

IFRCS Ffion Dart, Chairperson, Carmarthen Athletic Hockey Club

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

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[Effaith Gostyngiadau Cyllid ar Ddiwylliant a Chwaraeon](#) | [Impact of Funding Reductions for Culture and Sport](#)

Ymateb gan: Ffion Dart, Cadeirydd, Clwb Hoci Athletau Caerfyrddin | Evidence from: Ffion Dart, Chairperson, Carmarthen Athletic Hockey Club

1. What impacts has reduced funding had on your organisation and sector so far?

We use the Astro turf facility at Carmarthen Leisure centre 3-4 times a week to host our training nights and matches for Carmarthen Athletic hockey club. The pitch hire costs are astronomical when compared to other artificial grass facilities, meaning we have to set our membership and match fees far higher than what other clubs do. This has led to many members having to give up the sport due to not being able to afford the fees and unable to travel to a club further away.

Our juniors participate in a west Wales junior tournament where each club takes it in turn to host. The amount charged to the players is determined by the cost of the pitch hire, and we at Carmarthen charge the most. This in turn has caused the other clubs to not participate when we are hosting, reducing the amount of game time for players, impacting on their social interaction with other teams, and mainly causing us to make a loss on these tournament days.

2. What measures have you taken in light of it, such as changing what you do and how you do it.

We have had to increase our fees to members to counter the hire costs. We now have to host fundraisers roughly once a month to try and keep membership costs down as much as possible. This applies additional pressures to members to organize and attend the events, and to ensure we have enough people attending events to cover the costs.

We also ask for sponsorship from local businesses, however this is proving more difficult to get hold of due to the cost of living crisis.

We have started a initiative in the club called the access to hockey fund. This is something we set up around 2 years ago when we getting more and more members struggling with the fees and so having to either withdraw or limit their participation to the sport. The access to hockey fund can provide help to members, whether it be kit purchases or reduced membership fees, it just eases the pressure on members who can't commit to the sport due to the costs involved.

3. To what extent will these impacts be irreversible (e.g. venues closing, or specialist skills being lost rather than a temporary restriction in activities)?

The impacts will immediately prevent us from being able to provide the access to hockey fund to our members, ceasing their ability to participate in the club. It may be that we will have to look at a different venue, which the closest is around 25 minutes away and will massively effect members travel time to training and so on. We would ultimately end up losing a very large chunk of members, juniors and seniors.

4. What interventions would you like to see from the Welsh Government, beyond increased funding?

5. To what extent do the impacts you describe fall differently on people with protected characteristics and people of a lower socioeconomic status?

I understand that our sport is one of the more expensive, however with the lack of funding we only make it inaccessible to more and more people. We have the access to hockey fund in our club to help those who are in the lower economic brackets, enabling them to participate in a sport that they love.

6. Do you have any other points you wish to raise within the scope of this inquiry?
