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<https://yorkshirenetball.net/yorkshire-netball/documents>

1. Chairs report

Welcome to the Yorkshire Netball report for the 2023/2024 Season. It represents the enormous amount of netball activity that continues to happen across the Region, led by volunteers across our clubs, communities and committees and I continue to be in awe of the time committed by you all to make netball happen.

2023 was another year of change for Yorkshire Netball but also with opportunity to kick on and build more and better infrastructure and relationships across the Region. Some highlights to share:

- Holding our first networking day with our key partners including County Associations, England Netball and Leeds Rhinos; more follow up to come by the end of the year.
- Migrating our documents, communication channels and ways of working to Microsoft 365.
- Launching our new website and social media refresh to connect better with our volunteers and partners.
- Another bumper year of senior and junior competition.
- New board members recruited.
- A fantastic ONE Awards celebrated with Leeds Rhinos Netball.

And so much more that is shared in our technical lead reports in this document.

I'd like to end my introduction with a thank you but also what is a good bye.

As I have already announced, this will be my last AGM before I start the handover to our new chair as I take on new opportunities in netball. Being the Yorkshire Netball Chair has genuinely been a role in netball I will never forget. I have had the privilege of working with a dedicated and passionate management board, meet our fantastic volunteers and work with England Netball on national projects.

Thank you to all of you for your support and challenge, it has been a privilege to fulfil this role and represent our membership, and I wish the new chair and the board all the best for the future.

Sian Foley
Yorkshire Netball Chair
Chair@yorkshirenetsball.net

2. Governance and finance report

Governance Code

We have committed a lot of time to ensuring that we are compliant with the Tier 1 code for sports governance. This is a requirement for all Region and County Associations.

With just a very small number of actions to complete we are close to compliance sign off; this is a credit to the whole board who have worked towards this.

AGM

We are pleased to be back in our normal timescales for the AGM. We chose to deliver online only this year following the IT struggles we found during the previous AGM. We will continue to collate feedback to make sure that the AGM remains accessible to as many people as possible.

Key things to note:

The AGM will present a change of membership fees for the 2025/26 season.

We will be looking to appoint our new chair.

There have been no amendments to the constitution received.

Budgets and Finance

This year all our financial and reporting procedures have been reviewed; bringing with it more robust sign off, reporting and processing for all financial operations. We would like to thank our Finance Lead, Louise Dunsford for her innovation, passion and determination to bring about these significant improvements.

Our full financial report can be found with the AGM documents.

We have this year made a recommendation to increase adult membership fees by 0.20p from the 2025/2026 season. This increase follows a four year period of zero increases. The rationale for the increase was following the high level of applications made into our bursary pot; this highlighted a need for us to invest more back into the region; this small increase per person will allow us to provide more through our annual bursary programme in the future.

IT and processes

We have introduced Microsoft teams access for all our RMB members; including email accounts for all RMB members. This has helped us to continue our efforts to be a professional body and allows us to be more effective with our time, collaborate better and meet the Tier 1 Code for Sports Governance.

Jade Gerrard

Vice Chair/Governance Lead

Vicechair@yorkshirenetball.net

3. Safeguarding report

Safeguarding continues to be a priority for the board. Whilst the Safeguarding lead role remains vacant, we are positive a strong successful candidate will be confirmed in the next month.

Although the role has been vacant there has been no gap in coverage; with Sian, chair of the board taking on this role as interim. We continue to work with and support England Netball with any cases within the Yorkshire region.

At our recent Yorkshire Development day; we spent time working with and discussing safeguarding as a key topic with our partners. From this day; we are building an action plan for safeguarding around how we can improve safeguarding messages and the culture around safeguarding across Yorkshire. We must continue to react to any safeguarding concerns; but we look to resource ways in which we can prevent these cases, being proactive across the region to support education, resources and awareness. This will be the focus for the new Safeguarding Lead.

safeguarding@yorkshirenetball.net

4. Marketing and Communications report General Update

The Marketing and Communications working group was set up to enhance communication between the Regional Management Board and the region. The group has made significant progress against the priorities set out at the last AGM despite a reduction in membership, from 6 to 3 members. It has been operating for the last of couple of months without a lead however recruitment for the role is currently underway. It is the intention that a lead will be in place for 2025.

Communities and audiences – A key area for attention is the ability to broaden our reach by ensuring our communities and audiences are optimised. This is crucial for us to ensure we can share the right information to the right people at the right times.

Build following on our social platforms

- Social media content has been created and published for a range of topics during the year including:
 - Celebrating newly qualified umpires in the region
 - Promotion of 5x 50th anniversary tournaments delivered by EN
 - Encouragement to renew EN membership
 - Regional qualifying tournament results
 - Bursary scheme
- Engaging regularly with followers by liking and commenting on different clubs posts and reposting to our stories etc
- A YouTube channel has been set up to host video content that can then be viewed on the website. The YN50 video has been added to the website.
- A LinkedIn account has been created to support RMB recruitment by advertising RMB roles.
- Audience reach across our social media platforms at 5 November 2024:
 - Instagram followers: 854 (compared to 762 in September)
 - Twitter followers: 2.2K (compared to 2.1K in September)
 - Facebook followers: 3.1K (compared to 3.2K in September)
 - LinkedIn followers: 18 (since the page was created on 8 October 2024)

Share relevant content which is already available from sources such as England Netball

- As part of our social media approach, we have shared content during the year, where appropriate, from Leeds Rhinos and England Netball. This includes:
 - Netball 2024 rule changes

- Good luck messages for the EN National ONE Awards

Ensure our website is easy to find and information is curated in a user-friendly way. Invest in search engine optimisation to drive up website traffic and ensure users are presented with useful results based on their search criteria.

- A new Yorkshire Netball website (yorkshirenetball.net) has been built which brings together everything you need to know about Netball across the Yorkshire region. The new platform features greater functionality and includes information on:
 - Yorkshire Netball and the Regional Management Board
 - Policies and procedures
 - Agenda and minutes for regional board meetings and AGMs
 - Coaching, officiating and volunteering
 - Competitions – juniors and seniors
- News stories on the website are updated in conjunction with social media outputs. The website enables us to send our audience to detailed information that's too long for social media posts. This is driving traffic to the website.
- Since the launch of the website on 1 June 2024, there have been approx. 2,700 unique visitors to the website and 8,400 page views. (Google Analytics reporting has been set up to collect data from the website and provide insights into our activities.) The most popular content has been:
 - The Bursary Scheme announcement
 - Competitions
 - Rule changes
 - Volunteering

Membership ask

- Achieving our goal of becoming a more connected region, requires us to be member led, which in turn means we need to hear from our membership, and we need to be able to contact them. In order for us to do this, we need members to;
 - Follow us on social media channels (Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn)
 - Tag us in social media posts
 - Ensure email addresses are up to date on Engage
 - Review marketing preferences on ENgage to reflect how you are happy to be contacted
- Please note that as of Sunday 1 December 2024, Yorkshire Netball will no longer be using the platform X. We would like to encourage you to follow us on all of our other social platforms before we make our departure.

Facebook: Yorkshire Netball

Instagram: [@yorkshirenetball](https://www.instagram.com/yorkshirenetball)

LinkedIn: Yorkshire Netball
YouTube: [@YorkshireNetball](#)

Brand – Yorkshire Netball is going through a period of change whereby we will have a refreshed and renewed focus on connecting with our membership. As such, we are keen to ensure the brand is reflective of this and represents a new era of Yorkshire Netball.

Redesign of the Yorkshire Netball logo and colour palette to reflect who we are and what we are trying to achieve. Documentation of the brand guidelines, including when Yorkshire Netball branding and England Netball branding should be used and a consistent tone of voice.

- A brand book was developed in Spring 2024 to describe the new look of Yorkshire Netball's brand's identity, including logo, colours and fonts. This has been applied to the new website, marketing materials and social media platforms.

An engagement event to launch the new branding and meet existing and prospective members

- The Marketing and Communications lead liaised with Leeds Rhinos to secure a presence for Yorkshire Netball at the First Direct Arena game in April. This involved a stand on the concourse, facilitating conversation with members and increased the profile of Yorkshire Netball within the region.

Membership ask

- To support the refreshed brand, the Yorkshire Netball website and email addresses now use a yorkshirennetball.net format. Please use marketing@yorkshirennetball.net instead of ynmarketingandcomms@gmail.com for marketing and communication enquiries.

Content creation – Once we have established a network, we can then build a content runway to share useful information, drive up engagement and provide platforms for connection across the region.

Creating a feedback loop with the membership on what they want to see and hear about and whether it's hitting the mark

- The Marketing and Communications group have spent several months trying to gain access to Engage so that we can send email communications to our membership. Working with EN, we have tried several methods to obtain access however its so far been unsuccessful. Emails can be sent by EN and we encourage members to ensure email addresses and marketing preferences are up to date on Engage, to reflect that you are happy to be contacted.
- We monitor and respond to direct messages and email enquiries. We measure the impact of our social media posts to identify what content is resonating with our audiences. And more importantly, we listen when we're out on the Netball courts to what matters to people.

Creating a runway of events to celebrate Yorkshire Netball turning 50

- Resources limited the volume and scale of activities that could be delivered during the year however a [YN50 anniversary video](#) was created to celebrate Netball in the region. This was launched at the regional ONE Awards and it's also available on the Yorkshire Netball website.
- Congratulations to the following organisations/clubs celebrating their 50th anniversary:
 - West Yorkshire County Netball
 - Shipley Swifts
 - Sheffield Concord

Sherburn NC are celebrating their 20th anniversary.

- We used social media to promote 5x 50th anniversary tournaments delivered by EN

Monthly 'hot topics' or focus areas, utilising and promoting resources in the region

- This has not been developed due to changes in the members of the working group and changing priorities for Regional Board Members. Once the new Marketing and Communications lead has been recruited, this priority will be reassessed.

Create a wide-reaching email distribution list

- Due to the challenges of accessing Engage to send emails, as mentioned earlier in the report, progress on developing a quarterly email newsletter has been limited. The Marketing and Communications group have recently started collecting email addresses for key contacts in the region so that updates can be shared wider in the future.

Membership ask

- If you wish to be added to our email distribution list please send your email address to marketing@yorkshirenetball.net

marketing@yorkshirenetball.net

5. Competitions and Officiating report

This role is currently vacant and a full report will be made available in due course.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who gives their time up to provide competition across our region. Our last season of competitions has continued to grow from strength the strength; with countless volunteer hours spent supporting our competitions, clubs, officials and athletes. We thank everyone who contributes to this.

We would also like to thank Jayne Field, for her time, energy, dedication and commitment within her role on the RMB. Thankfully Jayne will continue to support our working group and the new RMB. We look to close recruitment in the coming weeks.

ADDITION:

Competition & Officiating

Aims & Objectives of Regional Competition

Seniors – Within 5 years (end of 2026 season) an increase of 4 teams from Yorkshire region to be participating in the England Netball Premier League (currently only 1 team is involved in this level of competition)

Juniors – Those Clubs from the region put forward to National Club Finals (under 14 & U16's) can challenge for a top 8 placing (18 teams in each age group, 2 per region)

Competition

In September 2023 Yorkshire Netball reset the regional competition, with clearly defined requirements and purpose of the league. The entry tournament was held at University of York University with 22 teams taking part. From these two (2) new divisions were formed. The season saw some fantastic games with final placings in the YN Premier League coming down to the final weeks of the season, DNC Netball finished in first spot and were the team from our region to go forward to England Netball Premier League, Division 3 playoffs held at the EIS. Whilst they didn't achieve a place in the EN competition, they and others go again in the 2024/25 season.

Our League One competition was equally as competitive with the changes seeing teams play each other more frequently through the season, and with clubs keen to gain the promotion to the premier league and secure their place in the 2024/25. From the season – Shipley Swifts were promoted to the top division. Clubs finishing 6 – 10th go forward to the competition playoff tournament where they will be joined by clubs from across the region looking to gain/retain their place in the 2024/25 competition. The playoff's took place in June 2024 at University of York

During 2023/24 the working group developed and consulted with county chairs and clubs on the proposed changed to the Junior League Competition Structure that would support and enable players and clubs to compete on a national front and see the region better placed to achieve its objectives.

Under 14's – Leeds Athletic and DNC Netball went through to National Club Finals, with DNC finishing 12th and Leeds Athletic crowned National Champions!!

Under 16's – Leeds Athletic and Chevrons went through to National Club Finals, finishing 9th and 16th respectively

The working group continued to offer clubs across the Yorkshire Region opportunity to access regional competition (by way of tournaments), to support player playing development and an opportunity for clubs to play teams and players from outside of own county. Age group offered included, U12 / U14 / U16, with feedback from some clubs and coaches positive and we will continue to offer competition (to non-regional league teams) going forward, looking at and building on demand on other age groups and types of competition such as U19's which is one raised by a number of clubs.

Another of the regional core deliverables is the regional round of the National Schools Competition. The competition is held at the EIS, Sheffield on a date set by England Netball. 24 teams across the 3 age groups take part over the 2 days. Schools Finishing 1st and 2nd in each age group go forward to England Netball National School Finals

Under 14's – Woodhouse Grove School and Silverdale School went to Finals, finishing 6th & 7th respectively

Under 16's – Wakefield Girls HS and Queen Ethelburga's went to Finals, finishing joint 6th

Under 19's – Woodhouse Grove and Wyke College went to Finals, finishing 8th and 9th respectively

Focus for the 24/25 season

- Implement the new Junior league Competition Structure.
- Embed the off-court requirements (around team bench officials, best practice etc)
- Continue to deliver core regional competition (senior league, junior league and national schools).
- Evolve further non regional competition offering by way of tournaments
- Deliver senior regional league play off tournament (June 2025).
- Continue to support the regional volunteer recruitment programme.
- Creation and publication of regional events calendar.
- Look to maxim opportunities with members and our Super league Franchise Leeds Rhinos at regional events.

Officiating

Officiating Yorkshire Netball is serviced by a dedicated group of volunteers who officiate at games and tournaments across the region as well as assessors, tutors, and mentors.

During 2023/24, Yorkshire Netball had officials involved in

- Netball Super league
- NPL
- Premier League
- Regional and county level of competition

As a region, Yorkshire is responsible for the administration of the B Umpire award assessments as well as providing umpires for National Schools regional round and identifying umpires that are C-B umpires (identified by an appropriate qualified EN assessor) to umpire in Regional Junior League Competition to support their development and access to regional competition.

The region also has a group of individuals who are qualified match bench officials, involved with Super league, International and World Netball Activities!

The region has an identified number of tournaments where it looks to appoint the umpires,

- Regional Junior League Entry Tournament
- Regional Senior League Playoff's
- Under 12 Festival
- Regional Round of National Schools Umpires

Priorities for 2024/25

- Support umpires and county umpiring leads with the 2024 rules of the games
- Development and access to regional tournaments for those identified C – B umpires.
- Access to mentors for umpires officiating at regional tournaments (in line with the EN mentoring programme)
- Organisation of B award assessments
- Work with England Netball to bring on board new B award Assessors
- Work with England Netball to organise B award courses in the Yorkshire Region for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 season to ensure a pipeline of opportunities.
- Develop CPD opportunities for Umpire Assessors and Mentors.

6. Insight report

We have continued to gather insight across all our projects and have linked our insight work through all our working groups. Creating a culture within our team of insight driven action.

It has been fantastic to see all our team members utilising the feedback and insight collated this year; and our 2023 research when developing new projects. We continue to work with our stakeholders to gather insight, a thank you to all the counties within the region who have also been supporting this work.

Some areas where insight has been key and guided delivery are below:

- Insight from our counties focus groups have fed into decision making for the RMB around finance, competition and EDI. This also informed the points of discussion within our Yorkshire Netball planning day which involved our key partners.
- Insight has highlighted where we need to focus our energy to create a more inclusive region; this led us to access additional training to upskill our team to help us tackle these focus areas effectively.
- Our new bursary scheme was developed based on insight we have gathered around the impact of the cost of living crisis within the country; we have also learnt a lot through the recent round of applications which will inform the bursary process for next year.
- Through our bursary feedback we heard that there were a number of common themes that were of financial concern to our members. This insight will help us plan some tailored support for our clubs and players moving forwards.

Area of future insight:

- We have learnt where we need to focus our insight needs and energy and will be working closely across People, Facilities, EDI and EN around deep dives on areas of concern and for growth.
- We have collaborated with regional universities (York St John and Hull) on future PhD projects (out to advert) regarding areas of concern and for growth; bringing in expertise to help us learn more than we could independently.
- We have plans for a survey to go out to members on a two year basis to be complimentary to the EN insights survey schedule.

Sarah Howard

Insight Lead

Insight@yorkshirenetball.net

7. EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) report

Where are we now;

- Phase one/pilot of bursary scheme has been completed. The aim of the bursary was to help reduce inequalities within the sport, support the cost-of-living crisis and provide funds to deliver EDI based projects across the region. A significant amount of investment allocated to projects with an EDI focus within the bursary process; and others have been signposted to other funding opportunities and the local EN team.
- Due to the volume of applications we increased our funding allocation to phase one of the bursary scheme.
- We have delivered EDI training to our board members to upskill and engage our whole board in EDI; we are developing a culture whereby inclusion is considered by all and it becomes an intrinsic part of how we operate.
- Our EDI lead continues to represent us within EN forums around EDI, and takes allyship within the sector to ensure that the RMB are viewed as an inclusive region.

Where we want to be:

- EDI should permeate all our work areas and be front and centre of all we do. A culture we can be proud of; that is visibly inclusive.
- The board will establish how EDI is considered/sits in each individual work areas and make it a priority.
- Building on the insight we have from the county focus groups and social media campaign on belonging. Our first task is facilitate the education of our region around what EDI and Belonging (EDI&B) is.
- We hope to establish a regional EDI&B network across the region to help us activate projects, amplify messaging and share best practice.
- To facilitate a regional EDI&B consensus statement to show our commitment to EDI&B.
- Conduct a training and development needs analysis of the regional workforce with regards to EDI&B.

We are building the foundations of the culture we wish to see within the region with regards to EDI and it's been incredible to see so much positive movement within this area. There are so many examples of best practice across the region; with dedicated volunteers ensuring that Netball in Yorkshire is a space for anyone. This is by no means perfect, but we are committed to continuing to be active allies and supporting inclusive practises across the region.

Louise Morby

EDI Lead

EDI@yorkshirenetball.net