

Berkshire Netball Development Officer's Report 2025/26

It's been another busy year for our Player Development Programmes.

- Following the completion of trials in September 2025 Berkshire Netball ran 2 x U13 and 2 x U15 PDPs as part of the England Netball talent pathway.
- The coaching team for 2025/26 were- Christina Turton-Berenger, Marina Bowles, Kate Maxfield, Katie Fisher, Sarah Feast, Jacqui Cossar, Poppy Simpson and new this year – Chloe Phillips.
- This year we enjoyed support from Wellington College for the U15 programme with bespoke strength & conditioning sessions delivered by one of their specialist coaches as well as guest sessions delivered by former Superleague players Amy Hepworth-Wain (previously Flanagan), Sophia Candappa and Katie Harris. They also provided catering for Play Days which we hosted in the Wellington RDC.
- We welcomed the England Netball Performance Pathway Manager, Patrick O'Grady, who came along to an U15 session to see what we do and listen to our concerns and thoughts about how the Pathway could be improved.
- In addition we ran some non-pathway programmes for U15s and, for the first time, some U11 sessions which proved popular. Some of the U15s moved up to the PDP during the programme and some of the stronger U11s were invited to join the U13 sessions after Christmas.
- Berkshire PDP athletes attended a number of Play Days which provided opportunities to compete against squads from numerous counties including including Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire, North Bucks, Essex, Essex Met, Middlesex amongst others.
- We also took an U15 squad over to play against Pulse Power's Berkshire PDP which contained several previous Berkshire PDP athletes which was a great experience and exposure to the next level.
- We sent 1 x U13 and 1 x U15 teams to the Bedfordshire Invitational PDP Tournament. This was an opportunity for the selected players to compete against teams from all over the country with 18 teams competing in each age group. The U13s finished 8th out of 16 teams and the U15s Berkshire were 10th.
- We took 3 x U15 teams to the Pulse tournament at the end of April which was a great finale to the programme and provided athletes with an opportunity to be seen by Pulse selectors ahead of their U15 trials, with several girls being invited in addition to those already nominated by the coaches.
- Continuing the successes of previous years, a number of this year's U15 athletes were selected for franchise U15 Academies for Pulse, Pulse Power and London Mavericks with many others selected into the U15 Development Academies and we hope that some of them will make the final competition squads.
- It was great to see a significant number of former Berkshire athletes being successful at franchise trials last September and gaining places in franchise U17/U19 and PDPs at Pulse Power, London Pulse and Mavericks and we hope that this year's graduates will do the same.
- We were delighted to hear that former Berkshire PDP athlete and current Eagles player, Jasmine Akraasi, has recently been selected to be part of the very first NXT Roses squad. What an inspiration for our aspiring athletes.
- Pre-screening for U13 and U15 PDPs 2026/27 took place on Sunday 28th June when we were joined by Sharon Clarke – Pulse Power's U15 Academy Lead Coach. We continue to see a lot of interest in our programmes and this year had 85 x U13 athletes and 128 x U15 athletes apply to trial. Next phase of trials will start early in September with both programmes due to start in October.
- Sarah Feast continues to be part of the London Pulse Pathway Management Group together with representatives from other counties aligned with Pulse.

We are looking forward to working with the new crop of athletes in 2026/27 and can't wait to help them develop their talent within the pathway.

Sarah Feast - Player Pathway Lead