

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2021/2022



Olivia Breen winning T38 100m Gold in Birmingham, Photo Credit: Team Wales



**WELSH ATHLETICS**  
ATHLETAU CYMRU

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# FOREWORD

**Steve Perks** Chair of Welsh Athletics



The most joyous element of this year has been seeing the sport almost back to its running, jumping, and throwing norm. There is still naturally some trepidation concerning some elements, but with everyone coming to terms with a few remaining limitations the sport can only go from strength to strength.

Additionally, this year we have seen some excellent performances across the board with the highlight being our team's performances at the recent Commonwealth Games in Birmingham and individual success at the European Athletics Championships in Munich. The enthusiasm of the crowd certainly added not only to the atmosphere of the different sessions, but also the responses of the athletes to the positive environment. The hard work in preparation for the next games in Australia will be beginning shortly.

Society is facing challenging financial times and it will be the role of the Board, the General council, and all other representative groups to work together to ensure the Sport can navigate these possible uncertainties.

Y peth sydd wedi rhoi y pleser mwyaf eleni fu gweld y gamp bron yn gyfan gwbl yn ôl i'w norm gyda rhedeg, neidio a thaflu. Yn naturiol mae rhywfaint o ofid ynglŷn â rhai elfennau, ond gyda phawb yn dod i delerau ag ychydig o gyfyngiadau sy'n weddill ni all y gamp ond mynd o nerth i nerth.

Yn ogystal, eleni, rydym wedi gweld rhai perfformiadau rhagorol yn gyffredinol, a'r uchafbwynt oedd perfformiadau ein tîm yng Ngemau'r Gymanwlad yn Birmingham yn ddiweddar, a llwyddiant unigol yn y Pencampwriaethau Athletau Ewropeaidd yn Munich.. Yn sicr, ychwanegodd brwdfrydedd y dorf nid yn unig at awyrgylch y gwahanol sesiynau, ond hefyd fe ymatebodd yr athletwyr i'r amgylchedd cadarnhaol. Bydd y gwaith caled i baratoi ar gyfer y gemau nesaf yn Awstralia yn dechrau cyn bo hir.

Mae'r Gymdeithas yn wynebu cyfnod ariannol heriol a rôl y Bwrdd, y Cyngor Cyffredinol, a'r holl grwpiau cynrychioliadol eraill fydd gweithio gyda'i gilydd i sicrhau bod Chwaraeon yn gallu ymdopi â'r ansicrwydd posibl hwn.



**Steve Perks** Chair of Welsh Athletics

**Thank you everyone for your continued support and contribution to Athletics in all its guises in Wales.**

**Diolch i bawb am eich cefnogaeth parhaus a'ch cyfraniad i Athletau yn ei holl ffurfiau yng Nghymru. Diolch yn fawr**

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

**James Williams** Chief Executive of Welsh Athletics

**Its very much been a year of two halves. We started 2022 with yet more restrictions due to the COVID pandemic, and when compared to the scenes of the Birmingham Commonwealth Games, its hard to imagine that just eight months separated the two.**



**James Williams** Chief Executive of Welsh Athletics

## Pandemic

Once again, we found ourselves having to lobby the Welsh Government for the return of our sport. Our open letter, co-signed by parkrun had close to 2 million engagements on social media. This went a long way to ensuring the restriction were eased and enabling mass participation sport to return.

The athletics and running communities across Wales showed their resilience and dedication and worked tirelessly to enable our sport to return safely. Fingers crossed the lessons learnt throughout the pandemic will enable our sport to adapt quickly to future challenges.

## Recovery

The sports recovery from the pandemic has been far from straight-forward. Like all sports, we have seen participation numbers remain below pre-pandemic levels, and a number of volunteers have chosen not to return.

On a global basis, mass participation events continue to see lower than expected entry numbers, this coupled with increased delivery costs is sometimes leading to events not being financially viable.

Our #RunWithUs campaign in the Spring saw a number of adults begin running for the first time, and in recent months we have seen new parkrun's begin across Wales.

Our physical literacy programme Starting Blocs continues to grow across Wales, and our partnership with the URDD has enabled 13 new junior athletics groups to be launched across all parts of Wales.

The ultimate recovery for our sport will be led by our clubs and groups. As was the case during the pandemic, our network of clubs and groups are creating supportive and engaging environments that are enabling athletes of all ages and abilities to begin their physical activity journey.

We hope to be able to support clubs over the next 12 months to re-build their volunteers base. The launch of our new club framework will also enable club committees to evaluate where they need to focus their attention to enable their club to go from strength to strength.

## Commonwealth Games / European Championships

**What an incredible Summer for our Sport with three wonderful Championships. Once again Wales were well represented in the World Championships, with Melissa Courtney (1500m), Josh Griffiths (Marathon), Joe Brier (Mixed 4x400m relay) and Jeremiah Azu (4x100m relay) all selected.**

Despite the uncertain build up, a total of 24 athletes were selected by Team Wales for the Birmingham Commonwealth Games, the largest of all sports who were part of Team Wales. No stone was left unturned by the staffing team to ensure our athletes arrived at the Games in the best possible shape.

Despite narrowly missing out on medals, the performances of Jake Heyward and Jeremiah Azu deserve a huge amount of praise. It was a privilege to witness one of the greatest 1500m races of all time, and to see Jake smash the Welsh Record, and the Games record that had stood since 1974 – sadly for him, it was only good enough for 5th. It was the same position for Jeremiah Azu – performing superbly to make the final and narrowly missing out on a medal.

Both men would get their moment in Munich at the European Championships. A record 8 Welsh athletes represented Great Britain, with our athletes bringing back 4 medals. Both Jake and Jeremiah got their just rewards for superb seasons with individual medals – Jake claiming a silver behind Jacob Ingabritsen and Azu storming to a bronze in lane 8 in the 100m. Jeremiah returned a few days later to help Great Britain claim Gold in the 4x100m, while Joe Brier ended his season with a team Gold medal in the 4x400m.

A wonderful Summer of Athletics, and I have no doubt that many future Commonwealth Games athletes would have been inspired by the performances of our athletes across the 3 Championships.

Its important to also reflect on the wonderful role the athletes Coaches played this Summer – with many travelling to all parts of the World to support their athletes. We made a commitment that every single personal coach was invited to attend the Commonwealth Games and share in the experience with their athletes.



**I would also like to pay my thanks to the Welsh Athletics staffing team for all their hard work in the lead up and during the Commonwealth Games – all the athletes commented on how well supported they felt by the team that supported them in Birmingham.**



## Officials

As much as we celebrated the success of our athletes in Birmingham, we were also proud to have a strong contingent of Welsh officials at the Games. The fact that Welsh officials are consistently selected for National and International competitions is testament to the dedication and commitment shown by our Officials week in week out.

Despite this success, we must also face up to the significant challenge that we have at present with the number of officials in Wales. We continue to ask a huge amount from a relatively small group of volunteers. The re-launch of the Junior Development League in Wales suffered this year from a lack of officials – and throughout the UK we have seen an increased number of events having to be cancelled due to a lack of officials.

It is clear that we need a specific plan to recruit, develop and reward our volunteer officials. This will not be an easy task, and it will take some time to recruit the numbers required to meet the ever growing demands of our competition structure. We will only overcome this challenge if the whole sport comes together to tackle it, this means our clubs taking a key leadership role in recruiting volunteers, with Welsh Athletics supporting our clubs every step of the way.

Throughout the year we have been in discussions with UKA regarding the Home Countries taking on all aspects of officials education. This change will enable us to provide a more flexible approach to the qualification, and ensure the process meets the demands of the sport in Wales.

## Commercial/modernisation

Like all sectors, our sport is feeling the pressures of increases in cost of living. Our sport has always prided itself on its accessibility, and we will always explore ways to ensure that our sport remains as cost effective as possible.

We continue to be focused on exploring new commercial opportunities, and over the past 12 months have agreed a joint approach with colleagues from the other Home Countries. Working collectively, we hope we can develop commercial partnerships that will bring in fresh income into the sport.

This income will enable us to invest into the infrastructure of our sport – the IT systems, the facilities and new initiatives. It will also be used to ensure that we can absorb as many increases in delivery costs as possible, and in turn ensuring that our sport remains accessible to everyone.

## Stakeholders

We continue to forge strong and lasting working relationships with colleagues from UK Athletics and the Home Countries. Our collaborative approach has been best demonstrated with the secondments of Chris Jones and Chris Moss over the past 12 months.

We will continue to explore ways of working collaboratively as we all work to re-build the sport post COVID. The coming 12 months will see a renewed focus around a joint commercial approach, whilst also continuing to drive improvements in Coaching, Officials and domestic competition through the joint working groups.

Our relationship with Sport Wales and Welsh Government remains strong. We have pressed the case for further investment into Athletics (facilities and programme), and the potential benefits that extra investment would have on tackling inequalities and improving the Health of the Nation.

One area we intend focusing our efforts on in the coming 12 months is the desire to expand the delivery of the Daily Mile in schools across Wales. Welsh Athletics has a strategic goal of every school in Wales engaging with Athletics – we see the Daily Mile playing a key role in our desire to achieve this goal. This will require the collective support from Sport, Education and Health, and we will advocate across Welsh and Local Government in order to achieve this.

## Safeguarding

We continue to implement the recommendations of the Quinlan Review, and have put in place very clear requirements for all clubs. In conjunction with the Welsh Sports Association, we have put in place a series of Time to Listen courses for our club welfare officers. We thank all the affiliated clubs for their commitment to embedding these requirements, and have had close to 100 welfare officers undertake this training so far.

Our close working relationship with UK Athletics and the other Home Countries has also seen the adoption of a UK Wide set of codes of conduct, and an updated disciplinary policy and process.

We make no apologies for adopting a zero tolerance approach to safeguarding, and will continue to explore ways to further enhance our processes to ensure our sport is safe and welcoming for everyone.

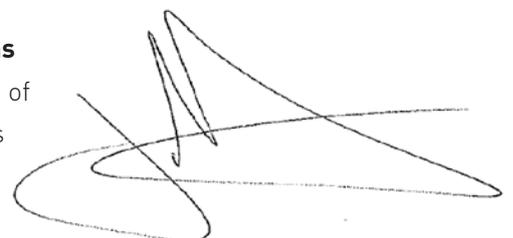
## Looking ahead

The previous 12 months was largely focused around the Commonwealth Games and the immediate recovery from the pandemic. The organisation will now take a longer term approach to growing the sport in Wales.

Internally, we need to ensure that we have clarity on roles and responsibilities – to focus on the areas that we can make the greatest impact. Aligned to this, we remain committed to exploring how we can further support and empower our clubs to drive local delivery.

The sport has many challenges post pandemic, but it also has a huge number of new opportunities. We want to create the right environments that allow our clubs to modernise their approach, to lead on coach and official recruitment and development. If we do this, then clubs will have more control of their destiny – more coaches will enable more members, and more officials will enable them to create the competition offering that their members demand. We want clubs to take risks, and to explore new ways of engaging their communities. This will hopefully lead to our clubs demanding more from their Governing Body, and in turn this will help shape the future of the way we deliver our sport in Wales.

**James Williams**  
Chief Executive of  
Welsh Athletics



# FINANCIAL STATEMENT



**Nick Everitt** Non-Executive Director, Finance / **James Williams** Chief Executive Officer

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
<b>Income</b>	1,686,146	1,824,739	1,760,274	1,588,872	£1,972,869
<b>Expenditure</b>	1,784,816	1,779,831	1,823,704	1,543,062	£1,976,274
<b>Profit / (Loss)</b>	(98,670)	44,908	(63,430)	45,810	[£3,405]

The organisation continued to feel the financial impact from the COVID pandemic. There were a number of positives with a number of activities re-starting, giving a much needed boost to membership & education income. This resumption was of great benefit to the organisation, and whilst also a great relief to the many competition providers across Wales, and most importantly our members.

Despite this positive step, the delivery of the activities in the post-COVID world added additional financial pressure as operating models had to adapt.

Once again the financial sub-group played a key role in managing financial actuals and projecting financial year end outcomes at key points during the year ensuring that all financial risks were mitigated.

We are thankful for the ongoing support provided by Sport Wales and the Welsh Government throughout this period. On top of the annual funding grant, an additional £191,000 of COVID support was provided to Welsh Athletics to support the re-start of the sport across Wales. An additional £81,000 of underspend from the previous financial year was carried forward to support our athletes' preparation for the 2022 Commonwealth Games. The two additional sums meant that overall, Sport Wales funding increased to £1,443,868 – this makes up 73% of our total income for the financial year.

We continue to explore all opportunities for support of our facilities, and work hard to secure the best outcome for our members, we were delighted to receive £293,657 of funding to support a number of initiatives including the installation of new lighting at CISC, and the re-surfacing

of Deeside track. The timing of the grant means that £211,749 will be deferred to the 2022/23 financial year. This has been a key factor in our overall income increasing to £1,972,869 (an increase of £431,739 on the previous financial year).

Despite the return of activity, we were faced with major challenges that continue at the time of writing, income generated from membership, education and race licensing all remain below pre-COVID levels. The continued impact of COVID on activity, plus the additional challenges posed from increases in cost of living will impact on our operations for some time.

We remain mindful of ensuring that our sport remains accessible to as many as possible. We continue to apply strict financial management to absorb the majority of additional costs incurred in delivering our services and activities.

The financial year covered the main qualifying period for the Commonwealth Games. Welsh Athletics was committed to supporting athletes in their attempt to reach the required standards – this saw significant increase in expenditure to support International Competition and preparation and in our Coaching programme.

## The resumption of events was of great benefit to the organization, and whilst also a great relief to the many competition providers across Wales.

A key strategic objective is to drive commercial activity and develop new income streams. The financial year saw the launch of junior programme Starting Blocs. The initial outlay of £27,182 in Starting Blocs already yielding a financial return of £18,587. The programme is on track to generate a profit in the 2022/23 financial year.

Due to the impact of Covid and it being a preparation year for the Commonwealth Games we were set a budget of an operating deficit of £5,000, and due to the careful management shown during a very turbulent year we exceeded this ending the year with a lower operating deficit of just £2,317

Looking ahead, the forecast is uncertain. Despite everyone's best efforts, membership and participation remains below pre-COVID levels. This coupled with

increased cost of living and delivery will put a squeeze on the organisation's finances.

Sport Wales have amended the implementation plan of their new funding model, meaning that the previously stated uplift will not be fully realized until 2025. As part of this change, the organization Lottery Growth funding has been withdrawn, this will mean a reduction of income of £71,000 in 2022/23.

We will continue our aims of reducing our dependency on Sport Wales funding, and increasing our self-generated income. Our ambitions to increase commercial revenue will continue into 2022/23, ensuring that we can continue to grow our programmes and investing back into the infrastructure of our sport.

*Junior Home international , Photo Credit Steve Ashworth*



# GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

**Dr Nicky Lewis** Non-Executive Director, Governance

Over the previous governance year, the Governance Sub-Group has continued to scrutinise the process for recruitment of new Non-Executive Directors to the Board and advocate for increased difference and diversity throughout the governance infrastructure. This has been to ensure that those making decisions and having conversations about our sport are representative of those participating, performing, volunteering and achieving within our sport. In addition, proposals for amendments to Articles regarding the term of service for Board members were also debated and approved.

Policies relating to the pay and benefits for staff were reviewed and sent forward to the Board with a recommendation for approval. Changes, within these policies arose from a benchmarking exercise jointly commissioned across a number of National Governing Bodies of Sport in Wales and will help to ensure our sport continues to attract and retain high quality staff in the current challenging recruitment market.

The implementation of the Quinlan Safeguarding Review recommendations and resultant codes of conduct and

disciplinary rules and procedures, in addition to the UK Sport Transgender Inclusion in Sport guidance have also been regular topics of discussion, review and most importantly action; with the Governance Sub-Group receiving reassurance and evidence of how the Welsh Athletics staff team have worked in close partnership with their counterparts across the home nations to deliver clear, coherent and consistent governance across these areas in a timely manner.

As I complete, what it is now my final Governance Sub-Group overview for a Welsh Athletics Annual Report, I am also able to confirm the completion of the online governance handbook for new and continuing members of the sport's governance infrastructure, to further enable the sustainability of the considerably more secure position that the sport now finds itself in. The work, however, is by no means done, so I would warmly encourage anyone with a passion and commitment for continuing this vital work, to offer their support and I will guarantee, you will find yourself working alongside some of the most professional, dedicated, values-driven and inspiring human-beings around.

**Finally, to all the athletes, coaches, officials, staff, fellow directors, and wider group of volunteers, I thank you for leaving me in no doubt that Welsh Athletics and Athletics in Wales can and will continue to be firmly embedded in trust, respect, togetherness, ambition, excellence and fun.**

2022	Board	Finance	Governance	ED&I	Development & Participation	Performance
Steve Perks	6/6	4/8				3/3
Nick Everitt	4/6	8/8				
Nicky Lewis	4/6		5/5			
Sue Alvey	6/6					
Bernie Plaine	6/6					3/3
Tom Overton	4/6				6/6	
Helen Adams	6/6			4/4		
Jonathan Ford	6/6					
Lorna Kerr	4/6		2/4			

# GENERAL COUNCIL REPORT

**Sue Alvey** Chair of General Council

## Strategic Aim: Lead the Way

“Ensure the sport has the most effective and robust governance structure to support the development of the sport in Wales.”

General Council has continued to meet on a regular basis albeit remotely. We have been kept informed of changes to staffing within Welsh Athletics and changes at UKA level with the options for UKA membership being discussed as it was then shared with clubs for their opinion.

We received information from two new staff members; Carl Williams regarding the safeguarding procedures that Clubs will have to follow and how this would be implemented. Neil Taylor, as Para – Athletics Manager, gave a presentation regarding the Para Athletics Pathway and was available to answer questions raised on behalf of clubs who may feel uncertain over how to proceed.

This year the Clubs Modernisation and Development Fund had an early application available to all clubs to assist with the organisation of events to encourage membership increases as we returned to competition following the restrictions of the Covid period.

The very busy athletics calendar we faced this year, brought its own challenges. As restrictions lifted there was a drive to provide our athletes with every opportunity to compete ahead of the Commonwealth Games.

Chris Jones, Performance Manager, attended one of our meetings to give an update on the selection process and timescales for the Commonwealth Games.

We also had a presentation from Liz Davies regarding the Regional Development Squads and the plans for the future. We are noticeably short of officials, and this is a topic which we have discussed at General Council and requested Regional Councils and Clubs to discuss ways in which this can be addressed. There is still work to do to get clubs to fully engage with Regional Councils for the information stream to reach General Council and vice versa.

This will be my last report as Chair of General Council and I hope that my replacement can enjoy the support that I have had over the past six years from both members of the council and Welsh Athletics as we strive to improve the opportunities for all in Athletics in Wales.

*Olympian Joe Brier attended the official opening of the new track at Oakdale*



# EQUALITY STATEMENT

**Helen Adams** Non-Executive Director, Equality

The further development and growth of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Group over the last 12 months has helped to provide strategic direction and focus to Welsh Athletics. A key area of focus has been on data and insight, to not only better understand what the current landscape looks like and areas of development, but also to help to monitor our impact.

We know from our data that we continue to have a 50/50 split in terms of male and female participation in the sport, and we are persisting with work to ensure this parity is seen in coaching, officiating and governance roles within the sport. Work is ongoing to improve the completeness of the anonymous data available to us on protected characteristics to allow us to focus our work.

*The Queen's Baton Relay visited the Rhondda where Rhys Jones proudly held the baton*



- 97.5% of members who responded to the Ethnicity question identify as White, compared to 94.8% in the Welsh population as a whole.
- 1.6% of members report having a disability [up from 1.5% in 2021] which is well below the 21.8% in the population as whole.

Clearly more needs to be done in terms of developing opportunities and providing an inclusive and accessible pathway across all areas of the sport from participation, competition, and workforce development. The sustainability and growth of the sport will depend on this.

Creating an inclusive and accessible environment in our sport is crucial, and as such education is a key theme for us in helping to embed equality, diversity and inclusion in all that we do. The number of members who identify as a different gender to that of their birth has doubled from 2021 to 2022<sup>1</sup>, and work is ongoing with UK Athletics to

implement the Transgender Inclusion in Sport Guidance published this year by the UK Sports Councils.

To support this work and help us to achieve our strategic goals, Welsh Athletics will continue to develop and work with other partners who have a shared vision on equality, diversity and inclusion. This includes working with Sport Wales in relation to the roll out of the revised Equality Standards in Sport Framework. We look forward to working closely with their designated delivery partner over the coming years to help us continue to grow and develop an accessible and inclusive sport.

<sup>1</sup> Part of this increase is due to an increased response rate to this question within the membership database.

# SAFEGUARDING & DUTY OF CARE

Carl Williams Safeguarding & Compliance Officer

## Strategic Aim: Unite

“Ensure robust safeguarding practices are being implemented across the sport.”

Following on from the UKA Safeguarding review by Mr Christopher Quinlan in 2020, Welsh Athletics have ensured that the following new or updated policies are all in place and being implemented across the sport:

- **Safeguarding and Protecting Children,**
- **Adult Safeguarding policies,**
- **Codes of Conduct**

Awareness and sign up to these are being enforced as an integral part of the club affiliation process, as are the mandatory Club Welfare Officer requirement. All CWO's must now complete the following:

- **Time to Listen course**
- **Safeguarding in Athletics module**
- **DBS check**

Since the Safeguarding requirements changed from July, we have run 11 online Time to Listen courses via the Welsh Sports Association for Club Welfare officers (CWOs) to attend, with a further 8 planned for October 2022. To date 85 Club Welfare officers have been trained in Time to Listen. Remaining CWOs will receive training throughout 2022 / 2023 ahead of re-affiliation in April 2023.

There will be a new 'Adults at Risk' course in 2023. We will continue to work closely with the CPSU (Child Protection in Sport unit), Ann Craft Trust, UKA and the HCAFS to ensure that our clubs have the current accredited relevant training available and good practice is being shared. All staff attended a training session in June delivered by our Safeguarding and Compliance Officer.

The safeguarding lead officer forms part of the UKA Case management group to manage active UK cases. Also working closely with the UKA Safeguarding team to manage local safeguarding and disciplinary cases. Since January 2022, **25 cases** passed to Welsh Athletics regarding Safeguarding, Codes of conduct and discipline matters. The My concern & My confide recording systems are both now in use by Welsh Athletics to ensure all matters are linked with UKA and the HCAF's.

We are working as a team to ensure that the set mandatory safeguarding club requirements are in place, and have started sending a quarterly Safeguarding Newsletter to all clubs with the latest updates - for example the new Position of Trust legislation that was implemented in June 2022 for England and Wales. Webinars are also being planned by the team for CWOs and clubs to help them understand changes in requirements.



**85 Club Welfare officers have been trained in the Time to Listen course**



# CORPORATE SERVICES

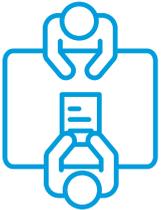
**Rob Sage** Head of Corporate Services



## Strategic Aim: Lead the Way

“Be a high performing organisation” &  
“Invest in and empower our staff to develop and succeed.”

During the last 12 months we have continued to put staff well-being and development as a priority, encouraging staff to take well-being time back each week, investing in provision of online training, and developing a new pay and rewards policy in response to staff feedback. Additional training with line managers is underway to ensure the new policy is implemented in a fair and robust manner across the organisation as we continue to modernise and professionalise.



**The engagement index for the 2022 survey is 64%, which compares to 71% for 2021. Work is ongoing with line managers and our HR support agency to understand and respond to the survey results.**

## Strategic Aim: Inspire “Bring Athletics to a wider domestic audience”

The summer of 2022 played host to three major athletic championships within 5 weeks including; the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games where 24 athletes took to the stage to represent Wales. This provided a great opportunity to maximise coverage and raise the profile of our athletes and sport. We worked closely with our athletes, colleagues, Team Wales, local and national media contacts and a PR Consultant to help spread the word and tell the stories behind our athletes. This resulted in:



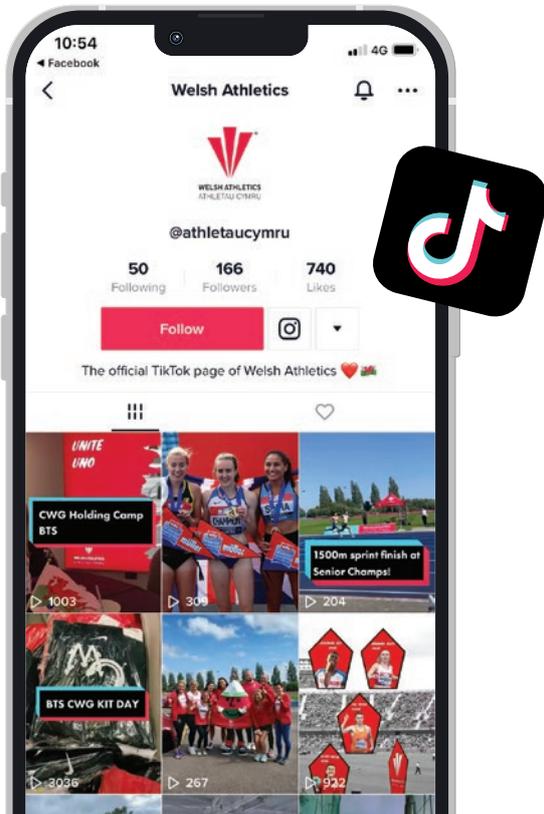
MORE THAN  
**116**  
PIECES OF MEDIA COVERAGE



MORE THAN  
**1.3 MILLION**  
PEOPLE REACHED

*ITV Wales interviewing Welsh fans on the Commonwealth Marathon route*





Our following across our social media channels has grown by 4000 in the last 12 months, bringing our total followers to just below 30,000 - well on track to hit our target of 40,000 by 2026.

We continue to analyse the impact of our communications and make changes where needed to ensure we are speaking to the right target audiences on the right changes at the right time.

This year we have launched a TikTok account and begun working with athletes to share content on this ever-growing platform and have begun shifting towards the use of Reels [short video clips] on Instagram.

# COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY

## Strategic Aim: Lead the Way

“Plan and implement change to secure the financial sustainability of the sport.”

The last year has seen a renewed focus and investment of resource in building commercial partnerships and securing sponsorship for our programmes and events. We have seen investment into Junior Athletics from Re-inspire who sponsored our Junior Championships at Newport.

Further investment into Welsh Athletics has seen Sportshoes.com become a sponsor of the Cardiff Cross Challenge, as well as providing vouchers to the winners of the junior section. Sportshoes.com will also be offering all of our members exclusive discounts via the Member Online Portal.

Positive discussions are ongoing with specialist running shop Moti, who will become our Retail Partner and will host an online shop for us selling a range of Welsh Athletics merchandise as well as featuring some lines in their stores.

Discussions with other Welsh NGBs and the other UK athletics bodies are underway in relation to environmental sustainability and impact. A sustainability strategy for the organisation and baseline evaluation of current activities will take place in the coming year aligned to the World Athletics strategy and British Association Sustainability in Sport [BASIS] principles

# DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION



**Hannah Pretty** Head of Development & Participation

## Membership

At the end of the 2021-22 affiliation year, club membership reached 11,177 across over 100 affiliated clubs. Activity and participation in the sport have continued to rebuild following the pandemic, and midway through the affiliation year, membership currently stands at 10,647. Following a fantastic summer of international championships, and our Welsh athletes inspiring the next generation, we anticipate this number will continue to grow over the remainder of the year.

Earlier this year, we were all relieved and looking forward to the prospect of meeting up with friends and colleagues from nearby clubs in person and on Saturday 5th March we saw the long-awaited return of the Welsh Athletics & Run Wales Conference at the Vale Resort Hotel. It was a fantastic day, with over 50 representatives from clubs and groups across Wales in attendance. We were delighted to be joined by exceptional guest speakers who delivered engaging sessions across various topics

including Supporting Positive Mental Health, Building & Sustaining Positive Environments within our Clubs. The community Q and A panel saw great interaction between the audience and the guest speakers, with clubs sharing their experiences and ideas and discussing how they have achieved their aims.

This year the Club Modernisation Fund was divided into two pots:

1. Commonwealth Games Legacy Fund £12,000 - to support clubs with innovative projects that celebrated the Commonwealth Games and supported membership or increased membership.
2. Club Modernisation Fund £8,000 later in the year.

Our clubs have continued to benefit from funding through the 'Be Active Fund' via Sport Wales, enabling more clubs to access funding to support their growth and development.

## Strategic Aim: Innovate

“Continue to invest in a modern infrastructure to reduce the administration demands for clubs and improve the athlete experience.”

In spring 2022, the enhanced digital 'Secretaries' Portal' was launched to modernise the club affiliation and members' registration process. With functionalities that enable members to pay online and instantly be registered with their club and Welsh Athletics, reducing the administrative workload of volunteers and improving the experience for the end user.

Through the updated Secretary's Portal, clubs can now record and capture governance information. As part of

the affiliation process, clubs will update and complete a series of 'Club Standards' which serve as a governance health check for clubs, highlighting minimum standards to be met around safeguarding and compliance as well as showcasing best practice for clubs to work towards.

It has been reassuring to see many clubs working towards achieving all seven club standards and we continue to support clubs to achieve high levels of operating standards.

## Strategic Aim: Engage

“Create and roll out a physical literacy offering for children aged 4 – 9.”

## Starting Blocs

Since the launch of Starting Blocs, the program has continued to contribute to our ambition to provide opportunities for children aged 4-9 to access our sport across Wales. There are now 11 Starting Blocs providers across Wales covering 12 Local Authorities, and we look forward to reaching our ambition of every Local Authority in Wales (22) having access to Starting Blocs.

In January 2022, we were delighted to form a partnership with the Urdd as a delivery agent of Starting Blocs. Over 20 members of the Urdd coaching team were upskilled to deliver Starting Blocs and as a result the workforce have been the catalyst to increasing the opportunity for children to experience Starting Blocs through the Welsh language. Since the partnership formed, the Urdd have delivered regular sessions and summer camps across 11 Local Authorities. We continue to work collaboratively with the organisation to enhance delivery and to signpost children into local clubs where appropriate.

Over the summer, Starting Blocs taster sessions were delivered during both the Senior and Junior Welsh Championships, widening the audience of our sport and introducing children to participating in the sport physically and being inspired whilst spectating. It was great to see many of these children subsequently attending Starting Blocs summer camps in the school holidays.

We were grateful to be successful recipients of the Summer of Fun funding, made available by Welsh Government via Sport Wales. The grant of £20,000 allowed us to deliver 8 affordable summer camps to children in area's that may not have otherwise been able to access activities, resulting in more children participating in athletics. The funding has also supported the purchase of equipment, the upskilling of coaches and volunteers and associated marketing costs.



HAS ENGAGED  
**3000+**  
CHILDREN

ACROSS  
**450**  
SESSIONS



## Strategic Aim: Engage

“Create an enhanced Teacher Education and Development programme.”

Following on from last year’s success of the Teacher Education and Development programme, over 150 individuals across Wales have attended the Primary & Secondary teacher training courses this year. These training opportunities has improved the confidence of both primary, secondary, and trainee teachers to deliver the sport within their environments.

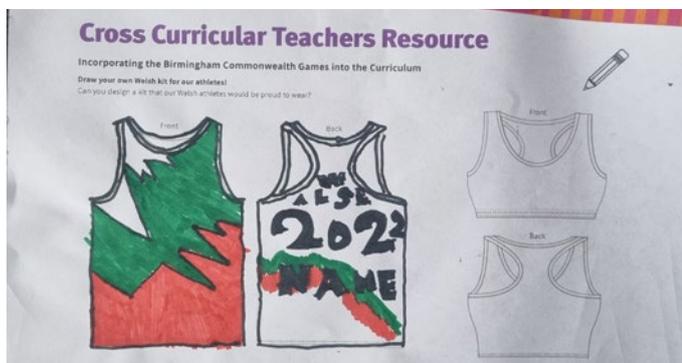
This has increased the experience of young people accessing our sport within the school setting. Over the next year we aim to increase these figures with more courses, along with creating opportunities for staff to attend official education courses, to ensure that schools competitions can be run safely and effectively.

## Strategic Aim: Engage

“Improve provision of athletics and running within every school in Wales.”

### Summer of Fun

During the summer term of 2022, we provided primary schools with a Birmingham 2022 inspired resource, that included tips for running school sports days and numerous cross curricular activities to engage pupils in the excitement of the Commonwealth Games 2022. These were also used across Starting Blocs Summer Camps, with many children designing their own ‘Welsh Vest’!



### The Daily Mile

Over the last year our partnership with The Daily Mile has continued to grow and we are looking forward to collaborating with them in the future to continue to promote the well-being benefits of physical activity from a young age. There are now over 500 schools signed up to The Daily Mile across Wales and through various campaigns planned over the next academic year we hope to see this number increase



## Facilities

Whilst it is recognised that athletics facilities across Wales can be a challenge, there has again been further investment facilities over the last 12 months. Significant funding has been provided by Sport Wales to support both smaller developments and more large-scale projects that will benefit the sport over the coming years. In an attempt to maintain this momentum, we have submitted further applications to the Sport Wales Capital Fund and continue to explore wider opportunities.

More operationally, over the last 12 months we have commissioned facility inspections at key competition venues across Wales and are working closely with facility operators to identify gaps in provision whilst supporting through direct investment.

Next year will see the roll out of the UKA TrackMark accreditation programme with this accreditation being linked to competition licencing from April 2023.

As we are aware, facilities are vitally important to the development of our sport, providing safe environments for many to participate in athletics and running.

Therefore, we will continue to work with facility owners and operators across Wales and will continue to explore funding opportunities and to secure the future of more of our facilities across the country as part of the wider Welsh Athletics Facilities Strategy.

## Strategic Aim: Own it

“Train, inspire and empower run leaders to establish their own groups across Wales.”

Building on work done in 2021, a menu of development opportunities were made available to Run Leaders to help:

- Refresh their knowledge and skills after a covid break in delivery in club and group environments.
- Develop further understanding of energy systems, a technical model of running, and athlete profiling and planning.
- Support VI friendly running sessions (guide running).

We are looking to deliver these workshops in more practical setting and share knowledge and skills around individualising session experiences to support greater success for new and developing runners.

Run Wales is marking 6 years of supporting people to run, jog and walk their way to a more active lifestyle by hosting a Run Wales Celebration Relay around each of the 47 parkrun events in Wales. Launched in June at Nova Prestatyn parkrun, the relay is giving social running groups an opportunity to come together in their local community and showcase their social running options, which complement the weekly parkrun. At the time of writing, the celebration baton has visited 9 parkrun events across North Wales, which has included 10 Run Wales

registered social running groups supporting parkrun events with volunteers and runners on 17 occasions.

There are now several new social running groups under development in North Wales as a result of the relay, as well as established groups registering with Run Wales to receive the support available through the programme. Social running groups have also reported that they have recruited new members following their participation in the event and the groups have also encouraged members to attend parkrun for the first time both running and volunteering. As the Celebration Relay makes its way around the country, we look forward to seeing more groups forming and providing the opportunity for more individuals to access running.

## Strategic Aim: Own it

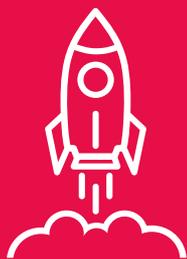
“Champion the health and wellbeing benefits of our sport at all levels.”

**DISCOVER  
THE JOYS OF  
RUNNING.**

#RunWithUs



In April 2022 as society emerged from COVID, we delivered a 'Run with Us' campaign to encourage new and returning runners to find groups, clubs, or just others to continue their running journey with to aid motivation and re-build social connections. The campaign used new methods of online advertising including DAX audio and paid promotions via Wales Online.



- The campaign generated 188 new followers on social media
- 7.5million impression on Twitter
- Just under 7000 unique visitors to the [irun.wales](https://www.irun.wales) website

As the nation recovers from the pandemic, and with only half of adults in Wales participating in physical activity at least once in the last four weeks (National Survey for Wales 2021-22), we have been working with partners to discover new ways to attract people to an active lifestyle to enhance health and wellbeing.

Through the wider Run Wales advocacy programme we have established new relationships with new partners including local health boards and Greenwich Leisure Limited (operating leisure centres across Cardiff), and Swansea University to explore how we can increase opportunities for more people to become active in our communities.

We are also working with local partners to discover how running can contribute to social prescribing schemes, and thus enabling us to reach a wider audience through our Walk to Run and Couch 25K offers.

We are committed to ensuring there are free running opportunities for all across Wales, and continue to

work closely with parkrun to fund and support new opportunities. Parkrun continues to provide weekly free opportunities for many across Wales to participate in walking and running via 69 events (19 junior, 47 senior events, 3 custodial), including 3 new events established this year in Ruthin, Llanishen and Monmouth. We will continue to support free and accessible running opportunities to all going into the next 12 months.

Following the launch of Clwb Run Wales in 2020, Run Wales' virtual running club has continued to develop, with membership standing at over 100 members. This year there has been a focus to improve systems and processes to ensure that the members' experience meets high standards.

In addition to individual Clwb membership registration, the development of Clwb Run Wales partner groups has resulted in 10 groups across Wales benefitting from membership benefits, including discounted race entries and coach education courses.

**Strategic Aim: Own It** "Provide the tools, training and resources to facilitate the removal of all barriers to participation."



# - ATHLETICS - ATHLETIG

GEMAU  
CYMANWLAD  
BIRMINGHAM 2022

BIRMINGHAM 2022  
COMMONWEALTH  
GAMES



# COACH EDUCATION AND COACH DEVELOPMENT



**Zoe Brown** Coach Development Manager

**Strategic Aim: Unite** “Invest in athlete and coach development structures”.

In a year of recovery for the Sport, clubs and groups have worked incredibly hard to recruit volunteers to become Coaching Assistants and Run Leaders, whilst supporting existing coaches and leaders to develop. As a reflection of this dedication, we were able to deliver a combination of 65+ online, and face to face, courses, and workshops across the on track and off-track pathway.

The current total number of licensed coaches and leaders in Wales is 1,850:

- 300+ Individuals have undertaken the Leadership in Running Fitness qualification, with 100+ new coaching assistants now able to support their local Athletics & Running environment
- 80+ individuals have taken the next step on their development journey to become Athletics Coaches, Coaches in Running Fitness, and Event Group Award Coaches.

I would like to say a huge well done to all the club officials, coach/volunteer coordinators, and support coaches, for the work they have done to recruit, and support, the new and current generation of coaches and run leaders.

Throughout Covid, and into 2022, we have enhanced our support for learner to ensure a positive on course experience, and ongoing help to navigate the multiple learner management systems, and aim to provide remain engaged with leaders and coaches throughout their qualification journey.

Currently our completion rates for qualifications are:

- **Leadership in Running Fitness - 78%**
- **Coaching Assistant - 88%**
- **Coach in Running Fitness 80%**
- **Athletics Coach 65%**

**Across the qualification offering, 95% of learners gave a 5\* rating for on-course experience**

“The course was brilliant. The coach developers (tutors) were lovely and worked really well together. Sometimes I find that I feel a bit self-conscious on training courses, but I didn't feel like that at all over the weekend.”

**Coach Assistant participant**

“The course was really informative, interesting and well organised. There was good interaction with coach developers (tutors) and participant in the virtual classroom session, and there were lots of resources to dip into pre and post course.”

**Online LiRF participant**

## Sustainability of Coach Education Delivery & Coach Developer Growth

**In 2021, in addition to our Regional Calendar of courses, we have worked with local authorities, partner organisations and clubs to deliver bespoke courses aligned to their workforce needs.**

Progressing into 2023, we are aspiring to be able to be more reactive around partner and club led demand for courses and workshops. This year we have recruited 10 new coach developers (Tutors) from across Wales and from within our Athletics family.

We believe it is essential that Welsh Athletics Coach Developers (Tutors) are passionate about the sport and connected to Athletics in Wales.

This recruitment will allow us:

- To have more flexibility in terms of delivering timely course in all parts of Wales
- To embed coach and leader care from the beginning of the journey in the Sport. Relatability and understanding will be at the heart of our coach and leader education experience.

“Welsh Athletics would like to thank all the coach developers (Tutors) for their time and commitment to supporting the education of coaches and leaders in Wales. With an ever-evolving landscape of content and delivery mechanisms for education we would like to acknowledge their dedication to developing their skills to ensure a quality learner experience.”

**Jana Pacyna, Coaching Educational Administrator**



# COACH & LEADER DEVELOPMENT



**Zoe Brown** Coach Development Manager

**Strategic Aim:** “Invest in coach and athlete development structures & bring new people from all backgrounds into our athletics family.”

## Guide Running

Since the emergence of the Welsh Athletics Guide Running Workshops in Aug 2021, we have now supported 72 club/group volunteers and Run Leaders to acquire the knowledge and skills to guide. These individuals are embedded in environments that are now driving greater accessibility to Athletics and Running for the VI community across Wales.

A running group leading the way on delivering VI inclusion is Just Run Penybont. With run leaders attending one of

the original guide courses in the summer of 2021, they were keen to look at how they could put the skills they had learnt to use and be a benefit to the community. Working with locally charities and groups, in March 2022 a group of VI individuals were encouraged to come together for a taster guided session. There they found out more about the opportunity, got to know the guide runners and dispel any fears and anxiety they may have. Since then, the group has been meeting on a Saturday each week, with word spreading and the group growing.



## Regional Coach Development Programme (Junior T&F)

In 2021, the Regional Development Programme was formally given a coach facing development arm, running alongside the athlete development days. We have had coaches attending from across the country with representation from 75 % of our Junior T&F clubs, with return engagement from 90% of coaches attending.

The coach developer and support workforce are all embedded within the club coaching landscape which has encouraged regional support networks to emerge and

continued professional development in the daily training environments to be fostered.

We hope this year, to raise greater awareness of the programme as a coach development opportunity, and grow the number of coaches accessing regional days. Welsh Athletics are determined to ensure coaches feel valued and supported in their aspirations to improve and can share in this journey with other coaches in their region.



Para Coaching workshop underway

## Strategic Aim: Develop excellence

"A focus on long term athlete and coach development."

## #Unite Female Coach Initiative

In 2021 Welsh Athletics launched the #Unite Female Coaching Initiative. This initiative is aimed at showcasing the achievements of our female coach and leader community, whilst providing funded support coaches and leaders to progress on their coaching journeys in Athletics.

A mixture of 14 of the coaches and CiRFs were also supported by a Performance Coach Mentor for a year of their coaching. These mentors included Kelly Sotherton, Laura Turner-Alleyne, Laura Kerr, Amy Foster, and Helen Clitheroe. Due to covid this was predominantly delivered remotely, complimented by competition meet-ups. The next iteration of the initiative will evolve to include 'in environment development' and offer more flexible support mechanisms for female coaches to draw down support not exclusive to mentoring.

In 2022 we had:

- 25 coaches graduating from the Female Coach Initiative
- 100% of these women are actively coaching in our clubs/group/training environments across Wales.
- 2/3rds of the cohort are working with our most talented youth athletes with success at Welsh Athletics and England Age Group Championships.
- 50% of these coaches have also been involved with Welsh Athletics coaching ,or team management, staff for Home Country International events.

## Athlete to Coach Programme

In April 2021 we introduced a pilot Athlete to Coach programme. Welsh Athletics is steadfast in its mission to value athletes and their commitment to the Sport by providing dual, or ongoing opportunities to be involved in Athletics.

The Athlete to Coach Programme aims to create a positive environment for athlete to coach transition, providing funded support and peer learning environments to introduce, develop and embed understanding of the coaching process to compliment existing technical knowledge of the Sport,

This year we have 14 coaches graduating the Athlete to Coach Programme:

- 21% have completed first step on off-track or on-track pathway
- 79% have completed or are working towards completion of Athletics Coach or Coach in Running Fitness qualification
- 92% are currently coaching and support school/club/group or regional development environments.
- Over 1/3 have been part of coaching or team management staff in a Home Country International or Schools

**This year we have 14 coaches graduating the Athlete to Coach Programme**



**Welsh Athletics are committed to valuing and supporting coaches who are striving to build performance programmes and environments to support talent of the future.**

## Talent Coach Initiative

In December 2021 the Talent Coach Initiative went live. This initiative is aimed at supporting the bespoke development needs of coaches' working with athletes on our Welsh Athletics funded programmes.

13 coaches received funding to drive self-elected areas of development across four themes:

**1. Athlete Development   2. Coaching Process   3. Environment   4. Leadership**

This process of review was mapped to a framework of competency behaviour across the above themes and priority led by the annual development goals of coach and their athlete(s).

- All 13 coaches are currently working through their individual development plans to enhance the delivery and evaluation of their programmes.
- Two thirds of the cohort are working with athletes with success at UK Para- Athletics, UK School Games, SIAB, Welsh Athletics and England Age & Combined Events Group Championships.

In 2022 we will be opening application for the grant scheme to coaches who are not currently linked to Welsh Athletics funded athletes. Welsh Athletics are committed to valuing and supporting coaches who are striving to build performance programmes and environments to support talent of the future.

# PERFORMANCE & PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT

## Strategic Aim: Inspire

“Increase the number of Top 6 Performances at the Commonwealth Games.”

2022 saw a positive uplift in Top 6 finishes and a platform to achieving the strategic aim of 75% of all athletes that compete at the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

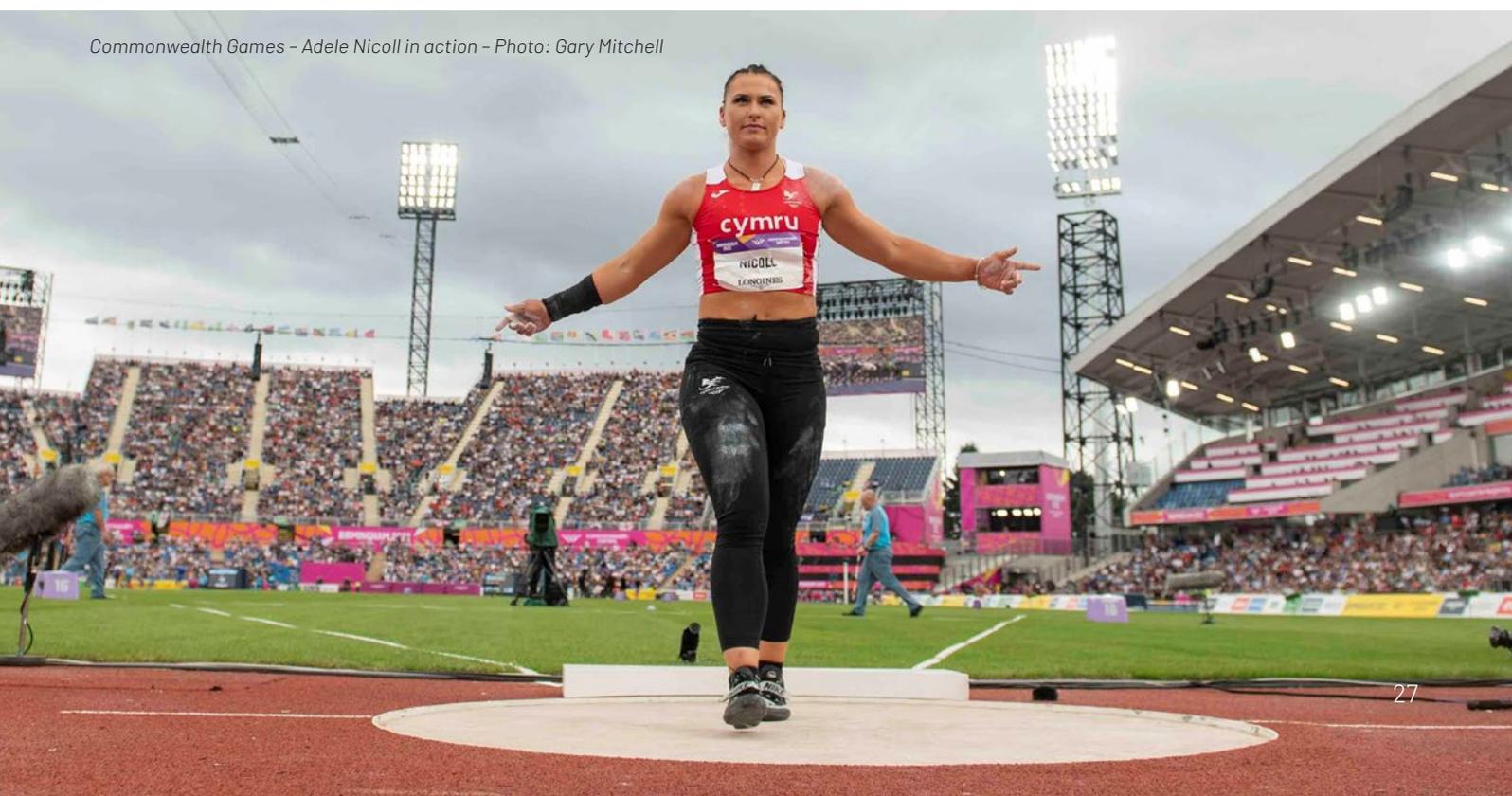
Games	Nation	Date	No. Top 6 Finishes	Team Size	Top 6%
2014	Glasgow	23 July - 3 August 2014	4	25	16.00%
2018	Gold Coast	8 - 15 April 2018	6	18	33.33%
2022	Birmingham	28 July - 8 August 2022	11	24	45.83%

Birmingham 2022 hosted the 22nd Edition of the Commonwealth Games. Since 1930 the Home Nations will have hosted seven editions of the Games. Athletics, Aquatics and Boxing are the only sports that have featured at every Games. The Commonwealth Games is the only occasion that Athletes get to wear their National

Vest on a Global stage and a Home Games is always a special and privileged opportunity for Welsh Athletes.

Despite there being an overall reduction in the size of Team Wales, 24 Athletes competed in Birmingham.

Commonwealth Games – Adele Nicoll in action – Photo: Gary Mitchell



Athlete	Event	Coach	Club
Jeremiah Azu	100m	Helen James	Cardiff Athletics
Olivia Breen	100m, T38	Aston Moore	City of Portsmouth
Joe Brier	400m	Matt Elias	Swansea Harriers
Hannah Brier	200m	Matt Elias	Swansea Harriers
Natasha Cockram	Marathon	Robert Hawkins	Micky Morris Racing Team
Piers Copeland	1500m	Bob Smith	Pontypridd Roadents
Melissa Courtney-Bryant	1500m	Rob Denmark	Poole AC
Aled Davies	Discus, F42-44/F61-64	Ryan Spencer Jones	Cardiff Athletics
Bethan Davies	10,000m race walk	Andi Drake	Cardiff Athletics
Clara Evans	Marathon	Chris Jones	Cardiff Athletics
Lauren Evans	Heptathlon	Fyn Corcoran	Cardiff Athletics
Dewi Griffiths	Marathon	Kevin Evans	Swansea Harriers
Beth Kidger	5000m	Joel Kidger & Geoff Watkins	Brighton Phoenix
Heather Lewis	10,000m race walk	Chris Jones	Pembrokeshire Harriers
Osian Jones	Hammer	Carys Parry	Liverpool Harriers
Rhys Jones	100m, T38	Kevin Williams	Disability Sport Wales
Jake Heyward	1500m	Mark Rowland	Cardiff AAC
Jonny Hopkins	3000m steeplechase	Tomas Plibersek	Swansea Harriers
Jenny Nesbitt	5000m	Chris Jones	Cardiff Athletics
Adele Nicoll	Shot put	Ryan Spencer Jones	Birchfield Harriers
Jac Palmer	Hammer	Adrian Palmer	Cardiff Athletics
Julie Rogers	Discus, F42-44/F61-64	Ryan Spencer-Jones	Disability Sport Wales
Amber Simpson	Hammer	Gareth Simpson	Deeside AC
Harrison Walsh	Discus, F42-44/F61-64	Nathan Stephens	Disability Sport Wales

Welsh Athletes held their own amongst the top athletes in the world. There was a British Record in the 10,000m Race walk from Heather Lewis, and a new Welsh Record over 1500m for Jake Heyward, whose 3.31.08 clocking now puts him 8th on the UK all time list behind Steve Ovett.

Jeremiah Azu was the first home nations athlete in the men's 100m in a high-class field with athletes from eight different nations represented – all four who finished ahead of Jeremiah have run under 10 seconds this season. Clara Evans was first home nations athlete home in the women's marathon

## Medal winners



**Aled Sion Davies**  
Gold, Discus



**Olivia Breen**  
Gold, 100m



**Harrison Walsh**  
Bronze, Discus

The Games was a massive team effort with staff from across the organisation working alongside personal coaches, and volunteers to ensure the athletes had the best possible environment and support to perform to their

best. Thank you to all who came and supported the team and were part of generating the fantastic atmosphere both on the roads of Edgbaston and in the new Alexander Stadium.

## Strategic Aim: Inspire

“Ensure Wales is represented at every Global and European Championship.”



Wales had representatives in the British Athletics teams for both the Oregon World Championships and Munich 2022 European Championships. In a hectic summer, Joe Brier competed at all three global events having broken his PB early in the season to secure his Commonwealth nomination standard.

Munich 2022 saw both Jeremiah Azu [Coach - Helen James] and Jake Heyward [Coach – Mark Rowlands] secure their first senior global medals after fantastic but frustrating performances in Birmingham.

Jeremiah secured a 100m Bronze behind teammate Zharnel Hughes and Olympic Champion Lamont Marcel

Jacobs of Italy. Jeremiah’s time of 10.13 was another PB in what was a break through season that also saw him become the first Welshman to take the British 100m title since Ron Jones. He followed up his individual medal by leading off the Gold medal winning men’s 4x100m team – a fantastic and well deserved pair of senior major championships medals for the Cardiff sprinter.

Jake Heyward, who’d run the race of his life in the Commonwealth Games final breaking his own Welsh record – 3.31.09 to finish 5th! - showed his class in the Munich final, running a tactically excellent race to claim silver behind Jakob Ingebrigtsen.

## Athlete Development Programme

The National Development Programme had 48 athletes accepted on to the two year programme. Over the year athlete and coach pairs were invited to two camps held in NIAC, Cardiff along with virtual workshop sessions throughout the year covering a range of topics from anti doping to nutrition. Of the athletes accepted on to the programme the gender split of athletes achieving the standards were 58% Male and 42% female.

The Regional Development Programme in 2021/22 began with a coach upskill day held in Brecon, with the aim of upskill the coaches who will be delivering the RDP

sessions. This was followed by three RDP activity days held throughout the year in each region. The sessions were a mix of technical work related to an individual event group and physical preparation. Despite some disruption due to COVID there were 420 athletes engaged with the RDP programme throughout the year with 43 coaches also engaged. In the week leading into the Regional Days, Instagram was used to build engagement with topics such as long-term athlete development and what it takes to progress from being a junior to a senior athlete. The endurance cohort was the largest event group followed by sprints.

# Para-Athletics Integration

## Strategic Aim: Unite

“Achieve full integration of para-athletes across the sport in Wales <sup>2</sup>.”

During the last year substantial further progress has been made in this area driven by the Para-Pathway Manager, Neil Taylor, who is employed in a jointly funded role with Disability Sport Wales.

Our 2022 Commonwealth Games team was an inclusive ‘one team’ with para and non para-athletes all brought together throughout the process. Podium Gold for Olivia Breen in the (T37/38) 100m and Gold and Bronze for Aled Siôn Davies and Harrison Walsh respectively in the men’s discus throw (F44)/(F64) event.

There has been a significant increase in integrated participation in both Welsh U15/Senior and U13/U17/U20 Championships. Para athletes Michael Jenkins and Zach Tandy came first and second outright in the U20 Men’s integrated Discus.

A first ‘in comp’ Classification Clinic was held within the Welsh Junior Championships in August. Five young Welsh athletes as well as two guest English athletes were reviewed and classified by national classifiers. National Classification allows you to compete in Para Athletics competitions in the UK and ensure your performances are recorded on the UK disability rankings on Power of 10.

An ambulant 100m for individual male and female athletes were included in the U20 International in Swansea for the first time with new Welsh Schools and U20 vests presented to three para-athletes, two of whom are currently on the National Development Programme.

The Schools Games this year again grew in participation for our Welsh cohort, seven para-athletes participated coming away with four golds and two silvers.

The National Development Programme operates as a fully inclusive offer, currently 7 para-athletes are on the first year of the two-year set programme with another 3 applying for the 2023 October intake.

Regional Development Programme (RDP) days are also fully inclusive and growth in this area of work continues

to progress across athlete and coach participation. Moving forward we will be working with DSW and other key partners to create classification specific development opportunities to give clubs and coaches the tools to shape truly inclusive Athletics environments.



# COMPETITION

**Rhiannon Hawker** Head of Competition

**Strategic Aim: Own it** “Develop the competition pathway to support long term athlete development and retention.”

After a long period of consultation and planning during the pandemic, we launched a new format of Junior League for 2022 which had Long Term Athlete Development at its core.

The multidisciplinary focus would allow athletes to have a more rounded experience of our sport and develop key technical and motor skills that would benefit them as they progress throughout the age groups, alongside leading the art of competition in a friendly team-based environment.

Unfortunately, the format was unable to be fulfilled as the full impact of the pandemic on our teams of volunteers and officials became clearer.

The challenges experienced with this initiative, however, did also present new opportunities. Many clubs took this opportunity to run their own small head-to-head competitions within club nights and training sessions, serving as a key development activity for young athletes, and also an opportunity for officials starting out on their journey to learn from those who have already progressed through the officiating pathway.



*Cardiff Archers vs Cardiff Athletics at Cardiff Met*

A new format of the Inter Regional Championships was held for the first time in 2022, which aimed to make the format of the competition more manageable for officials and more engaging for the athletes and team managers involved. The format allows for a shorter day as events

are now held on a two-year rotation basis and was well received by athletes, coaches and officials. A full review of this format will take place after completion of the two-year cycle to ensure that the competition remains relevant to the competition pathway.

## **Strategic Aim: Innovate**

“Build new collaborations to support innovation in competition provision.”

We continue to work collaboratively with clubs and competition providers to ensure that there is a greater network of accessible competition across Wales for all levels and age groups.

We are delighted to have provided support to over 50 Track & Field competitions delivered by a range of providers including clubs and regions that have provided competition opportunities for athletes aged 9 – masters (including schools), and we look forward to welcoming at least another two competition providers into our network for the forthcoming season.

The Welsh Athletics U20 International made a welcome return to our fixtures programme for the first time since 2019. Working closely with our Para Athletics Pathway Officer, Neil Taylor, we were delighted to incorporate scoring Para events into the fixture for the first time.

An extremely successful Classification clinic was also run alongside our Welsh Junior Championships where seven athletes received their first Para classification and will now continue their journeys along the Para pathways.

**Strategic Aim: Inspire** “Deliver World Class Events that showcase our sport throughout Wales and the rest of the World.”

Our major events programme for the competition year kicked off, as always, with the eagerly anticipated Cardiff Cross Challenge – the first edition of the event since 2019. In 2021, the event was given World Athletics Cross Country Tour Gold Label status and was one of only two Cross County events in the UK to be part of the globally recognised series – the only one achieving the Gold Label. The highlights package produced for the event was viewed by 1700 people totalling 175 hours of watch time, showcasing Wales on the international sports scene.

Gold Label status has again been secured for the 2022 edition of the event and an enhanced broadcasting package will further showcase the event.

2022 brought about Wales’ turn to host the SIAB XC International and the picturesque venue of Pembrey Country Park welcomed teams from the four competing nations.

The Welsh Senior Track & Field Championships was once again combined with the U15 age group to provide our young and developing athletes with an opportunity to compete alongside the best athletes in Wales. The reputation of the event continues to grow in popularity and in 2022 we saw a 20% increase in entries from the previous edition. We also welcomed back the streaming services of VINCO to broadcast a send off for our Commonwealth Games athletes.



**The Cardiff Cross Challenge highlights package produced for the event was viewed by 1700 people totalling 175 hours of watch time**





## Welsh Schools Athletic Association: Competitions

The year's formal WSAA competitions comprised of our Welsh National finals that in turn progressed to, the international pentathlon for 16 of our pupils on 4th December 2021, a very successful hosting of the SIAB cross country in Pembrey Country Park on 26th March 2022 for 32 of our endurance runners, and 63 pupils made the journey to Belfast for the track & field international on 16th July 2022. An U20 team was fielded in the Welsh Athletics U20 International too.

All in all, over 120 pupils gained invaluable international competition experience and we are grateful to all the staff, coaches, team managers and school officers who made these events possible. The Welsh Sportshall final in March 2022 saw three of our eight school districts in a position to field teams coming out of the worst of Covid 19.

We are very grateful to the volunteers from the eight school districts of Afan Nedd Tawe, Dyfed, Cardiff & the Vale, Glamorgan Valleys, Powys, South East Wales, Eryri & North West Wales, who were back up and running this school year, with most in a position to host events in track & field, cross country and Sportshall athletics. In the 2022/23 academic year we aim to see a return to a full competition programme of district events progressing to the respective National Finals.

On the governance side WSAA Officers continue to work with Welsh Athletics colleagues refining the Service Level Agreement which secures WSAA domestic and international operations, and update the WSAA Constitution to reflect and cement the content of the SLA.

Beneath the formal secondary school and colleges competition pathway, numerous other athletics events, sports days & festivals were held, where pupils enjoyed and experienced athletics whether it be in a competitive or non-competitive environment. We compiled and made available a free Commonwealth Games themed support resource for schools to support the delivery of these events including plenty of hints, tips and links to further information on how to host a great athletics event.

**All in all, over 120 pupils gained invaluable international competition experience and we are grateful to all the staff, coaches, team managers and school officers who made these events possible**

# OFFICIALS

**Zoe Holloway** Officials & Volunteer Development Officer

## Strategic Aim: Unite

“Recruit & support officials to remain active.”

In March the Track and Field Officials conference returned in person, this provided the opportunity for our Track and Field Officials to network, connect and learn through a series of presentations covering a range of different topics:

- Understanding the different disciplines
- The role of the technical manager
- The role of equipment officer and clerk of the course

## Since September 2021:



- 87 newly trained officials
- 45 primary officials have qualified level 1
- 21 primary officials have upgraded to level 2 and 3



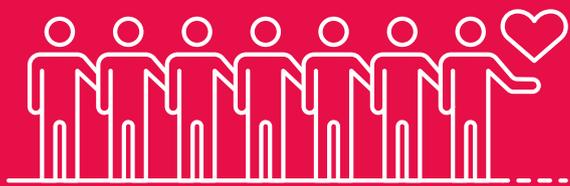
**In March, East & South hosted a joint Officiating Development Day** in Aberdare. Welcoming 20 enthusiastic volunteers of all ages from various clubs across the regions Aberdare AAC, Rhymney Valley AC, Rhondda AC, Cardiff Archers, Bridgend AC and Cardiff Athletics. Giving them all an introduction to 6 different sessions - timekeeping, track, field (shot and long jump), seeding/ results and starter/ starter's assistant.



**The first West Wales T&F Officiating Development Day** incorporated with the Swansea Open. This was held to support the future generation of officials here in Wales. Welcoming 13 enthusiastic volunteers from various clubs across the region Swansea Harriers AC, Carmarthen & District Harriers, Trots, Llanelli AAC, and 3M Gorseinon Road Runners. Volunteers gained experiences in various disciplines - timekeeping, track, field and photo finish. Experienced officials were on hand to explain what is involved at each event.

**Seven Welsh officials were selected to officiate or volunteer at the Commonwealth Games:**

Amy Price, Becky Gibbs, Dave Jessett, Sue Hooper, Sue Maughan, Lorraine Mulvaney, Gareth Elliott



**BIRMINGHAM 2022**



“Working as the National Technical Delegate at the Games was an amazing experience, working alongside and learning from the International Technical Delegate and the Competition Management team. As part of my role, I was in charge of managing all access to the field of play for athletes, officials, medal ceremonies and the technical equipment. It was great to see all the athletes as they headed out and to be able to wish all them all good luck and sneak in a ‘pob lwc!’ to all the Welsh athletes.” **Sue Maughan**



“My role at the recent CWG as an SA (Starter Assistant) came as a great surprise and I was honoured and privileged to be one of a team of 4 SA’s. It was an amazing experience to be able to work alongside a very experienced Start team and learn from them. The SA’s role involved taking “control” of the track athletes once they arrived onto the field of play and making sure all were where they should be and at the correct time. It was great to see some of the world’s best athletes along with some who were competing outside their country for the 1st time and extremely nervous. Every day the atmosphere was amazing and the spectators supported everyone regardless of what country. As this was my 1st experience of this level of meeting I was very well looked after and have no complaints.” **Sue Hooper**



“Basically, I had an absolutely amazing time as a volunteer with the Longines technical team. Self-imposed duties included smiling with excitement every time we came across past and present elite athletes, and networking with high level coaches from around the world. It was particularly special to be fitting so many amazing athletes from around the commonwealth with their transponders in the final call room area and wishing them the best of luck just before their races. Volunteers received a variety of games specific thank you gifts at different stages, all of which were well received especially as we weren’t aware of this incentive until we started.” **Lorraine Mulvaney**

# VOLUNTEERS

**Zoe Holloway** Officials & Volunteer Development Officer



## Strategic Aim: Unite

“Recognise and value the contribution made by active volunteers.”

“As part of our commitment to recognising and valuing the contribution made by active volunteers, in May we became part of tempo time credits network, offering Time Tempo Credits to our event volunteers supporting Championship events”

**Zoe Holloway, Officials & Volunteer Development Officer**

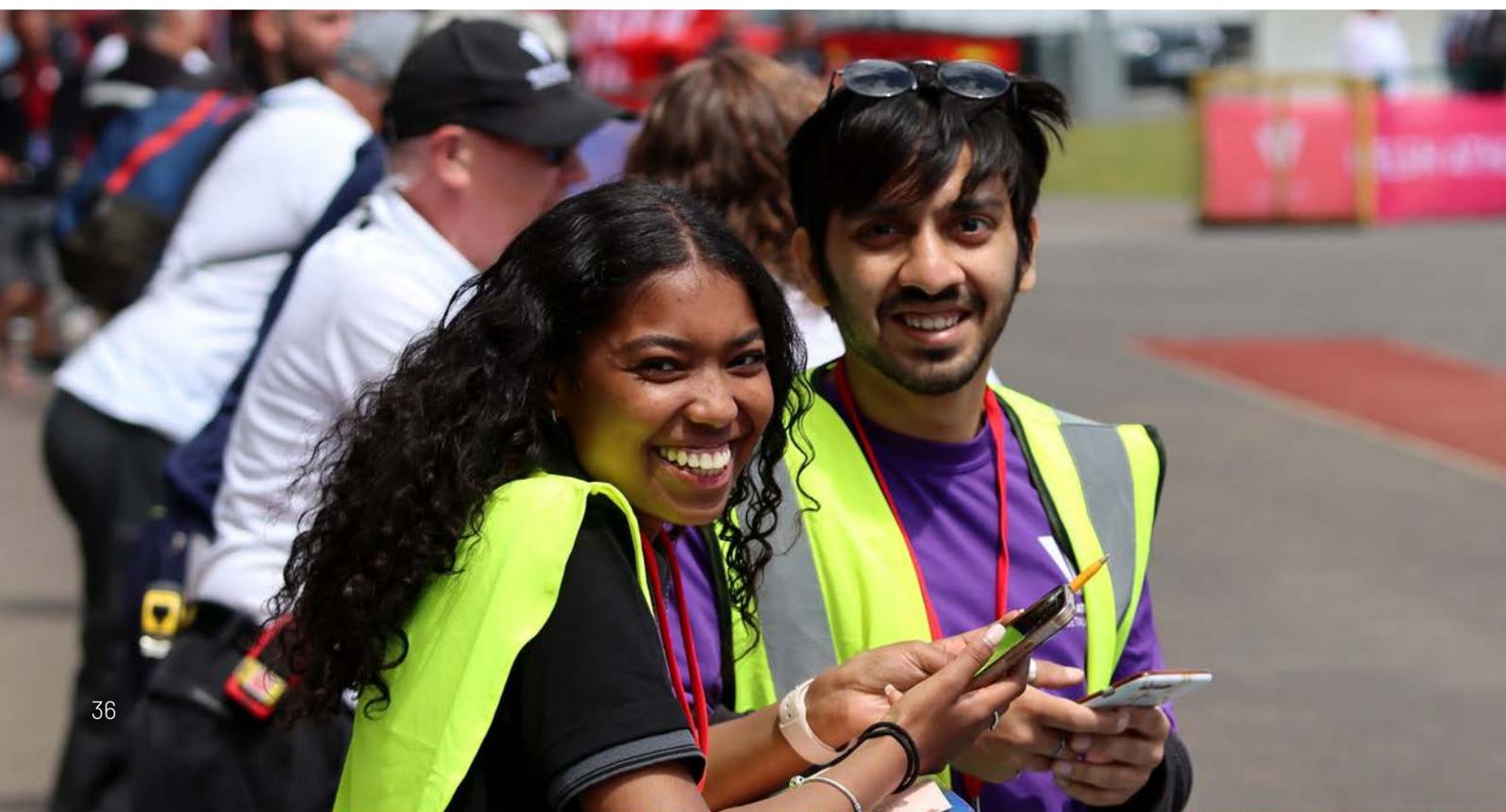
Tempo Time Credits can be exchanged for a wide variety of products, services and activities. Fun activities include entry to castles, bowling vouchers, tickets to music or sporting events.

Since January, over 420 hours have been volunteered at our key events, calculating a social return of over £4,000 which will be reinvested back into hosting a 'Club Volunteer learning series' in Autumn.

“There have been many benefits of volunteering with Welsh Athletics, one of the major benefits has been gaining valuable experience working within events, meeting and networking with different people”

**Ollie Bailey, Cardiff Met student**

*Volunteers at the Welsh Senior Champs - Photo: Owen Morgan*



# AWARD RECIPIENTS IN 2021

## Award of Honour

Phil James  
Sue Maughan  
Derek Osborne  
Ralph Siggery  
Gwilym Williams MBE

## Meritorious Award

Ros Alterman  
Mark Boswell  
John Davies  
Gwynneth Elward  
Jane Goode  
Denys Gumbley (Posthumous)  
Roger Harrison-Jones  
Nick Higman  
Sally Higman  
John Tanner

## Athlete Achievement Award

Justin Chaston  
Liz Lewis (nee Gill)  
Dewi Griffiths  
Tony Harris  
Jake Heyward  
John Merriman (Posthumous)  
Liz Johns (nee Parsons)(Posthumous)  
Christian Stephenson

## 2022 Regional Volunteer Awards

Haydn O Reilly, East, BUILT & District Running Club  
Colin Wilmott, East, Griffithstown Harriers  
Wayne Griffiths, West, Pembrokeshire Harriers  
Alun Parry, North, Prestatyn Running Club  
John Messum, North, Menai Track & Field  
Kevin Wyn Jones, North, Menai Track & Field  
Gareth Jenkins, South, Ogmores Phoenix Runners



Wayne Griffiths  
receiving his awards  
from Heather Lewis

# LIFE MEMBERS OF WELSH ATHLETICS



## Life Members of Welsh Athletics

1989	<b>Raye Evans *</b>	1989	<b>Ken Harris *</b>
1989	<b>Ron Evans *</b>	1991	<b>Bill Evans *</b>
1991	<b>Margaret Elgie *</b>	1992	<b>Frank Ireland</b>
2001	<b>Lynette Harries</b>	2002	<b>D. Hedydd Davies</b>
2002	<b>Ivor Adams</b>	2003	<b>Gwilym Evans *</b>
2003	<b>J. Barrie Owen</b>	2004	<b>Alan Currie</b>
2005	<b>David Alun Williams*</b>	2007	<b>John H. Collins *</b>
2009	<b>Jan Evans</b>	2009	<b>Keith Matthews</b>
2015	<b>J. Clive Williams</b>	2017	<b>John Penny</b>
2019	<b>Joyce Tomala</b>		

*\*denotes deceased*

# WELSH ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

## Welsh Athletics Hall of Fame

The following athletes were added to the Hall of Fame in March 2022



**Doug  
Turner**



**Sally  
Simpson**  
[nee Peake]



**Paul  
Gray**



**Carys  
Parry**



**John  
Merriman**

Hall of Fame inductees - photo credit Irfon Bennett



## Notes on the history of the awards

The awards were first introduced by one of the predecessors of the governing body in Wales - the Welsh AAA in 1952 with the Award of Honour. This was followed in 1954 with the Meritorious Award which is intended to honour individuals with less service than the Award of Honour.

For individuals who have made a long and exceptional contribution to athletics in Wales, further recognition was established in 1989 whereby a small group of individuals are honoured as Life Members of the association.

The Lifetime Achievement Award was introduced by the newly formed governing body Welsh Athletics to coincide with the inauguration of the Hall of Fame Awards for retired athletes in 2007. The Lifetime Achievement Award is for individuals who have given outstanding service over a minimum of 40 years.

Finally, the Athlete Achievement Award was introduced in 2018 for athletes who are unlikely to achieve the criteria for entry into the Hall of Fame. A full list of recipients of all awards and a detailed criteria for nomination of the awards can be found on the WA website.



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