

**swim  
ULSTER**



Ulster Water Polo  
Development Plan  
2022/25



**sport**  
Northern Ireland

**SWIM  
IRELAND**

## Vision

*"Our vision is for water polo to be a growing vibrant sport in ulster, played by young people and adults competing in a wide range of well organised, enjoyable events overseen by strong Swim Ulster & Club governance models"*



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## Introduction

Our Ulster Water Polo 2022/25 Development Plan follows on from our very successful 2017/21 plan which, despite the impact of Covid-19 restrictions, we were substantially able to deliver prior to implementation of the most severe restrictions.

Our new Development plan is very ambitious and when delivered, will undoubtedly advance water polo in Ulster to a new level of growth. Indeed 'Growth' is an obvious theme within our key objectives in terms of increasing participation through an advanced Competition Programme, a formalisation of Ulster Squads and associated development pathways, Schools partnership projects, embracing new Pool facilities, further development of Education opportunities and an aspiration to develop water polo in the West of Ulster

Undoubtedly the Pandemic has had a serious impact upon our sport however there are positive signs that we are beginning to emerge from Covid-19 restrictions; we are optimistic for the future of water polo in Ulster, and we look forward to delivering on the challenges presented within this 2022/25 Development Plan.

I would like to thank everyone involved at Swim Ulster, Swim Ireland, SportNI and particularly those from within our Ulster water polo Clubs who helped deliver our 2017/21 Plan. Our work to date has provided us with a stable platform from which we can further develop water polo in Ulster and despite the obvious challenges, we must grasp the opportunity signposted by this Development Plan and strive to ensure the future growth of our sport.



Jane Reilly

Chairperson - Ulster  
Water Polo  
Committee

## Where we were.... Pre-Covid!

### Swim Ulster Clubs

Bangor Barracuda's Water Polo Club  
Cathal Brugha Swimming & Water Polo Club  
Clonard Water Polo Club  
Cú Chulainn Water Polo Club  
Diamonds Water Polo Club  
Lisburn City Swimming Club  
Newry & Mourne Swimming Club  
Portadown Amateur Swimming Club

### Qualified Officials (Pre-Covid)

Table Officials: 17 (not all active)  
Referees: 23 (not all active)

### Education

*(no new Coaches/Officials fully qualified during Covid)*

Referee Courses  
New Rules Seminars  
Table Officials Courses  
Water Polo Level 1 Coaching  
Water Polo Level 2 Coaching  
Water Polo Level 3 Tutor  
Safeguarding  
Team Manager

### Swim Ireland Registered Players (Pre-Covid)

Junior Players: 306  
Adult Players: 205

### Competitions Pre-Covid

Junior Blitz Competitions  
Schools League & Canada Trophy  
National League & Cups  
Club Organised Tournaments  
Inter-Provincial Tournament

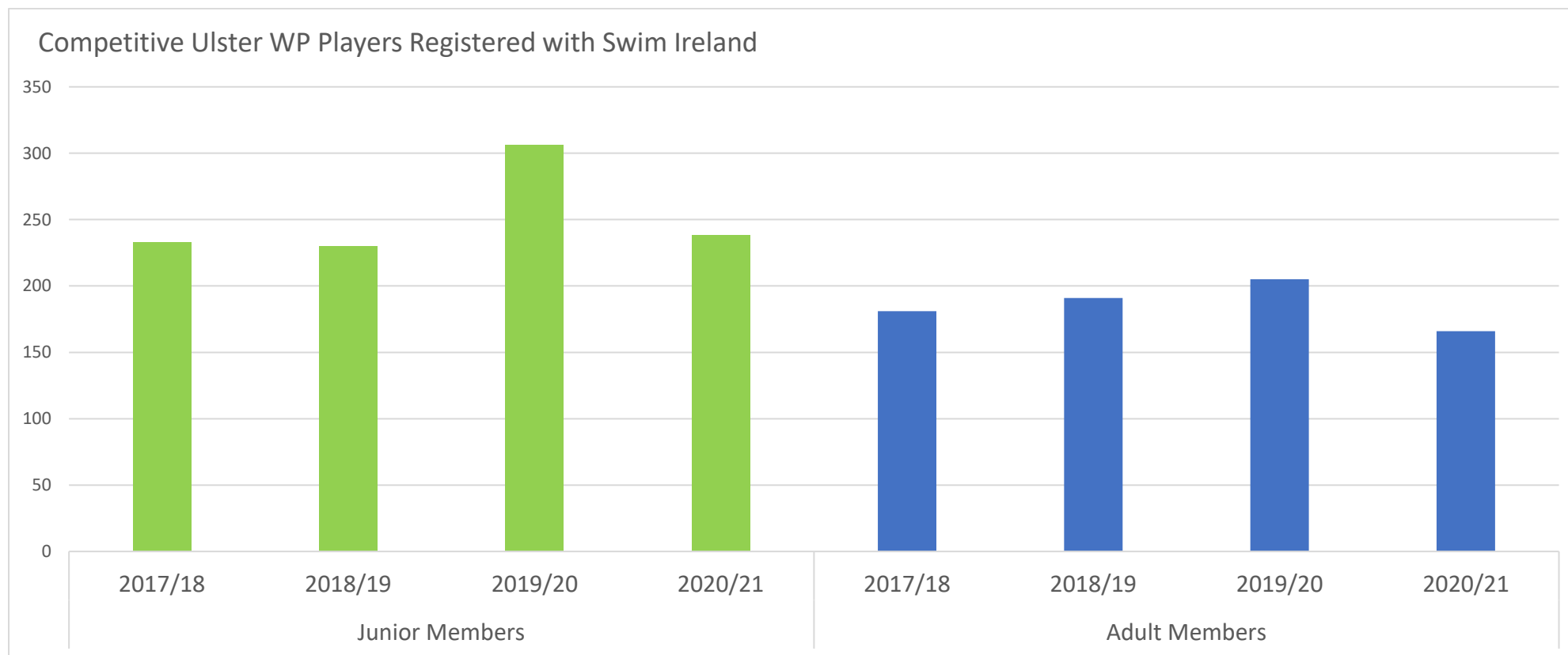
### Clubmark Registered

Bangor Barracuda's Water Polo Club  
Cathal Brugha Swimming & Water Polo Club  
Clonard Water Polo Club  
Diamonds Water Polo Club  
Lisburn City Swimming Club  
Newry & Mourne Swimming Club  
Portadown Amateur Swimming Club



## Participation.... work to be done!

Over this past year, there has been a significant fall off in water polo player registrations from Ulster Clubs, mainly due to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions. Water Polo was one of the first sports to feel the impact of Covid-19 restrictions and, as an indoor activity, we were one of the last sports to be permitted to return to operation following an easement of restrictions. Substantial credit must be given to our Club Committees, Coaches, Parents and Volunteers who worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to ensure Clubs remained ready to bounce back at the first sign of restrictions recovery, and we extend our appreciation to Swim Ulster, Swim Ireland and SportNI for standing by us during some very difficult times.



## Player Pathways.... a development journey!

Our Player Pathway provides opportunities for water polo player development from FUNdamentals sessions targeted at young players from around 5yrs old, right through Junior and Senior levels to Masters level.... a lifelong participation and development pathway for players involved in our sport.



Diagram:  
Player Pathway

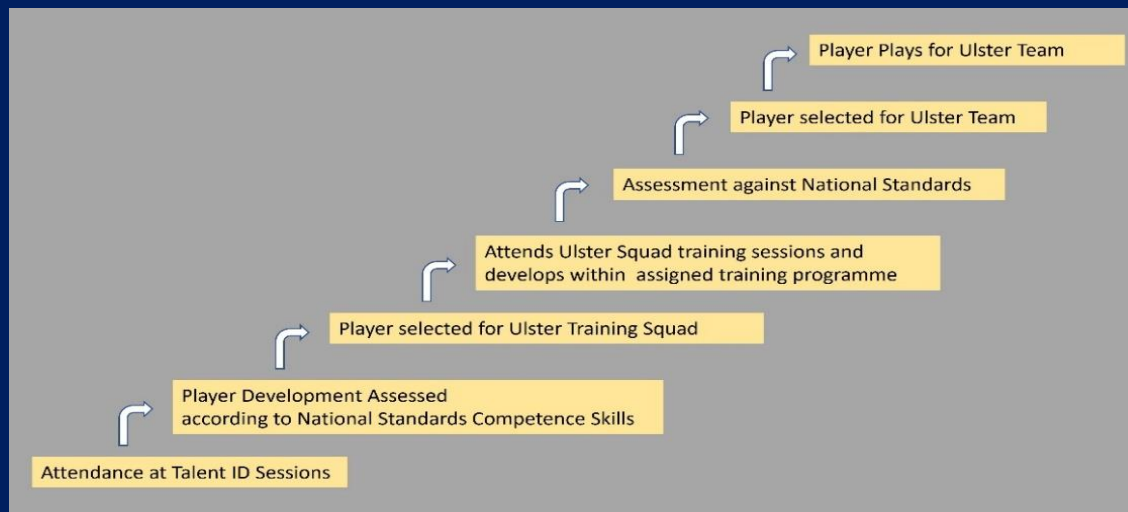


Diagram:  
Ulster Team Player  
Pathway

## Strategic Pillars, Objectives & Targets.... what we will do!

Leadership & People	Education & Training	Participation	Develop & Compete
<i>The Swim Ulster Water Polo Committee will lead and serve development of water polo in Ulster</i>	<i>Promote the development &amp; training of everyone involved in Ulster water polo</i>	<i>Actively promote and provide opportunities to increase water polo participation in Ulster</i>	<i>Build capacity &amp; performance through supporting the development of individuals and their Clubs</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Address negative impact of Covid-19</li> <li>2. Provide positive leadership at regional level</li> <li>3. Be represented at and contribute positively to National Water Polo Committee business</li> <li>4. Positively promote the importance of Mental Health amongst athletes and volunteers</li> <li>5. Recognise &amp; reward volunteer contributions</li> <li>6. Support and assist development of Club Committees</li> <li>7. Support &amp; advise Clubs on planning and delivery of water polo activities</li> <li>8. Work with pool providers to develop water polo participation, competition, and education</li> <li>9. Support Club funding application bids</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Hosting practical modules for water polo Coaching Courses at Ulster venues</li> <li>11. Pursue development of an entry level qualification such as 'Poolside Assistant' or 'Level 0'</li> <li>12. Support and encourage Clubs to nominate members to SI Courses</li> <li>13. Host learning sessions for young players within areas such as water polo rules, injury avoidance and codes of conduct.</li> <li>14. Embrace learning opportunities provided at Swim Ulster Coaching Conference and other similar opportunities</li> <li>15. Facilitate and deliver a range of CPD programmes via Swim Ireland Education</li> <li>16. Learn from development best practice both inside and outside of Ireland</li> <li>17. Work with SI to build a sustainable WP Education Programme for UWP</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18. Retain Players by offering a programme of high-quality competition at all ages</li> <li>19. Support Club development of a FUNdamentals programme within Clubs</li> <li>20. Recognition of Volunteer contributions</li> <li>21. Support WP development partnerships with Swimming Clubs, Schools, Scouts or similar organisations</li> <li>22. Look for opportunities to deliver new participation events</li> <li>23. Work with Pool Operators to support water polo development at new venues</li> <li>24. Develop water polo in the west of Ulster through projects involving Schools, Swimming Clubs and Pool Providers (subject to available resources)</li> <li>25. Organise a Masters water polo event in Ulster</li> <li>26. Work with Pool Operators to develop and deliver projects designed to support Club development and to increase WP participation</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>27. Supporting Inter-Regionals as they are a key development milestone</li> <li>28. Host Provincial, National &amp; International Competitions</li> <li>29. Create &amp; deliver an annual programme of Ulster competitions</li> <li>30. Promote a Club Session Blitz circuit for U9's &amp; U11's involving all Ulster Clubs</li> <li>31. Further Develop relationship with Schools by Supporting Schools established competitions and developing new Schools events</li> <li>32. Provide participation opportunities throughout the Player Pathway</li> <li>33. Deliver Talent ID sessions, as part of Ulster Squad Pathway</li> <li>34. Deliver Skills Learning compliant with National Standards &amp; Competencies</li> <li>35. Develop the 'Ulster Squad' concept and appoint Head Coaches for both Boys &amp; Girls Ulster Squads</li> <li>36. Invite 'Guest' Coaches/Speakers to Camps, Conferences &amp; other learning opportunities</li> </ol>

## People...out of the water!

To make our sport happen and to help us meet the challenging objectives and targets identified within this plan, we must ensure development and learning opportunities are available to everyone within water polo and here are some examples of learning and progression opportunities available to our Coaches, Referees, Table Officials and Club Committees. Swim Ulster Water Polo will provide the local organisation to facilitate delivery of the opportunities identified within the table below:

### Pathways: Qualifications and learning available via Swim Ireland Education



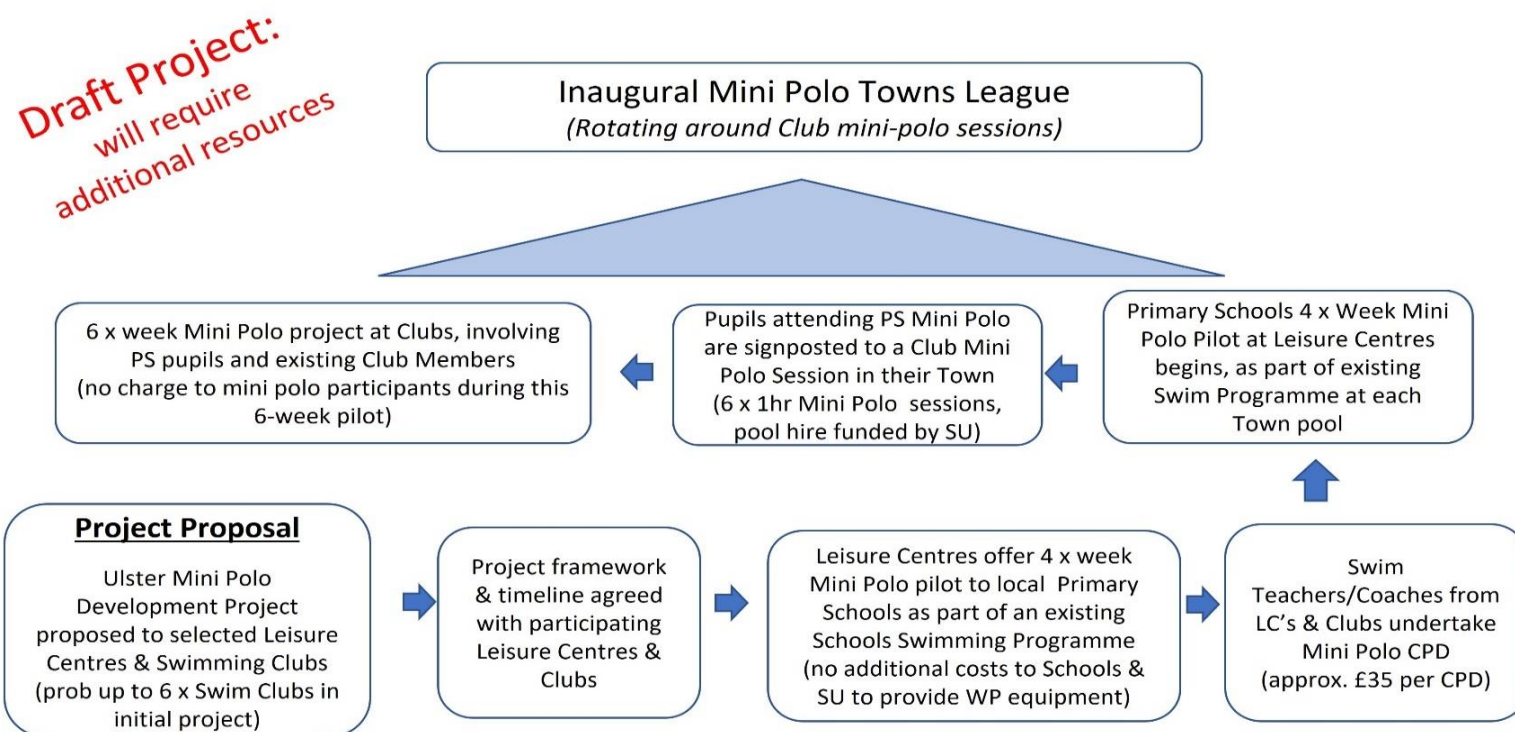


## Water Polo in the West.... additional resources required!

For some time, it has been our aspiration to develop water polo beyond the Greater Belfast area in particular West of the Bann. Despite successful adoption of water polo by Clubs outside of Belfast, in Newry, Lisburn, Bangor and Portadown, the West of Ulster remains a water polo development opportunity yet to be grasped.

Developing water polo West of the Bann, will require substantial resources in terms of Officer time and other resources. Unfortunately, such resources are not available to us currently, however we have chosen to include this development project within our 2022/25 Development Plan to demonstrate our commitment to spreading our sport throughout Ulster, and we remain hopeful that perhaps the required resources may become available during the lifetime of this strategy.

Example of “Water Polo in the West” initial project....



## Delivery...how we are going to do it!

Delivery of our 2017/21 Development Plan was in the main via our Ulster Water Polo Committee, Action Group Leaders, Coaches, Clubs and Volunteers whose combined efforts helped ensure completion of priorities set out within our Plan.

This approach was very successful, although more volunteers and an increased contribution from Clubs & Coaches will be needed to ensure delivery of the challenging objectives, we have identified within this new 2022/25 Plan.

### Swim Ulster Action Group Table – 2022/25

Strategic Pillar	Objective	Actions Led By:
Leadership & People	<i>The Swim Ulster Water Polo Committee will lead and serve development of water polo in Ulster</i>	Ulster Water Polo Committee Water Polo Development Officer
Education & Training	<i>Promote the development &amp; training of everyone involved in Ulster water polo</i>	Ulster Water Polo Committee Water Polo Development Officer
Participation	<i>Actively promote and provide opportunities to increase water polo participation in Ulster</i>	Ulster Water Polo Committee & Water Polo Development Officer Competition Action Group Skills Development & Talent ID Action Group
Develop & Compete	<i>Build capacity &amp; performance through supporting the development of individuals and their Clubs</i>	Ulster Water Polo Committee Water Polo Development Office Competition Action Group Skills & Talent ID Action Group



Ulster Coaches, Clubs and Volunteers  
Supported by Swim Ulster, NWPC & Swim Ireland  
"If We All Do a Little, Together We Can Achieve a Lot"

## Ulster Water Polo: Club Contact Details

Club	Email	Website	Based at
Bangor Barracuda's Water Polo Club	<a href="mailto:bangorbarracudas@hotmail.co.uk">bangorbarracudas@hotmail.co.uk</a>	<a href="https://bangorbarracudas12.wixsite.com/webs ite">https://bangorbarracudas12.wixsite.com/webs ite</a>	Bangor Aurora Complex
Cathal Brugha Swimming & Water Polo Club	<a href="mailto:info@cathalbrughawaterpolo.com">info@cathalbrughawaterpolo.com</a>	<a href="http://www.cathalbrughawaterpolo.com">www.cathalbrughawaterpolo.com</a>	Falls Leisure Centre
Clonard Water Polo Club	<a href="mailto:clonardsecretary@gmail.com">clonardsecretary@gmail.com</a>	<a href="https://clonardwaterpolo.org/">https://clonardwaterpolo.org/</a>	Falls Leisure Centre
Cú Chulainn Water Polo Club	<a href="mailto:cuchulainn.waterpolo@gmail.com">cuchulainn.waterpolo@gmail.com</a>	<a href="http://cuchulainnwaterpolo.com/">http://cuchulainnwaterpolo.com/</a>	Grove Wellbeing Centre
Diamonds Water Polo Club	<a href="mailto:info@diamondswaterpolo.com">info@diamondswaterpolo.com</a>	<a href="http://www.diamondswaterpolo.com/">http://www.diamondswaterpolo.com/</a>	Grove Wellbeing Centre
Newry & Mourne Swimming & Water Polo Club	<a href="mailto:info@newryswimmingclub.co.uk">info@newryswimmingclub.co.uk</a>	<a href="https://newryswimmingclub.co.uk/waterpolo/">https://newryswimmingclub.co.uk/waterpolo/</a>	Newry Leisure Centre
Portadown Swimming Club	<a href="mailto:portadownasc@gmail.com">portadownasc@gmail.com</a>	<a href="http://portadownasc.com/">http://portadownasc.com/</a>	South Lake Leisure Centre
City of Lisburn Swimming Club	<a href="mailto:secretary@lisburncityswimmingclub.org">secretary@lisburncityswimmingclub.org</a>	<a href="http://www.lisburncityswimmingclub.org/">http://www.lisburncityswimmingclub.org/</a>	Lagan Valley LeisurePlex, Lisburn

Swim Ulster Contact:

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Twitter: [Swim Ulster \(@SwimUlster\) / Twitter](#)