



CASE STUDY: WELSH TRIATHLON

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Welsh Triathlon is the National Governing Body (NGB) for Triathlon in Wales.

As an NGB, it has three main areas of responsibility—governance, performance and development. Welsh Triathlon works to promote excellence and create opportunities for everyone to achieve their personal triathlon challenges.

Welsh Triathlon, as a Home Nation member of British Triathlon adheres to the vision and values outlined by British Triathlon for all of the sport's organisations and for the governance of Triathlon. These are summarised below:

- ◆ we are people centred
 - ◆ we are ambitious
 - ◆ we are inclusive
 - ◆ we do what is right
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OUR DIRECTOR
APPOINTMENT
CAMPAIGNS
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OPPORTUNITY
TO BUILD A MORE
DIVERSE BOARD.



WHY DID YOU NEED TO CHANGE THE STRUCTURE OF YOUR BOARD?

At that time, in 2017, the Board was made up of nine white men along with our female CEO. We wanted this to change as the Board needed to be more reflective of our membership and participants. We were also facing changes on the Board as individual Directors came to the end of their terms which mean we had a total of four vacancies to be filled.

Triathlon supports inclusivity and equality because it is the right thing to do so our Director appointment campaigns offered us an excellent opportunity to build a more diverse Board.



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HOW DID YOU GO ABOUT MAKING THESE CHANGES?

We initially circulated information to members about Board roles, inviting them to apply—all Welsh Triathlon Board positions are through application. We advertised widely through the sport but did not get a great response so decided to open the positions up to the public.

We advertised via Women on Boards, Acorn Recruitment, sporting websites and also through the networks of our existing Board members. We also sent the information to our contacts across different communities. We were particularly keen to find younger Directors or at least someone who could bring insight to the Board on youth sport.

Our CEO used every opportunity at equality and diversity events to promote our Board through equality networks and encourage people to apply.

We eventually received nearly 40 applications and many of these were extremely high quality. When we analysed how candidates

had become aware of the positions, we discovered some had responded to our CEO's networking, some had come via Acorn and others had seen the roles on our website.

As there were so many applicants, we interviewed over a period of four weeks to give all the quality candidates and our interview panel enough opportunity to find the right people. Although there were four Board positions, we wanted to take advantage of the skills available and, in the end, appointed seven people, three of whom agreed to join sub-committees. This served two important purposes, firstly we would gain access to their knowledge and skills. In addition, as they developed a deeper understanding of Welsh Triathlon, there may be opportunities in future for them to join the Board, thereby strengthening our succession plan.

We gained vital expertise in the areas of legal, youth sport, disadvantaged communities, equality and diversity, commercial and contracts.



WHAT DIFFERENCE HAVE THESE CHANGES MADE TO YOUR BOARD?

To use a motorsport analogy, it felt like we had moved from first gear to fifth. The existing Board members were reinvigorated and re-energised. The newly appointed Directors brought new focus, energy and ideas. They also looked at things in a modern, futuristic way bringing new methodologies to sport. They provided a positive challenge to plan for the future.

Other ways in which the Board has changed is in its approach to inclusion as we now consider equality and diversity as part of our discussions and decisions. This includes younger perspectives.

The candidates who were invited onto sub-committees are also making a difference, bringing distinct skills and expertise that support the organisation in areas such as communications. We have found that their involvement in Welsh Triathlon is adding value to their experience and has enhanced their professional profile.

It is important to note that we have retained significant knowledge of, and engagement in, triathlon on the Board. Whilst skills, expertise and diversity are at the heart of our recruitment process, we ensure at least a proportion of our Directors understand the sport from community to elite. This is critical to maintaining balance on the Board.



WHAT IMPACT HAS THE NEW BOARD STRUCTURE HAD ON THE ORGANISATION?

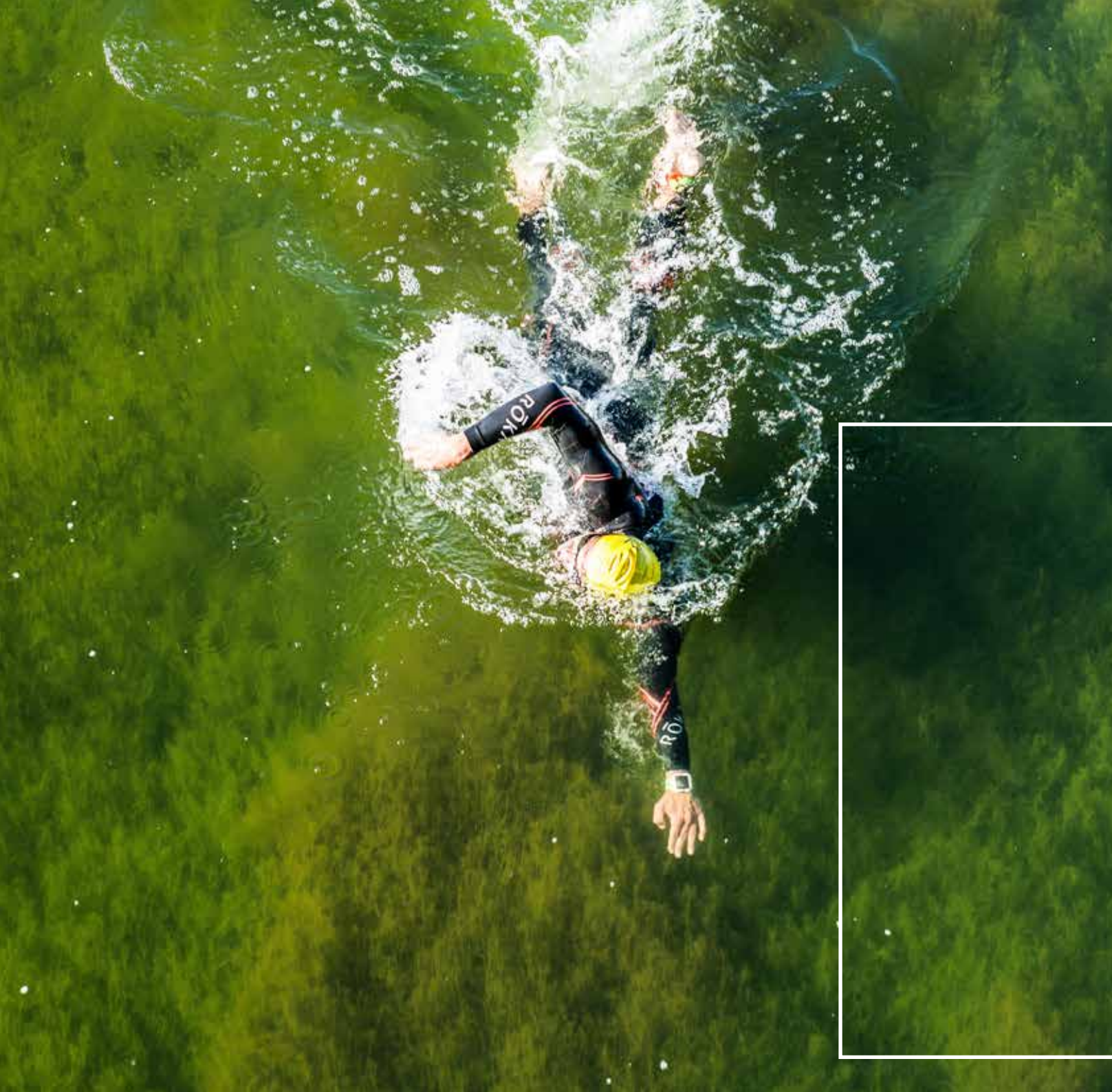
Previously, it may not have been clear to the staff how the Board was adding value to Welsh Triathlon. Since initiating changes to our Board composition, there is much greater input and challenge from Directors which staff can see and appreciate. There is also a sense of increased integration between staff and Board, with Directors attending events and supporting staff.

We now have the drive and skills and to shape and sustain a professional and progressive profile as an organisation, which will have a positive impact on our relationships, not least with commercial partners. We have experienced an increase in stakeholder confidence including from British Triathlon, who want to adopt our Board recruitment best practice, and Home Country bodies.

We have also been able to find operational efficiencies as Directors constructively challenge ways of working and offer new

ideas. This has helped generate funds that we can reinvest in the sport for the benefit of members and participants. Several of our Board members have now taken up positions on Home Nation sub-committees to ensure the Federation develops the sport in the right way for Triathlon across Britain.

One of the most influential factors was the way in which the Chair and CEO worked together to drive change. Whilst either could have made a difference on their own, the impact was much more powerful together. The Board was also very supportive and we were not encumbered by tradition. It was predicated on the belief that we wouldn't just tick boxes - our mindset is honestly about reflecting the people we represent and using experiences from a wide base to drive innovation and change for triathlon and the wider sport sector.



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