

All,

Re: Inequality in Sports Funding in Wales – The Case for Rugby League

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the inequitable distribution of sports funding in Wales, particularly the systemic underfunding of Rugby League in comparison to other sports such as Rugby Union. This issue has long hindered the growth of our sport, despite its rich history, diversity, and the opportunities it provides to individuals from all backgrounds.

There is much talk about equality, diversity, and inclusion, yet this decision is the very opposite. It reinforces a culture of exclusion that many of us hoped was consigned to history. The legacy of the Welsh Rugby League codebreakers should have marked a turning point — but the systemic discrimination they faced appears to continue in modern-day Wales when it comes to funding.

I've attached links to recent documentaries and parliamentary discussions that highlight the sport's historical and ongoing struggles.

I urge you to watch and listen — it's a damning indictment that Rugby League is still fighting for fairness in 2025.

[BBC One - The Rugby Codebreakers, Welsh Rugby Codebreakers](#)

[BBC One - The Rugby Codebreakers, Clive Sullivan](#)

[Tides of History on X: "The campaign to get a knighthood for the great Billy Boston reaches the House of Commons... <https://t.co/eJg4FEUbGV>" / X](#)

Rugby League has faced historical challenges, often sidelined in favour of Rugby Union and other sports. Despite this, the sport has persevered and thrived through the dedication of volunteers and the passion of its participants. Rugby League has a proud tradition in Wales and continues to grow, with significant strides made across various programmes and age groups.

Currently, Wales Rugby League supports an extensive range of initiatives, including:

- Men's Senior Team (Higher World Ranking than our Rugby Union counterparts.)

- Women’s Team (qualified for the 2026 World Cup)
- Wheelchair Rugby League (ranked 5th in the World)
- Under 18’s (winners of a 3-game series against Ireland)
- Under 16’s (Home Nations champions with a historic victory over England at the Gnoll)
- Physical Disability Rugby League (PDRL)
- Dragonhearts (Amateur Team)
- A thriving community game with year-on-year increases in participation.

Our junior pathways are particularly noteworthy. Currently, 38 young players under the age of 18 are part of academy pathways with Super League clubs. Importantly, 80% of these young athletes come from deprived communities, demonstrating the vital role Rugby League plays in providing opportunities to those who might otherwise face significant barriers to participation.

Despite these achievements, Wales Rugby League operates largely on volunteer support and self-funded programmes.

The funding allocated to Rugby League is £47,023.00 annually, which pales in comparison to other National Governing Bodies as listed below.

NGB	2023/24 Total Offer
Angling Cymru	£35,000
Badminton Wales	£295,000
Basketball Wales	£65,000
Bowls Wales	£123,000
Canoe Wales	£377,000
Cricket Wales	£588,000
Football Association of Wales	£1,010,000
Hockey Wales	£588,000
RYA-Cymru Wales	£340,000

Snowsport Cymru Wales	£45,000
Squash Wales	£303,000
Swim Wales	£1,017,000
Table Tennis Wales	£289,000
Tennis Wales	£346,000
Wales Golf	£465,000
Wales Netball	£446,000
Wales Rugby League	£47,023
Wales Weightlifting	£294,000
Welsh Archery Association	£8,000
Welsh Athletics	£1,034,000
Welsh Billiards & Snooker Association	£24,000
Welsh Boxing	£534,000
Welsh Curling Association	£1,500
Welsh Cycling	£988,000
Welsh Fencing	£19,000
Welsh Gymnastics	£1,042,000
Welsh Judo	£261,000
Welsh Orienteering Association	£1,500
Welsh Rowing	£317,000
Welsh Rugby Union	Unknown due to governance issues
Welsh Target Shooting Federation	£242,718
Welsh Triathlon	£263,000
Welsh Wrestling	£18,000

This disparity places an unsustainable burden on our volunteers, who are often pushed to their limits to ensure the success of our programmes.

It is difficult to reconcile this reality with the often-discussed principles of equality and fairness in sports funding.

The impact of Rugby League extends far beyond the pitch. Clubs across Wales are deeply embedded in their communities, providing not only opportunities for physical activity but also fostering social cohesion, developing life skills, and offering a positive outlet for young people.

I respectfully request your assistance in raising awareness of the challenges faced by Rugby League in Wales. We ask that you advocate for a fairer allocation of funding, ensuring that our sport can continue to thrive and provide opportunities to individuals and communities across the country.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely

James Davies

Chairman