

IFRCS30 Caroline Spanton, Chief Executive Officer, Beicio Cymru

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

[Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol | Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee](#)

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

Ymateb gan: Caroline Spanton, Prif Swyddog Gweithredol, Beicio Cymru |
Evidence from: Caroline Spanton, Chief Executive Officer, Beicio Cymru

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

The reduction in funding has had significant and far-reaching impacts on Beicio Cymru (BCy) (Formerly Welsh Cycling) and the wider sports sector in Wales. Most notably, we have experienced a reduction in staffing, which has inevitably strained our capacity to deliver the high-quality programs and support that our community has come to expect. With fewer hands on deck, our ability to maintain current operations and pursue new initiatives has been compromised.

Talent Development opportunities, particularly those aimed at nurturing future talent, have also been curtailed. The funding cuts have forced us to re-evaluate and potentially alter our talent pathway, limiting the scope and reach of programs that were designed to identify and support emerging athletes across the region. This not only jeopardises the future success of our sport on a world stage but also diminishes the opportunities for young athletes to progress within the sport.

Our ambition to expand regional opportunities and bring more localised development programs to various parts of Wales has similarly been hampered and with further cuts will be significantly hampered. The vision of creating a more accessible and inclusive talent pipeline, with strong regional hubs, has been delayed due to the potential of further funding reductions.

In summary, the reduced funding has not only hindered our current operations but also posed challenges to our long-term strategic goals. Without adequate

resources, our ability to foster growth, inclusivity, and excellence in Cycling and the broader sport sector in Wales is significantly compromised.

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

We have redone our strategy recently knowing the challenges and so have taken an approach to be smarter and be more empowering to work through and with others in the sector to consolidated and collaborate resources. We have reorganised the staffing structure, we are now a far leaner team and made 3 redundancies and also gone through all of our operational costs and made reductions where we can.

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)?

We have lost experienced staff due to the future concerns of job security and looking elsewhere out of the sector. We will lose talented young people who wont have access to development and talent programmes.

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

We must foster greater collaboration and make better use of shared services across various sectors. By aligning our efforts, we can achieve more—such as through partnerships where Welsh Tourism invests in or supports sport and physical activity. Our strategy, Wales: Made for Bikes, recognises the significant impact cycling has on the Welsh economy. Cycling contributes not only to health and fitness but also drives tourism, supports local trails, and utilises our natural resources. To fully realise these benefits, it's crucial that we strengthen our collaborative efforts across all relevant sectors.

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

Massively as we will not be able to take programmes across the whole pathway out to communities, we will be limited to run things centrally and therefore limiting access to opportunities in hard to reach areas. We want to take safe

cycling facilities to the communities that need pump tracks and safe cycle routes but we need the people to support delivery at these new venues, so along with capital funding we need revenue to get great coaches out to engage these communities who need support.

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

We need to recognise the importance of investment in sport and physical activity and the benefits that come with what we all do. Cycling is a skill for life, it showcases Wales on the world stage, Emma Finucane started on her bike in Carmarthen came through the Welsh talent pathway and is now the most successful Paris Olympian who has inspired hundreds of girls and boys to get on their bikes already all because of Welsh Government support!