

#FELMERCH

Evaluation of the
#FelMerch National Conference
05 & 06 March 2022



Background

#FelMerch is a project by the Urdd Sports Department, supported by Sport Wales, which has been established specifically to inspire, support, and empower young women and girls to keep active and break down the barriers that prevent women and girls from participating in sport.

Inspire . Support . Empower

This two-day #FelMerch National Conference was Wales' first-ever female youth sports conference which provided opportunities for women and girls to come together to be inspired and empowered. It was hosted by the ultra-marathon trailblazing runner and TV presenter Lowri Morgan. Gemma Grainger, Wales Women's National football team manager, and four-time Paralympian Hollie Arnold MBE were our headline speakers. We were also in the esteemed presence of specialists in their fields delivering a variety of workshops around health and wellbeing, body image, healthy eating, disability sport, equality, resilience and much more.

“All young women deserve the same opportunities and that’s why I’m delighted to be part of the first-ever young women’s sport conference in Wales, #FelMerch, helping to inspire, empower and provide opportunities to help young people women and girls to realize their full potential and achieve their goals”

Hollie Arnold MBE



Content of the Conference

Over the weekend we provided travel, accommodation and food for 140 young women and girls 14 – 25 years old from all over Wales to enjoy the company of experts in their fields to inspire, support and empower.

Saturday 05 March 2022

Sian Lewis

Chief Executive of Urdd Gobaith Cymru

Dawn Bowden AS

Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip

Lowri Morgan

Endurance adventurer & Athlete

Laura McAllister

Professor of Public Policy and former Welsh football captain

Natasha Harding

Professional footballer for Wales and Reading

Francesca Antoniazzi

Basketball player for Cardiff Met Archers in the British Women's Premier League

Nia Fajeyisan

#FelMerch Ambassador

Ali Abdi

Community Gateway Partnerships Manager

Catrin Ahmun

Fitness and Wellbeing Specialist

Sunday 06 March 2022

Lowri Morgan

Endurance adventurer & Athlete

Mah Zai Kakar

Influential female speaker and refugee from Afghanistan

Hollie Arnold MBE

Gemma Grainger

Wales Women's National Team Manager

Elinor Snowsill

#FelMerch National Ambassador, Professional Rugby Player for Wales & Bristol Bears

Gwennan Harries

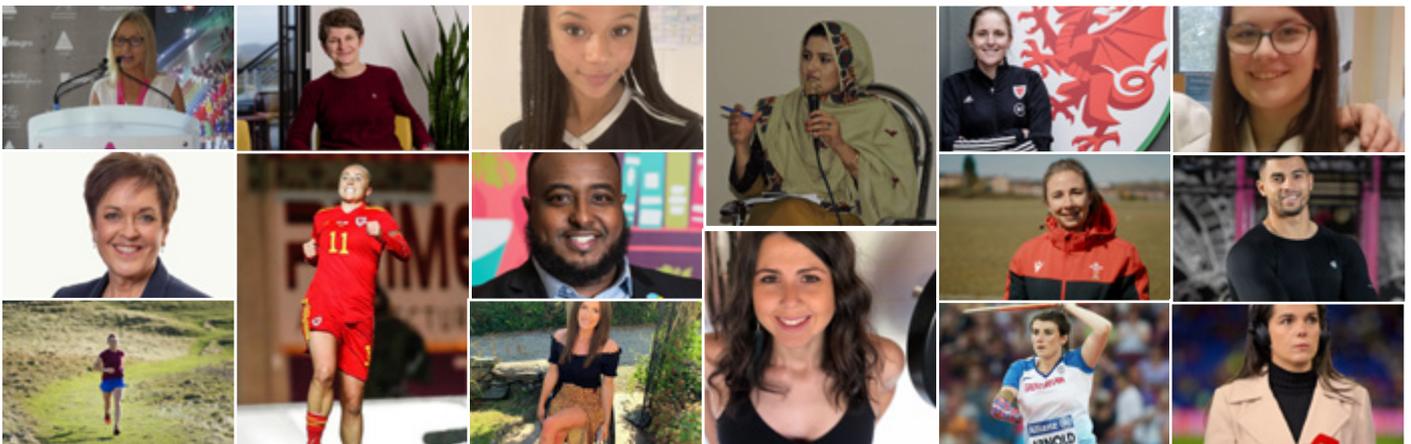
Sports commentator and former Welsh football striker

Deryn-Bach Allen-Dyer

#FelMerch Ambassador

Connagh Howard

Presenter and Fitness Instructor



“The wider #FelMerch initiative is vitally important in growing girls’ participation and offering more opportunities in all sports across Wales.

“I have been fortunate enough to see the success of #FelMerch first-hand at the Urdd Centre in Llangrannog, and the Urdd’s support in organising fan buses to our Cymru matches.

“I am excited to see how #FelMerch will continue to develop in the future.”

Gemma Grainger, Wales Women's National Team Manager

“The diversity of guest speakers was amazing throughout the weekend, fantastic workshops, and an opportunity to socialise once again with new people after COVID”

Feedback from one of the attendees

Workshops

Various workshops were delivered throughout the weekend led by professionals in their fields to provide the young women and girls with information and understanding, but also to inspire around topics relating to health and well-being, body image, healthy eating, disability sport, equality, resilience and much more.



Catrin Ahmun: Self Care | Beca Lyne-Pirkis: Healthy Eating | Urdd Gobaith Cymru: Volunteering | Disability Sport Wales | Dyddgu Hywel: Health and Well-being | Mari-Wyn Elias-Jones: Yoga & Pilates | Sophie Davis: Media in sport

Information Stands

Working with national and local partners is important to the success of #FelMerch. We invited 11 partners to the conference to showcase all the fantastic opportunities that are available to young women and girls in their local areas to become active and part of wider opportunities such as volunteering and coaching.



Making the Difference

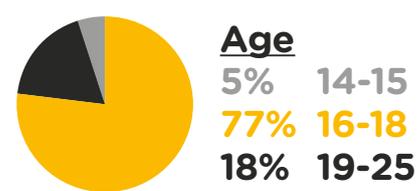
140 140 young women and girls inspired, supported and empowered

94% Representation from 94% of the 16 Urdd regions

11 11 partners showcasing the opportunities available to young women and girls

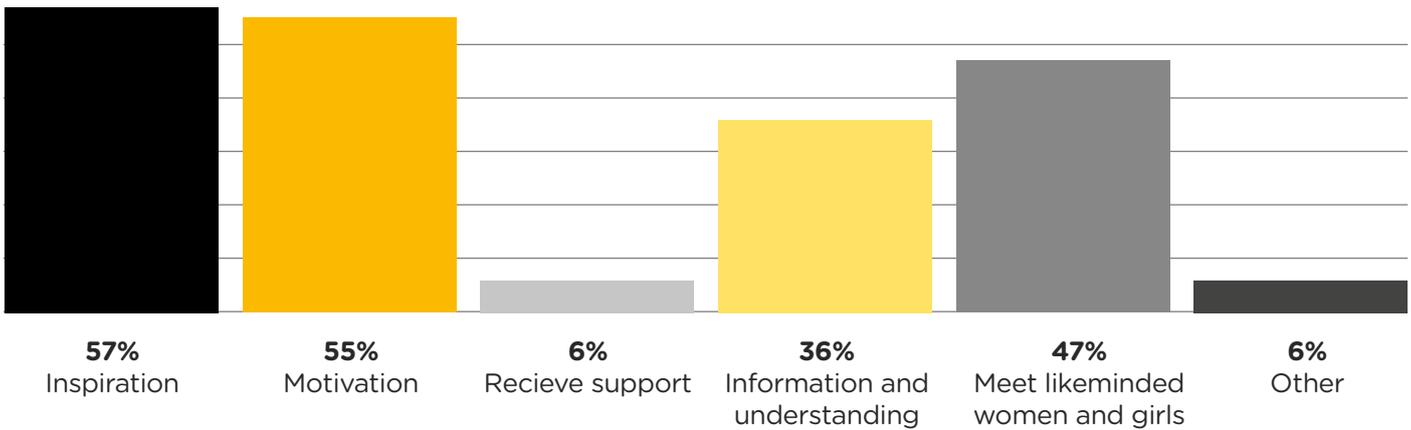
21% 21% of the attendees were Welsh language learners

37 37 new #FelMerch volunteers were recruited

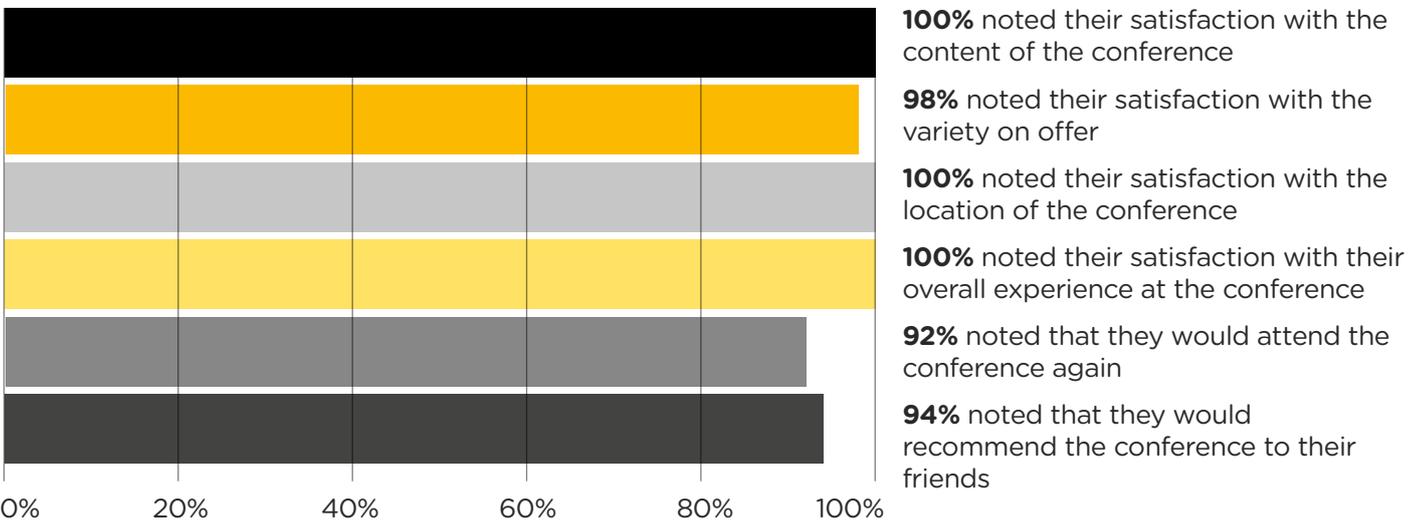




Key reasons behind attending the #FelMerch conference



Summary



Reaching The Audience

In order to reach the target audience we adopted a marketing strategy which included a series of messages across the social media pages of Urdd Gobaith Cymru and the Urdd Sports Department. As well as this, we held a series of face to face presentations in schools, colleges, universities and communities around Wales.

The conference also drew significant press interest which included: BBC Radio Cymru, S4C, ITV Wales, Wales Today, Golwg, Heart Wales, Ffit Cymru and much more.

Social Reach



Facebook

Impressions = **31,455**
Response = **1,213**
Watched Videos = **2,964**



Twitter

Impressions = **145,319**
Response = **3,749**
Watched Videos = **1,855**



Instagram

Impressions = **39,906**
Response = **248**
Watched Videos = **356**

Highlights

Discover highlights from the #FelMerch National Conference at www.urdd.cymru/FMHighlights





Actions From the Conference

As a result of the National #FelMerch Conference, the #FelMerch project commits to continuing to break down the barriers by ensuring the following actions locally and nationally;

- Develop and establish 12 regional #FelMerch hubs across Wales
- Continue to develop and establish #FelMerch provision during the holidays
- Continue and grow the Regional and National Forums
- Ensure #FelMerch Ambassador representation on the Urdd Sport and Apprenticeships Board in order to ensure a voice for young women and girls in Wales whilst developing strategies
- Provide volunteering pathways including a programme of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for young women and girls
- Continue to recruit #FelMerch ambassadors to ensure attainment in all Urdd regions across Wales
- Engage more partners locally and nationally to the #FelMerch programme
- Engage young women and girls in raising awareness of #FelMerch at events i.e. trips to Welsh women's international games across a range of sports

Future of the Conference

Following the huge success of Wales' first female youth sports conference; National #FelMerch Conference, discussions have begun to hold this conference as an annual event for the women and girls of Wales on a bigger and better scale. To ensure success we will;

- Increase the number of spaces available to reach a greater target audience
- Offer access on a day-by-day basis to reach a more local audience and different demographics e.g. young mothers
- Use of local sports facilities to offer more practical workshops
- Form the content of the conference in consultation with young women and girls nationally
- Ensure that there are no barriers for young women and girls to attend the #FelMerch conference based on language

“It always seems impossible until it's done. There is always a way around this, even if you have to ask for help, help is not weakness.”

Francesca Antoniazzi

Basketball player for Cardiff Met Archers in the British Women's Premier League

“The conference was great and a lot of fun. The topics discussed were extremely interesting. The whole weekend was brilliantly coordinated, and it was an unforgettable experience.”

“The weekend as a whole was amazing. Plenty of variety, well presented, and very inspiring.”

“It was a thrilling weekend that was extremely well organised.”

“The guest speakers were very empowering and showed me that I can start now, and it is not too late.”

“The information stands provided ways to move forward and the opportunity to join clubs in our areas.”



With thanks to our sponsors and partners

Main Sponsors and Partners

**Welsh Government, Winter of Wellbeing,
Sport Wales**

Partners

**Aberystwyth University, Cardiff City FC
Foundation, Cricket Wales, Ctrl Alt Design
Ltd, Disability Sport Wales, Dragons, FAW
Trust, Just Perfect, Orchard, Outdoor
Partnership Wales, Street Games, Tiny
Welsh Media, Urdd Apprenticeship
Department, Urdd Residential Centre
Cardiff, Welsh Athletics, Youth Sport Trust.**



FelMerch@urdd.org
www.urdd.cymru/FelMerch