspirus Sports helping them bring their NCAA College Basketball events series to a global audience and runs his own production company Scram Films where he specialises in bringing stories to life through moving image audio-visuals and photography. When not obsessing over sports, there is nothing more that Marc loves than spending time with his wife and two young sons Luca and Leon.

### **Dr Paul Donnelly**

Paul has been a Lecturer in Sports Development and Coaching in the School of Sport at Ulster University since February 2021. He is a graduate of Ulster University (1993-1998) and Sheffield Hallam University, England (2013) where he completed his PhD investigating Physical Activity, Health and Wellness Levels Amongst Adults in Northern Ireland.

Paul leads the sport development curricula on Ulster University's undergraduate and post-

graduate programmes, and has a particular interest in sport policy, strategy, and practice. He has worked with several universities in the UK and Ireland as an external examiner.

Previously, Paul was the Regeneration Director with the Gaelic Athletic Association (2018-2021) and Head of Policy, Planning and Research at Sport Northern Ireland (2002-2018). Currently, Paul is the Chairperson of The Camogie Association's National Development Plan Implementation Committee (NDPIC) and is Vice-Chair of PlayBoard NI.

### **Karen Rollo**

Karen has been Executive Manager of Netball NI since 2015 having previously worked as a Club and Workforce Development Officer. She is currently Secretary of Ards and North Down Sports Forum and Trustee on the Newforge Community Development Trust (NCDT).

While her employment is focused on the business and administration side of sport, with particular attention to finance, governance, HR and commercial partnerships, Karen's passion for sport stems from personal involvement with Netball at her local club where she plays and coaches, and within the wider Netball NI family as an umpire, umpire tutor, assessor and mentor. Sport has given her so many opportunities, supported her to develop many skills and created lifelong friendships. Her ambition is to ensure opportunities are made available and accessible to everyone. She believes that being a part of the NISF is some way to achieve that.

### **Amina Martin**

Amina has worked across a wide range of sports; as an Outdoor Recreation Instructor, a Level 2 Gymnastics Coach, a Level 1 Rowing Coach and a P.E teacher and sports coordinator in a secondary school. She has been the Project Officer and then the Digital Marketing Officer with the Female Sports Forum. Amina then became a Risk and Conflict Analyst with a consulting firm.

Amina is currently the Northern Ireland Development Officer and Women in Sport Programme Support with Triathlon Ireland. Her focus is currently on participation, inclusion and club development. She is also the Female Lead on the Equality Sub-Committee of the Canoe Association NI which has the remit for inclusion for the organisation

# GOVERNANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

2022-23 has been a reasonably quiet year for the Governance Sub-committee. The key focus has been the monitoring of the operational plan.

Whilst the formal operation of the committee has been limited, there have been some key highlights:

- Continuing to monitor progress against the Strategic Plan and operational targets for the year;
- Full review of the Operational Plan to consider factors such as the agreed work plan with Sport NI;
- Continued review of the Board structure and governing documents;
- Consideration of the process for developing a new strategic plan.

In 2023/24 the Forum will enter a crucial planning phase with the Governance Committee leading on the process of developing a new long term strategy for

the future of the organisation. Terms of reference have been agreed and a consultant identified for this essential piece of work and we hope to see progress in the coming weeks where there will be some key engagement opportunities with our members.

In conclusion, 2022/23 has seen embedding of the new staff team in the NISF however from a governance perspective, things have been stable. As we enter the planning phase for the new strategic plan, these are positive times for the Forum and we have a great opportunity to create a clear pathway for our future and ensure we continue to make a significant impact for our members.

*Marc Scott*

**Chairperson**





## SPORTS DIVISION

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# COMMUNICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

During this reporting period the NI Sports Forum Communications Subcommittee continued to advocate on behalf of our members on a range of areas affecting the future growth and sustainability of sports across Northern Ireland.

Whilst we continue to operate without a devolved government, the committee, alongside the NI Sports Forum Board and Executive team continued to engage with decision makers on a range of issues with a focus on engaging with local councils and departmental officials.

The cost-of-living crisis has continued to affect the operations of sports clubs across the region, with many struggling to sustain their operations as they face rising costs.

The All Party Group on Sport and Physical Recreation continues to provide an important platform for engaging on key issues with MLAs, with the hope that when an NI Executive returns, elected representatives will be well informed on the range of challenges the sector faces. Key areas discussed this year during the All Party Group includes Good Relations funding, Commonwealth Games 2026, Funding streams and the continued cost of living impact on sport.

Throughout the year the committee has supported the Executive team in communicating key areas relevant to members and the sector to a range of stakeholders and where appropriate highlighting the work of the NI Sports Forum.

Looking forward, the NI Sports Forum will focus on building the capacity of our members as we face a difficult year in terms of budgets and funding streams. This capacity building will allow members to begin to plan for their longer term futures.

It is vital, however, that the sector is supported long-term and the NI Sports Forum is committed to playing their part in considering tangible solutions that will ensure the long-term investment and growth of a sector that contributes to much to the local economy as well as the health and well-being of society

*Kelly McVeigh*

**Chairperson**

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Since September 2022, NI Sports Forum employed Natalie Niederman as an Inclusive Participation Officer with the Female Sports Forum. In the year before the Start Here funding came into effect which supports her role, the Female Sports Forum was relatively inactive. However, in the first six months of this financial year, a series of projects were initiated which aimed at highlighting the role of women and girls in sports at all levels in Northern Ireland in line with the Active, Fit and Sporty plan.

The Role Models Project spotlights individuals across the sports sector. This project has increased the social media presence of the Female Sports Forum following a relatively quiet period. Various sports have been included like Hockey, Climbing, Cricket, and more, have been featured, and it has been truly exciting to highlight the many of the faces of women's sports in Northern Ireland. There were over nominations for over 40 women and girls and 30 interviews that were conducted. This project has sparked conversations with multiple National Governing Bodies (NGBs), helping the Female Sports Forum better understand their projects and the ways to involve women and girls.

Furthermore, to showcase the achievements of Northern Irish athletes, the Female Sports Forum has started a monthly update on women in sports. This update is shared on social media, the Female Sports Forum website, and in the monthly members' report issued by the Northern Ireland Sports Forum. This initiative has aimed to connect people with a wide range of sporting successes that often go unnoticed in the media but also continue to highlight women's sports.

During the first six months of Natalie's post, she met with all the original members of the Female Sports Forum and created a summary document. This document aimed to assess the past success of the Female Sports Forum and understand the current landscape of the women's sports sector. It also initiated the committee's first meeting in two years, held in February, and a reframing of the FSF's goals. We will continue to meet regularly to discuss the Female Sports Forum's progress. To gain a comprehensive view of the sports sector in Northern Ireland, we have invited representatives from Athletics, Boxing, and Netball to participate in the committee as well.

In March, International Women's Day provided opportunities to attend multiple celebratory events. For instance, Ulster Boxing hosted an event where we participated in a poster session and engaged with schoolgirls, explaining the role of the Female Sports Forum. The Female Sports Forum also had the privilege of presenting at a girls' football tournament organized by the Manchester United Foundation at Oakgrove Integrated School. This event allowed us to interact with students from years 9 and 10 and explore potential future programs for the Female Sports Forum.

*Angla Platt*

**Chairperson**

# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The exceptional work done by the previous subcommittee, under its Chair at the time Allan Rutherford, ensured that the Forum established a position where it could continue to invest in its team and provide additional services to members over the past twelve months.

It has been a pleasure for the current committee to meet regularly to keep identifying new commercial partners, explore new member services and source new income revenues as we seek to further grow the organisation. Sponsorships and partnerships all contribute to making the Sports Forum as effective as it is, and I'd like to thank Keith McGarry from Sports Law NI, Fiona Dowds from Kingsbridge Private Hospital Group and Rachel Lyness from Cathedral Eye for their continued support. In the face of numerous uncertainties and challenges for the sector, this support has allowed us to continue making a meaningful difference to the organisations that we represent.

Over the past twelve months, we have been able to provide a varied programme of events and training. We responded to member feedback to deliver the first Female Sports Forum event in three years and provide a series of GDPR and social media workshops, both virtual and in-person. Our annual Sports Law Conference,

in conjunction with the Law Society of Northern Ireland and Sports Law NI, continues to go from strength to strength with over 100 attendees at the last event.

The Forum also applied for funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund to provide a strong foundation for future growth. Although the bid was unsuccessful, the Forum will continue to expand and develop to meet the needs of member organisations going forward, continuing to hold discussions with other potential partners, which could add to our wide range of support services and activities. If this is of interest to your particular organisation, please feel free to reach out to the committee or the Board.

*Chris Morrow*

**Committee Chair**



# FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

## CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Over the course of the year the Finance Subcommittee continued to meet virtually to review quarterly management accounts and budgets, review future projections, provide financial oversight to grant applications and recommend approval of the Financial Statements to the Board. In addition, the committee regularly reviews the Membership list as regards slow payers and potential deletions, with new member applications approved at board level. The committee monitors salary scales as well as liaising with the NI Sports Forum payroll and pension providers regarding possible/actual legislation changes.

As envisaged, the past 12 months saw a more conservative financial position for the Sports Forum due to a number of factors. It was a year of consolidation and investment in staffing and development, which I am confident will have a positive impact financially for future years. The decision to invest in additional staffing resources during the year resulted in a small managed reserves deficit. However, in year, with the support of the Rank Foundation, the Sports Forum has been able to increase its resourcing level with the welcome addition of two funded posts to support our existing membership body and the Female Sports Forum. This past year also saw the welcome return of the Sports Law Conference in person after a successful virtual event in the previous year, along with further opportunities to host in-person events and develop both new and existing

partnership arrangements. Robust previous financial years enabled the Sports Forum to manage the cash flow impact of that deficit and ensured NISF was well positioned and resourced to provide for our members.

The outlook for 2023-24 financially is more positive as the Sports Forum seek to benefit from a year of consolidation and development.

Much thanks goes to the members of the Finance Sub Committee for their support and smooth operation of the financial procedures all year; Sharon Crossan who as always ensured financial procedures were adhered to and transactions were carried out efficiently; Richard Honeyford for his oversight, support and input as Executive Manager and Richard Johnson who continued to provide a valuable contribution to the Finance Subcommittee after stepping down from his role as Sports Forum Chair.

After 6 years this has been my final year and report as Treasurer of the Sports Forum, and I would like to thank all those who across that time have contributed to the Forum and supported me in the role.

*Catherine Quinn*

**Treasurer &  
Committee Chair**

# INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Income</b>		
Sport Northern Ireland	31,500	35,000
Membership Income	14,924	14,333
Other Income	55,620	33,865
Bank Interest	245	221
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>102,289</b>	<b>83,419</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
	2022 £	2021 £
Wages & Administration	86,043	49,368
Printing and Stationery	3,450	2,189
Accountancy Fees and Sundries	4,919	2,820
Programme Costs	12,785	15,114
Access NI Fees	1,148	409
Course Fees	275	-
Website Expenses	1,128	576
<b>Total Expenditure:</b>	<b>109,748</b>	<b>70,476</b>
<b>Surplus (Deficit) for the Year:</b>	<b>(7,459)</b>	<b>12,943</b>

# BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Debtors	36,705	18,154
Cash at Bank	85,821	81,539
	<b>122,526</b>	<b>99,693</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Sundry Creditors and Accruals	41,750	11,458
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>80,776</b>	<b>88,235</b>
<b>Capital Fund</b>		
Opening Balance	88,235	75,292
Surplus/(Deficit) for the Year	(7,459)	12,943
<b>Total Charity Funds</b>	<b>80,776</b>	<b>88,235</b>

# REPRESENTATIVE & ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

## REPRESENTATIVE MEMBERS

American Football Ireland  
Archery NI  
Association of NI Car Clubs  
Association of Irish Indoor Bowls  
Athletics NI  
Basketball NI  
Baseball Ireland  
British Horse Society  
British Gymnastics  
British Taekwondo  
Canoe Association of Northern Ireland  
Cricket Ireland  
Cycling Ulster  
Golf Ireland  
Gymnastics Ireland  
Horse Sport Ireland  
IABA Ulster Branch  
Inline Hockey Ireland  
Irish Indoor Bowling Association  
Irish Football Association  
Irish Underwater Council  
Irish Bowling Association  
Irish Coastal Rowing Federation  
Irish Women's Indoor Bowls Association  
Irish Women's Outdoor Bowls Association  
Irish Waterski and Wakeboarding Federation  
Motor Cycle Union of Ireland (Ulster Centre)  
Motorcycle Racing Association  
Mountaineering Ireland  
Mounted Games Association  
Netball NI  
NI Association of Aeromodellers  
Northern Ireland Cross Community Angling  
NI Horse Board  
NI Ju Jitsu Association  
NI Judo Federation  
NI Orienteering  
Northern Ireland Pool Association  
NI Smallbore Shooting Association  
NI Volleyball  
NI Women's Football Association  
NI Weightlifting  
Northern Ireland Fencing Ltd  
North West Cricket Union  
Northern Cricket Union  
Parkour UK  
Pitch and Putt Union Ireland  
Racquetball Association of Ireland (Ulster Council)

Rowing Ireland Ulster Branch  
Royal Yachting Association NI  
Showjumping Ireland Ulster Region  
Softball Ireland  
Swim Ulster  
Table Tennis Ulster  
Triathlon Ireland  
Ulster Federation of Rambling Clubs  
Ulster Provincial Council of Sea Anglers  
Ulster Angling Federation  
Ulster Badminton  
Ulster Camogie Council  
Ulster Coarse Fishing Federation  
Ulster GAA  
Ulster Hockey Union  
Ulster Rifle Association  
Ulster Rugby  
Ulster Squash  
Ulster Tennis  
Ulster Clay Pigeon Shooting Association  
Ulster Gliding Club  
Ulster Council Ladies Gaelic Football

## ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

2 & 4 Wheel Motorsport  
Active Communities Network  
Ards and North Down Sports Forum  
Belfast City Marathon  
Commonwealth Games NI  
CI Sports and Leisure  
Disability Sports NI  
Ethnic Minority Sports Organisation NI  
Fermanagh & Omagh Sports Forum  
Inclusive Skating  
Leave No Trace Ireland  
Mary Peters Trust  
Multi Ethnic Sports and Cultures  
Northern Ireland Boys' Football Association  
NI Civil Service Sports Association  
NI Deaf Sports  
NI Football League  
NI Schools Football Association  
Outdoor Recreation NI  
Royal Lifesaving Society  
Sport Lisburn & Castlereagh  
Special Olympics Ulster  
Sported Foundation  
Train To Be Smart Soccer  
Ulster University Sports Union



VOICE OF SPORT AND RECREATION IN  
**NORTHERN IRELAND**

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Company No: NIO10440  
Charity No: 100895