



**wsa**  
Welsh Sports Association  
Cymdeithas Chwaraeon Cymru

**WSA Sports Industry Awards**

THURSDAY 6 JUNE 2024

PARKGATE HOTEL | CARDIFF



CBS is an award-winning, fully accredited, provider of top-tier DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Checks and Pre-Employment Checking Solutions, to SME's and larger organisations throughout Wales (and the UK).

We are proud to offer these services through the medium of English and Welsh.

CBS are proud to support the  
**WSA Sports Industry Awards**



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Complete Background Screening, CBS House, Cwm Cynon Business Park, Mountain Ash CF45 4ER

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# Programme

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- 6.45pm** Drinks Reception Sponsored By St John's Ambulance Cymru  
**7.30pm** Live Performance By Duke Al Durham  
**7.35pm** Welcome – Lauren Jenkins  
**7.45pm** Dinner & Awards Ceremony  
**11.30pm** Bar Closes  
**12.00am** Carriages

# Menu

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## STARTERS

Pressed Ham Hock Terrine

Fresh peas and beans, vanilla mayonnaise, shoots and radish (E,S)

Perl Las Cheese and Baby Spinach Tart

Rocket and mustard seed dressing, cranberry gel (V,D,G,E,Mu,S)

## MAINS

Braised Beef Brisket

Roast potatoes, seasonal vegetables, rich beef jus (D,SD)

Wild Mushroom and Pine Nut Pithivier

Seasonal vegetables, tarragon and tomato fondue (V,G,E,D)

## DESSERT

Lemon Torte

Layered and filled with hidden lemon centre (V,G,SD,S)

\*(V) Vegetarian, (G) Contains gluten, (D) Contains dairy/milk, (N) Contains nuts, (P) Contains peanuts, (E) Contains egg, (F) Contains fish, (Cr) Contains crustaceans, (M) Contains molluscs, (S) Contains soya, (C) Contains celery, (Mu) Contains mustard, (Se) Contains sesame seeds, (SD) Contains sulphur dioxide, (L) Contains lupin.

## Lauren Jenkins - Host

Lauren Jenkins is a presenter for BBC Scrum V and S4C on their rugby coverage. Lauren has reported on major global sporting events including the British & Irish Lions tour of New Zealand, multiple Commonwealth Games & more recently Wales' summer tour to South Africa.

Lauren has also worked as a pitch side reporter for Prime Video and Sky Sports and presents the weekly BBC Scrum V podcast.

Lauren is hosting the awards for the second successive year and also hosted the WSA Sustainability Conference last November.



## Performances by

## Duke Al Durham

Duke Al is a published poet, spoken word artist, rapper, and facilitator. Writing rhymes is Duke Al's therapy. From a young age, Duke Al would scribble raps and poems in his old lyric book. It was his way of expressing himself; an escapism to challenge his OCD. A passion of words, flow and rhyme flared.

After being diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at age 23, the pen was there to help him understand and articulate how he felt. Now he aims to make an impactful change using one rhyme at a time. He is the author of 'Bittersweet: The Highs, The Lows, Hypers and Hypos of Living with Type 1 Diabetes'. You can find Duke Al's recent published work on BBC Wales for the 2022 World Cup, BT Sports 'Sport in Words' for Black History Month on Sir Lewis Hamilton, Cardiff Metropolitan Anthology 8, Artes Mundi journal, on Amazon and BBC Scrum V for The Six Nations 2022.



## Siwan Henderson

Siwan Henderson is a singer and actress from Pontyclun. She trained in Musical Theatre at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts London and is a member of Welsh of the West End - a musical theatre super-group who have performed at iconic venues such as the Royal Albert Hall and the London Palladium, and wowed audiences internationally by reaching the live semi-finals of ITV's Britain's Got Talent. Siwan's credits include It Happened in Key West, The Pirate Queen, Pobol y Cwm (S4C) and pantos including Snow White and Aladdin.



## Stefan Hughes

Steffan is a singer and presenter from North Wales. He has performed for the likes of HRH Prince William, Shirley Bassey and Catherine Zeta-Jones, and shared the stage with performers including Katherine Jenkins and Russell Watson. He is the creative director of Welsh of the West End, which became an online viral sensation during lockdown gaining over 20 million views. He is a member of the Classical Brit Award-winning group Only Men Aloud and with them has enjoyed performing on several UK Tours and half-time performances at the Principality Stadium during the Six Nations Rugby tournament. He performs regularly on S4C, and is a presenter on both BBC Radio Cymru and Radio Wales.





# Foreword

## Andrew Howard WSA CEO

Croeso i bawb a diolch am ymuno gyda ni heno. Rydym yn gwerthfawrogi eich cefnogaeth ac yn gobeithio y byddwch yn mwynhau achlysur cofiadwy iawn yn ail Gwobrau Diwydiant Chwaraeon Cymdeithas Chwaraeon Cymru.

Good evening all and thank you for gracing us with your presence this evening. Your support is deeply appreciated, and we sincerely hope tonight marks a truly memorable occasion at the second Welsh Sports Association Sports Industry Awards.

Last year's inaugural WSA Awards received an overwhelming response, and we're thrilled by the heightened interest and anticipation surrounding this year's event. With a record-breaking 88 entries across eight categories, the competition has been nothing short of fierce. But then again, in the realm of sports and leisure, a spirit of healthy competition is practically woven into our DNA!

The purpose of these Awards is twofold: to celebrate and to showcase. We're here to shine a spotlight on the remarkable initiatives undertaken by our members, initiatives that not only elevate Welsh Sport but also enrich our society. I hope these stories inspire you as much as they have inspired the countless individuals who've had the privilege of experiencing them firsthand.

At the heart of tonight's gathering lie the WSA's three core strategic goals: Collaborate, Develop, and Promote. These principles permeate every aspect of this evening's festivities.

This event is a testament to collaboration, bringing together our key stakeholders who play pivotal roles in shaping and advancing the Sports and Leisure sector in Wales. We extend a warm welcome to our esteemed members and express our gratitude to our broader membership base for their unwavering support. A special acknowledgment goes out to our WSA partners, with a heartfelt thank you to Complete Background Screening, our headline sponsors. Through our ongoing partnership, we're enhancing safety within sports and leisure, having conducted a record-

breaking 18,500 DBS checks last year. By connecting our members with expert partners, we collectively bolster the sector's capabilities and resources.

Tonight, we're honoured to be in the esteemed company of Sport Wales CEO Brian Davies, along with Ruth Meadows, the Welsh Government's new Director of Sport, and Deputy Director Steffan Roberts. We eagerly anticipate collaborating closely with them to advocate for increased investment in the sector. We recognize the profound impact sports and leisure have on society and will continue to champion for additional investment beyond the sports budget, leveraging our sector as a catalyst to achieve Wales's seven well-being goals. Tonight's proceedings will undoubtedly underline this vital role of our membership.

Furthermore, this event serves as a platform for sectoral development through knowledge exchange and the showcasing of best practices. It's an exceptional opportunity to enhance performance, bridge knowledge gaps, foster collaboration, and nurture leadership. It would be a remarkable legacy if every member organisation represented here tonight, commits to replicating some of the nominated projects within their own organisation going forward.

A heartfelt thank you is due to all who have contributed to making this evening possible, including the independent judging panel, Engagesports, Genero, Harlequin Printing & Packaging, the WSA Board, and our dedicated team at the WSA.

Lastly, I want to address tonight's nominees directly. Simply earning a spot on the shortlist is a testament to the outstanding work your organization has undertaken. Regardless of tonight's outcomes, you've already secured a place on the podium of excellence. Take pride in your achievements; whatever the outcome, you've truly earned it.

Diolch a llongyfarchiadau mawr i bawb.

# Our Mission

Removing financial barriers for children to access sport

**The Welsh Sports Foundation:  
Like nothing else.**

Wales has an extensive infrastructure of clubs, facilities and places to play sport. The Welsh Sports Foundation supports those who fall through the gaps, without duplication.

*Every individual child and young person can take part in sport and physical activity, by removing financial barriers to make it happen.*

Too many children are denied opportunities. By levelling the playing field, no child is left on the side-lines.

**Donate Now  
and Make a Difference**



**No Donation is Too Small.**



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# Shortlist for Most Influential Campaign Award

## Squash Wales Summer of Squash

Squash Wales embarked on a vibrant journey to celebrate and elevate the sport of squash throughout the nation. Aptly titled “The Summer of Squash,” this pilot initiative spanned six energetic weeks, in the summer of 2023. The program was a collaborative effort that brought together 12 Welsh clubs: from Old Pens in the south to Wrexham in the north and from Aberystwyth in the west to St Mellons in the east, with Builth Wells in between. Each of the dozen clubs brought with them a rich legacy and passion for squash that made the initiative a memorable one.

The Summer of Squash was successful due to its comprehensive

marketing approach, collaborative efforts with multiple clubs, data-driven insights, adaptability and a focus on junior squash development – the very future of the sport.



## Swim Wales Ymlaen Strategy

Swim Wales launched its YMLAEN strategy in May 2023 to drive Welsh aquatics forward over the next three years. YMLAEN, the Welsh word for “forward” or “progress”, sets a new, positive direction for the national governing body, its members, supporters and the 500,000 people who participate in aquatics every week. The new strategic framework showcases Swim Wales’ commitment to driving growth, development, and inclusivity in aquatics throughout Wales as they work to make their vision of ‘Aquatics, For Everyone, For Life’, a reality.

At the core of the YMLAEN strategy is a multifaceted approach aimed at fostering positive change and sustainable progress across various facets of Welsh

aquatics. Through strategic partnerships and collaborations, Swim Wales has made significant strides in expanding its reach and impact within the aquatics community.

Through targeted initiatives and strategic partnerships, Swim Wales are driving positive change and making aquatics accessible, inclusive, and enjoyable for everyone, ultimately contributing to the health, well-being, and vitality of Welsh communities.



## Weightlifting Wales Raise the bar Wales

In December 2021, Weightlifting Wales created a project called Raise the Bar Wales as part of the Winter of Wellbeing initiative funded by the Welsh Government. The campaign offers young people the opportunity to participate in a free, inclusive 6-week weightlifting programme across Wales.

Due to the success of Raise the Bar, Weightlifting Wales have continued to fund the programme from its own limited funds, hoping that an organisation will see the CSR benefit of partnering with the initiative to safeguard its future.

The academy centres delivering the initiative receive a variety of support from Weightlifting Wales ranging from workshops, coach education material, equipment and social media marketing.

The project is aimed at increasing young people's confidence through social interactions, working with others and making new friends. The programme supports

the social, emotional, and physical well-being of young people through physical activity, with the sessions focused on enjoyment and learning how to lift safely and build strength.

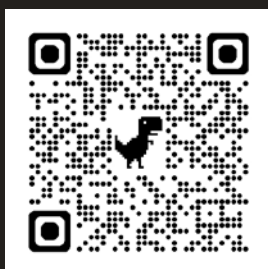


It's an inclusive programme which educates young people about the long-term physical, psychological and social health benefits of weightlifting and strength training. The programme supports children in several deprived areas and helps to reduce loneliness and isolation by engaging through carefully planned sessions. There has also been collaboration with local schools and other local organisations and sports clubs, and the programme has been exceptionally popular with most academies providing continuous courses throughout the year which are oversubscribed.

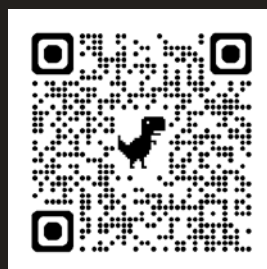
## Strategic Plan and Annual Reports

To find out more about the work of the WSA,  
view our Strategic Plan and Annual Reports here

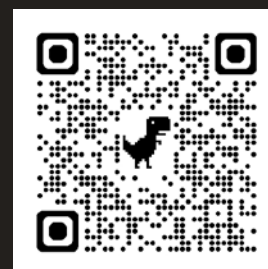
Strategic Plan



Annual Report



Adroddiad Blynyddol







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# Shortlist for the Best Initiative to Support Women in Sport and Physical Activity Award

## Cricket Wales Women's Softball Cricket

Cricket Wales has invested in people to support, promote and grow women's and girls' participation in cricket.

This initiative is for the recreational game, where women of all abilities or experience can take advantage of the opportunity to pick up a bat and give cricket a go! There is no cost involved in taking part, so players can just turn up in their sports kit, their trainers, a bottle of water and a willingness to have fun and play!

The Club, with the support of Cricket Wales officers, ensure that opportunities are there to for players to train, improve and play in teams. This friendly and inclusive environment where players can play whatever their ability and fitness levels make this offer stand part from others. In women's softball cricket, if you train and commit to

your team, you will get to play in a team and not only that you will get the chance to bowl (if you want to) and you must contribute with the bat. So, every player is valuable to the team's success.



There has been a huge growth in Women's teams, which have increased by 28% since 2021 and from 487 women in 2018, there were 1,794 playing in 2023. The growth of women's softball cricket has led to a boom in numbers of women also signing up to coaching courses with approx. 25% of all participants on coaching courses in 2022/23 in Wales, being women.

## Football Association of Wales Be Football Schools Programme

Through extensive research with girls across Wales, the FAW along with the Youth Sport Trust identified the drop off in girls participation at age 13. This research also presented insight into the barriers and motivations of players - which the Be Football Schools programme aims to support with. This programme is designed to support secondary schools to deliver curricular and extra-curricular girls-only football opportunities, whilst also

developing young leaders of the future.

There are now 45% of public secondary schools (79 schools) delivering the programme across Wales. Thus meaning, 45% of secondary schools are now delivering girls football >



as part of the curriculum, along with delivering girls football after school clubs - delivered by the BE Football Influencers within the school. With 79 schools now delivering, this also means there are over 474 BE Football Influencers trained to deliver girls football to their peers.

Not only has the increased participation in schools been a great success, but this programme also sets it apart as it makes girls aware of the career opportunities in football. The initiative provides full training on coaching

and marketing and by volunteering at the after school clubs, it provides increased experiences to support with Duke of Edinburgh, Welsh BaccaLaureate and college applications. The FAW truly believes in empowering young women to be their best self and they believe this programme allows girls across the country to challenge themselves, enhance further skills and enjoy playing football in an environment that previously has not allowed.

## The Outdoor Partnership This Girl's Adventure Programme

The Outdoor Partnership's 'This Girls Adventure Programme' aims to address the inequality of women in the outdoor sector. Women are underrepresented in outdoor leadership qualifications, and this becomes more pronounced the higher up the qualification ladder. Indeed, women make up only 4% of leaders with higher qualifications. This Girl's Adventure aims to inspire more women and girls to participate in outdoor activities and enjoy the benefits that the outdoors can bring to one's health and social wellbeing and ultimately see a potential career in the sector.

This programme looked slightly different in each region within Wales depending on the feedback from women and girls' and natural resources. For example, in Gwent, there was a focus on hiking and navigation sessions allowing women to feel more confident out in the hills and mountains. In Pembrokeshire, there was a focus on water safety, open water swimming sessions, and SUP safety sessions, teaming up with the RNLI on several occasions.

This success has led to the creation of a Women's Only Kayaking



Club as a branch of Llandysul Paddlers in Partnership with The Outdoor Partnership. This is the first time the club has had a specific session for women. The club has now been running since January 2024 and it is growing in numbers, with 90 women on a WhatsApp group that actively discuss kit, locations to hike, paddle, swim, share photos of their adventures and share links to other female only talks/events.

Our This Girls Adventure programme has created opportunities for 2,826 women and girls in 2023 alone across the whole of Wales.



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# Shortlist for the Best Commitment to the Welsh Language Award

## Actif Sport and Leisure, Carmarthenshire Council Actif Anywhere for Schools Platform

This project is a live streaming and On-Demand digital platform for schools. Called the 'Actif Anywhere for Schools' platform, the aim was to improve health and well-being, through physical activity in educational settings.

The objective was to provide school staff and pupils with the opportunity to access daily high-quality bilingual content (videos and TCresources) that will reduce the barriers to engagement, increase participation and support teachers in their delivery. A weekly schedule of live-streamed sessions brought the expertise of qualified sports coaches and instructors into classrooms around the county.

Whether at the start of the day, during lunchtime or an afternoon session the flexibility gave a range of options to schools who could also take advantage of pre-recorded a variety of on-demand sessions. This enabled pupils to get active in their classrooms as a welcome addition to their regular PE lessons.



The platform also enabled teaching

staff to access a bank of resources to support them in their delivery of school sport and PE to complement coaches and instructors bring able to share ideas and demonstrate good practice examples to help upskill teaching staff and grow their confidence in delivering themselves. A fully bilingual coach was recruited to lead on this project to ensure delivering was available in both Welsh and English languages.

There were 18 Primary Schools selected to be part of the pilot ensuring variety in terms of size, location and free school meals status. All the county's secondary schools were part of the pilot. A total of 51 Sessions were delivered, including 6 Teacher Time Sessions (for teacher wellbeing). The weekly Welsh Language Physical Literacy sessions proved to be the most popular, with 71 pupils attending on average per session, with a total of 3,645 participations.

## Byw'n lach Byw'n lach ac yn Gymraeg

The ability to offer all its services through the medium of Welsh is essential for Byw'n lach's relationship within its community, playing a key role in growing and normalising the Welsh language through its work in the leisure sector.

Byw'n lach provide more than 3,200 weekly community swimming and gymnastics lessons through the medium

of Welsh, providing adaptations within those lessons

for any younger children from a non-Welsh speaking background, who are yet to access full time education, >



or at the beginning of their language journey. Byw'n lach also provide weekly swimming lessons to over 70 Gwynedd primary schools through the medium of Welsh. The children's holiday programmes are delivered predominantly through the medium of the Welsh Language with adaptations for any children visiting the area of learning the language. This programme saw over 10,000 attendances to the free of charge sessions last Summer.

Welsh and English language skills are essential for all Byw'n lach's 250+ workforce. This allows the organisation to provide a truly bilingual service to all its customers and allows staff to use their Welsh language skills on a daily basis in the workplace.

Currently 97% of staff meet the defined Welsh language competence level, as defined in their job description. The remaining 3% are supported through structured training and less formal development opportunities to work towards the standard required.

Byw'n lach's social media and communication strategy makes prominent use of the Welsh language, generating a significant amount of media resources to reflect this. By placing the Welsh language first, Byw'n lach ensure that it is used more frequently by fluent Welsh speakers and new speakers alike.

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## The Outdoor Partnership Bant â Ni

The Outdoor Partnership has been operating as a fully bilingual charity since 2004. Its core aim is to enhance lives through outdoor activities; empowering residents, providing opportunities in local communities, improving health through participation, and supporting people across Wales to take up outdoor activities as a life-long pursuit.

The Bant â Ni initiative engages directly with Welsh speakers and learners, providing a range of opportunities, from taster sessions to instructor development, and everything in between. The programme aims to create and support a network of outdoor instructors and enthusiasts who are either first language Welsh speakers or who are learning Welsh. The project came out of a need identified by its Development Officers in both Swansea Bay and Mid Wales regions that many stakeholders in their areas were struggling to find providers who could deliver outdoor activities through the medium of Welsh. There is also limited support

for outdoor instructors who would like to develop their working Welsh in an outdoor specific environment that could be identified.



Additionally, The Outdoor Partnership supports hundreds of volunteers annually to achieve recognised Governing Body awards to qualify and up skill, allowing for safe participation, with bespoke Welsh medium courses delivered, which has directly resulted in an increased number of qualified Welsh speakers in a range of outdoor activities.

The Outdoor Partnership's Welsh Language Scheme is endorsed by the Welsh Language Commissioner, and they are currently developing this to create their Cynnig Cymraeg; a full endorsement from the Commissioner.



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# Shortlist for the Best Innovation Award

## Commonwealth Games Wales Team Wales Business Club

The Team Wales Business Club was launched in September 2023, following the successful introduction of ten new commercial partners to the organisation. This innovation was the first time in the organisation’s history to extend the commercial side of the business.

The Business Club’s main aim was to bring together the new partners, introduce potential future partners to the organisation; giving them an insight into Team Wales and the benefits of getting involved with an organisation, which is the only multi-sport competition which is inclusive of athletes and para-athletes.

Since the launch at the Royal Mint Experience in September, Commonwealth Games Wales have successfully hosted five Business Club events, with over 500 people and organisations attending.

These events are paramount for the future of the organisation and to continue building the commercial branch, to ensure the security and opportunities for

athletes are at the forefront.

The Business Club will continue throughout the year at various locations throughout Wales, giving organisations across the country opportunities to engage with Team Wales, to hear inspirational stories from Welsh athletes and sporting leaders, and giving them in return an opportunity to have a voice during the events.

Team Wales’ commercial income has increased significantly over the last year and the new relations and contacts made during the first six months of the Business Club, has put in place a healthy appetite from new organisations to become a new partner of Team Wales in the future. It is clear, that the success of the Business Club events has enabled the organisation to reach a wider pool of potential partners quickly and organically in a networking environment.



## Welsh Cycling Festiva

Welsh Cycling’s Festiva, is an innovative programme designed to engage a new generation of new riders.

The concept is very simple, but some of the best innovations are! Welsh Cycling used an evidence based approach to look at the issues they faced. Mainly, that there is high bike ownership in Wales but low engagement with organised activity, that traditional bike racing is too expensive and the environment quite intimidating for new riders (leading to a decline in participation rates and races being cancelled) and it offers poor value for money, whilst the lag time at races

for parents and riders that have travelled two hours or more, is sometimes low. Additionally - as racing is ‘first past the post’, it can be a deflating experience for new riders who are physically underdeveloped.

Welsh Cycling needed something that changed this, so designed the Festiva format, a fun-competitive event structure that uses varied and multiple mini-events to >



increase time riding at events whilst accounting for the different abilities that are present in any group. Racing is still encouraged, but different formats of it and some team races are included. But alongside the races should be skills challenges, games, bike maintenance tasks and art - or anything else that goes!

The concept has landed well with clubs and groups and Welsh Cycling have used the event structure to

design its first ever school championships that will take place regionally, and such is the flexibility of the format it can be linked to any major event like the Olympics or International Women's day. Welsh Cycling have designed a brand, supporting resources, made funding available and are offering regional support to increase uptake.

## Welsh Rugby Union PLAYER.Connect

The Welsh Rugby Union and Vodafone have worked together with The Sports Science Agency, to create PLAYER.Connect a first-of-its-kind app to monitor and improve women's health and rugby performance.

The innovative system was launched in February 2023 and enables the WRU's performance team and female rugby players to monitor all areas of their well-being and recovery.

PLAYER.Connect allows players to track well-being through mood and energy scores, recovery through sleep quality and quantity, illness and medication, injury and soreness, menstrual cycle, training load and recovery and concussion and head impact. The players are provided with performance and well-being recommendations, and their data is shared with the performance and medical teams enabling enhanced player and performance support.

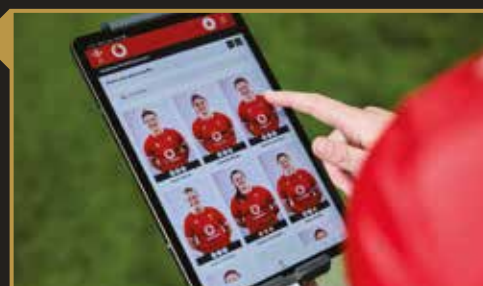
PLAYER.Connect has been used to support 341 female rugby players and has collected over 90,000 data points from across its teams. Since it was implemented in February 2023, PLAYER.Connect has been instrumental in helping the WRU medical team to identify health

issues with its players. Indeed, three players were identified as

having dysmenorrhoea (abnormally painful periods), which led to the diagnosis of endometriosis and anovulation (lack of ovulation), a common cause of infertility, was also identified with one player and through treatment, this player has recovered.

The initiative is also the only well-being monitoring app that enables the correlation with concussion incidence and symptoms, allowing it to be at the forefront of research into menstrual cycle and concussion which is an area where research is desperately needed.

The innovation has also had a significant impact on the time that the performance team spend analysing data. With the previous system, the performance team spent hours a day looking at spreadsheets of data. Now, with intuitive dashboards, graphical reporting and instant and scheduled notifications, the performance team can spend their time helping players, not staring at spreadsheets.





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# Shortlist for the Best Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Initiative Award

## Bellevue FC (nominated by FAW) Multi-Ethnic & Inclusion Football Club Initiative

The Football Association of Wales nominated Bellevue FC, as Wales' first league registered, multi-ethnic and inclusion specific football club, which offers league football opportunities to those from perceived adverse backgrounds and social poverty that might normally face barriers or discrimination within the sport.

The club was founded in the summer of 2016 and registered to compete in the North East Wales Football League from August 2017. The club was started with the aim of providing opportunities to foreign nationals moving to the area, but has recently expanded to the point where they are supporting refugees, asylum seekers, economic and educational migrants, children and adults with learning difficulties, people with minor physical disabilities, supporting those with mental health issues through sport, people within the LGBTQ+ community and people within the BAME community.

The club has grown in the last 12 months to include a League registered Women's team and two league registered children's teams for under 12 and under 11s. Within the wider community, Bellevue can always be found standing side by side with organisations promoting

equality and inclusion in society. The volunteers can be found

in situations ranging from motivational speaking to running pop-up stands at community events, always with professionalism and approachability. The club are regular attendees of the Offa community Carnival and AVOW Volunteers Day with their pop-up stand and have spoken at Glyndwr University, Wrexham Enterprise Hub and as part of Holocaust Memorial Day...All this, with just a few willing and dedicated volunteers.

The club have worked alongside Kick it Out, Fans for Diversity, the Football Supporters Federation, Show Racism the Red Card, Football v Homophobia, Level Playing Field, the Wrexham Disabled Supporters Association, Wrexham Town of Sanctuary, Citizens of the World and Wrexham City of Culture. The achievements that the volunteers have brought to the club are astounding and a credit to the level of work and commitment they bring to Bellevue FC and the dedication to the players within it.



## Tennis Wales LTA Serves Initiative in Wales

The Tennis Wales 'LTA SERVES' initiative in Wales is a development programme which takes tennis into the heart of local communities. It takes tennis and its benefits to places it has never been played before and to people who may have never picked up a racket, or thought tennis was for them.

LTA SERVES targets children and young people aged 4-18 years, from a diversity of backgrounds and underserved >



communities. It's delivered in a variety of venues including Community Centres, Youth Clubs, Council & Housing Estates, Mosques, Gurdwaras, Mandirs and Church halls. The initiative aims to empower and equip communities by engaging and upskilling local people to become 'Tennis Activators', enabling them to confidently deliver tennis sessions to their children and young people.

In 2023, Tennis Wales were the only national governing body of sport in Wales to receive funding from Welsh Government linked to the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan. The funding received from Welsh Government has supported the delivery of an initial two-year community tennis programme for young people from ethnically diverse communities in Wales.

The project is developing weekly tennis sessions under the banner of the LTA SERVES initiative across twelve locations with focus on communities in Cardiff, Newport and Swansea. The project is also training LTA SERVES

activators to deliver local fun, introductory tennis activities; and providing coach bursaries to support young people from ethnically diverse communities to undertake LTA Coach Development qualifications. The LTA SERVES initiative in Wales has seen rapid growth over the past two years in 2021 – there was only two community venues delivering the initiative in Wales by the end of 2023 this had grown to 90 projects across the country.

The initiative is delivered in 17 local authorities across Wales with 28 venues catering for WIMD 1 and 2 communities. A total of 296 activators have received training across Wales to support activities.

It has been a successful first year of the LTA SERVES in Wales – Anti-Racism Project with 12 venues recruited and 161 participants in weekly activity along with four festivals with 535 participants delivered to date.

## The Outdoor Partnership Inclusive Climbing Provision in Mid and South Wales

Since starting the inclusive climbing programme in November 2022, Llangorse has hosted 22 inclusive climbing sessions, providing 176 opportunities for climbers requiring 1:4 instruction – with conditions ranging from ADHD to autism, physical disabilities, anxiety and sensory impairments - and 44 opportunities for climbers requiring 1:1 instruction – including wheelchair users and those requiring low sensory environments and more support.

A total of fourteen parents and volunteers have completed nationally recognised qualifications – the 'Indoor Climbing Assistant' award - through funding secured by The Outdoor Partnership, allowing them to assist with kitting up and belaying during the session. Five people have gone on to join mainstream climbing clubs because of these sessions. The Outdoor Partnership have run three 'Climbing for All' courses - a one day nationally recognised CPD module for instructors - and provided 36 opportunities for instructors and volunteers in Mid and South Wales to upskill in how to support climbers with additional needs. In addition

to this, the Llangorse centre has also run a climbing day for

visually impaired climbers (10 opportunities) and several private sessions for third sector organisations such as Barnardo's and Sense, organised through The Outdoor Partnership as part of other programmes.

In terms of the other walls, Rock UK Summit Centre near Merthyr Tydfil has also been working in partnership with The Outdoor Partnership and Active Merthyr Tydfil to develop their own inclusive climbing programme and development programme to upskill volunteers. Boulders in Cardiff have been running inclusive sessions in partnership with Sense and The Outdoor Partnership and Dynamic Rock in Swansea are looking to expand their inclusive offer and have just received the adaptive equipment they need as a result of funding secured by The Outdoor Partnership.







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# Shortlist for the Best Sustainability Initiative

## Cymru Football Foundation Sustainability Fund

The Cymru Football Foundation’s (CFF) Sustainability Fund was created to support football clubs in reducing their carbon footprint and energy costs by developing their facilities to become more environmentally sustainable. Through funding received from Sport Wales, the CFF’s Sustainability Fund supported projects across two categories – Simple Steps and Transformational Steps.

The Sustainability Fund supported 23 projects across Wales with a total investment of over £400k resulting in a reduction of over 50 tonnes of carbon emissions per year and saving the beneficiaries £300,000 in running costs over the next ten years.

From the projects supported, 14 of the 22 Local Authorities were represented. 57% of projects included solar energy developments, 35% of projects included indoor LED lighting upgrades, 26% of projects included boiler or heating upgrades and 13% of projects included

sustainable water sourcing developments.

As part of the process, Energy Audits were stipulated as mandatory for all applications which ensured that all supported projects aligned to the strongest recommendation within the reports produced by energy specialists that delivered the biggest cost and environmental benefit to applicants.

The CFF was able to highlight to football clubs that not only is investing in environmentally sustainable projects beneficial for the climate and a globally responsibility on us all, but it also delivers significant cost benefits that enables clubs to become more sustainable, to reinvest in providing better experiences for their community.



## Dragons Rugby Eco Dragons

Dragons RFC launched an ‘Eco Dragons’ campaign for the 2023/24 season at Rodney Parade - as the Club looked to improve its sustainability, carbon footprint and drive positive change.

To give the campaign momentum, Dragons RFC teamed up with a number of partners including Pledgeball, who gave fans an online platform to visually take a stand on sustainability. Fans could then make a pledge to take actions, actions that together make a significant difference, and will save money at the same time.

The Dragons used their opening fixture to roll out several new initiatives, as well as championing local causes and work. They made some immediate changes to drive their own sustainability pledge, installing electric car charging

stations, swapping the stadium lighting to LEDs that are timed and

on sensors, to save on unnecessary energy usage. The club rotated in more ecologically forgiving cleaning products, swapping to recycled paper and toilet paper, and phased in granular fertiliser. New vegan food options were made available across the stadium.

The club also agreed a partnership with Newport Transport to provide free public transport to all members and worked with Stagecoach to give away free travel packages. At the first match, Dragons worked with fellow WSA-member Newport Live’s Momentum project, >



to include demonstrations of Technogym bikes and Pop-up bike storage units to facilitate cycling at their games.

Bee 1 also attended to talk to fans about their work, which addresses the decline in pollinators, both locally and globally.

Through their partnership with Pledgeball, Dragons' fans went online and pledged to save 55,240.90 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e - the

equivalent to taking 12.3 cars off the road. Determined to beat that figure, they held another Eco Dragons game in January 2024 and the fans responded in record-breaking fashion and pledged to save a massive 528,388.00 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e - the equivalent to taking 114.87 cars off the road!

## Wales Golf

### Wales Golf and Men's Sheds

Wales Golf & Men's Shed Cymru developed a sustainability initiative following the Senior British Open Golf Championship, which was held at Royal Porthcawl Golf Club.

The event, organised by the D.P. World Tour, is screened worldwide and participated in by some of the sport's greatest names and champions. Such an event requires considerable infrastructure to accommodate the players, media, officials and spectators.

Wales Golf, aware of the potential to recycle some of the materials used in the construction of the tournament infrastructure agreed with the organisers to separate all of the timber headed for landfill for repurposing.

Wales Golf then contacted Charity, Men's Shed Cymru. The Charity provides a place where men can escape from everyday stresses of life, to escape to and pursue their interests. Crucially it's a place where loneliness and isolation are addressed in a friendly environment and where men can chat and enjoy each other's company. As it transpired, one of the Charity's primary branches (The Bridgend Squirrel's Nest) was local to Porthcawl.

Following consultation with Men Shed's it was apparent that a donation of timber would greatly benefit the

charity as it would allow the charity to construct timber

products, such as benches and planters which could be sold on to generate income for the charity.

Following the Championship and throughout the two week "Take-Down" period, timber destined for landfill was separated and stored separately. This was collected by Wales Golf and delivered to The Bridgend Squirrels where the donations were greatly received and subsequently put to good use.

Not wanting to miss an opportunity for Golf Development, the Community Development Team have since visited the Squirrels group to see some of the products produced by the group with the recycled timber but also to deliver some fun golf activity sessions. The project has provided a significant inroad for the Sport into local communities and presents opportunities for further collaboration throughout Wales, where a network of 70 Men's Sheds exists.





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# Shortlist for the Best Social Impact Award

## Aura Leisure Community Sports Hub

The Community Sports Hub stands as a beacon of empowerment and inclusivity. The fifteen hubs welcome 200 young individuals each week to engage in transformative activities that transcend mere recreation. More than just a sports program, it serves as a vital lifeline for the community, providing a safe haven where young people feel connected, valued, and empowered to explore their potential.

At the heart of Aura Leisure's Community Sports Hub are the young participants who grace its sessions week after week. These individuals form the vibrant heartbeat of their community, representing a diverse tapestry of backgrounds, interests, and aspirations. Through their active participation, they not only find joy in the thrill of sports but also forge lasting friendships and a sense of belonging that extends far beyond the field.

Central to the Hub's ethos is the belief that every young person deserves access to quality recreational opportunities, regardless of their socio-economic status. As such, their services are provided free of charge, ensuring that financial barriers never stand in the way of participation. This commitment to accessibility not only levels the playing field, but also empowers young individuals to embrace their potential and pursue their passions without limitations.

During the school holidays, the Community Sports Hub takes on a whole new dimension, offering an array of

exhilarating activities designed to captivate the imagination



and ignite the spirit of adventure. From inflatable park sessions that unleash boundless energy to go-karting adventures that fuel the thrill-seeker within, each experience is carefully crafted to inspire awe and wonder. Additionally, climbing wall sessions provide an opportunity for young people to conquer new heights, both literally and metaphorically, as they push their limits and discover the power of resilience and determination.

Beyond the thrill of the activities themselves lies a deeper purpose: to create moments of joy, connection, and empowerment that resonate long after the sessions have ended. By providing a safe space for play, exploration, and growth, the Community Sports Hub serves as a beacon of hope, inspiring young individuals to dream boldly and pursue their passions with unwavering determination. Using the transformative power of sports and recreation, the Hub will continue to nurture a generation of resilient, compassionate, and empowered individuals in north-east Wales, who are poised to shape a brighter tomorrow for themselves and their communities.

## Bowls Wales Bowls Wales and the Stroke Association Initiative

The partnership between Bowls Wales and Stroke Association Wales was established so bowls could be used to aid stroke survivors' recovery. Bowls Wales offers stroke survivors the opportunity to learn a new sport or return to the sport following their stroke. Recovery can be tough, but by uniting stroke survivors together and helping them stay active, the initiative can rebuild lives after suffering a stroke.

During lockdown the first virtual bowls sessions were delivered,



ensuring Bowls Wales could still support stroke survivors with their recovery. Since the success of the first sessions, the initiative has developed and recently >

Bowls Wales have delivered a Stroke Survivors Competition at Carmarthen Indoor Bowls Club, with the winners from Hubberston community centre in Pembrokeshire. This in itself was a great story, as this stroke survivor group was initially set up for just eight weeks at Hubberston & Hakin Community centre. However, following its success, it is now a sustainable short mat bowls club, that has run weekly for the last 12 months. This social impact partnership is significant to everyone involved in the sessions from rehabilitation for the stroke survivors, community connection for partners and carers and the positive effect it has on

clubs, volunteers and community groups. Bowls Wales now have sessions running in Prestatyn, Llandudno, Wrexham, Caerphilly, Newport and Bridgend.

As the initiative develops, so does its inclusivity and Bowls Wales are also working with existing Stroke groups to offer bowls in non-traditional settings by bringing bowls to them, through the use of Bowls Buddies equipment. Bowls Buddies are a new type of soft bowls that are suitable for a range of surfaces (hard, grass and artificial), including target mats and ramps to appeal to a wider audience.

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## Welsh Rugby Union

### Fit, Fed, Fun

The WRU's 'Fit, Fed, Fun' initiative is a series of free, rugby-themed, day camps designed to support children throughout Wales during school holidays throughout the year.

Starting in 2022 after trials in 2021, the initiative has fed, and continues to feed, thousands of children in Wales' most under-resourced areas. The camps, supported by We Soda, have grown year-on-year for the past three years; and over the last 12 months, the WRU Community Department more than doubled the delivery of the 'Fit, Fed and Fun' camps reaching over 14,000 young people across Wales.

Feeding the children two square meals, a good breakfast and a healthy balanced lunch, is a key focus of the camps. Rugby coaching and fun activities for all ages and abilities are also hosted by experienced WRU and regional foundation staff. Several of the camps are cross sport with football and cricket activities also featuring as part of the program.

An integral part of the programme teaches about the benefits of looking after the community and the



environment, with a focus on recycling and reducing waste. The

children also learn about the benefits of looking after their community and the environment.

In addition to fun rugby activities the camps help to build social skills and self-esteem. Children work in groups, working together and building teamwork skills. Some of the children who come along are experiencing rugby for the first time. They may not have rugby boots, so the WRU take away this barrier. Since the inception of the program, the Union have given over 5,000 pairs of Gilbert boots to those children that need them. It also means, if they enjoy the sessions, they can visit their local club and continue playing afterwards.

The WRU's priority is to ensure that no child attending goes hungry or thirsty and benefits from a hearty breakfast to start each day.



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# Shortlist for the Best Collaboration Initiative Award

## Cricket Wales and Cymru Football Foundation Ponthir Community Hub Project

The collaborative efforts of Cricket Wales, the Cymru Football Foundation and Welsh Government have resulted in the successful delivery of the Ponthir Community Hub and multi-sport facility. This project has significantly impacted the community of Ponthir in Torfaen and it showcases the power of partnership in driving positive change and promoting inclusivity in sports and community development.

The Ponthir Community Hub Project emerged from a shared vision to create a vibrant, inclusive, and accessible space for the community to engage in sports and social activities. Recognising the need for modern facilities that cater to the diverse needs of the community, Cricket Wales, Welsh Government, and Cymru Football Foundation joined forces to bring this vision to life. The project aimed to address the lack of inclusive changing rooms for girls, women, people with disabilities, while also providing a new community building that serves as a licensed premises and a versatile community venue.

The collaboration was built on the principles of shared goals, mutual respect, and a commitment to maximising the impact of collective resources. By pooling together

expertise, networks, and funding, the

partners were able to leverage each other's strengths to overcome challenges and drive the project forward. The collaborative approach enabled the partners to maximise investment, optimise outcomes, and ensure the sustainability of the community hub for years to come.



The Ponthir Sport and Community Hub Project has delivered significant outcomes that have positively impacted the community including inclusive Changing Rooms, a Community Building and a multi-sport facility that offers opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to engage in sports and recreational activities. The facility has become a focal point for healthy living, wellness promotion, and skill development in the community. It has created a sense of pride, unity, and empowerment among community members, inspiring them to take ownership of their shared space and actively participate in its activities.

## Disability Sport Wales The Disability Sport Wales Para Sport Festival 2023

The 2023 Para Sport Festival was in its second year and such was its success, that it proved to be even bigger and better than its first year in 2022.

The Para Sport Festival was a week-long multi-sport and multi-venue event that ran from Monday 10th July to Sunday 16th July 2023. The Festival was designed to

inspire and encourage people of all ages and abilities to participate and spectate in disability and para sport. >



Building upon 2022's success, the 2023 Para Sport Festival delivered even more national status tournaments and more opportunities to get involved; as a participant, a volunteer or as a spectator.

The events attracted professional athletes and novice participants from all over the United Kingdom. Events included Welsh Para Golf Open, InSport Series event, Boccia UK Team Championships, Deaf Football International match, Wheelchair Rugby Welsh Open, Welsh Para Open Target shooting, British Para Fencing Championships, World Triathlon Para Series, and IRONMAN 70.3 Swansea concluding the week.

All events were free to attend, with all events offered as open access opportunities to maximise the social impact of the Para Sport Festival.

Collaboration was at the heart of the Festival's success as the delivery model is reliant on a collaborative approach from over 20 national governing bodies of

sport, alongside local authority and event provider partners, to deliver the unique event format. In total 38 partners were involved in the direct delivery of participation opportunities across the festival week.

As part of the Para Sport Festival week, Disability Sport Wales also hosted an insport series event which showcases inclusive opportunities for disabled children, young people, and adults. This event, providing a range of opportunities to experience inclusive sports, was delivered by 22 local insport Clubs and National Governing Bodies to provide a local pathway into inclusive clubs.

In partnership with A F Blakemore (SPAR) and local insport clubs, NGBs, Local Authorities or third sector partners, Disability Sport Wales are able to deliver accessible events which provide opportunity for disabled people and their friends and families to connect with good quality community opportunities available locally.

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## Wales Golf

### The Gareth Bale Festival of Sport Golf Championship

The Gareth Bale Festival of Sport aim is to inspire the next generation of sporting superstars and to promote non-early specialisation in Sport. The multi-sport festival ran on the 16th September 2023 at The Celtic Manor in Newport.

This fun, grassroots beginner festival provided opportunities for young people, from a local StreetGames Doorstep Sports Club, to try a range of sports in a fun and safe environment with the option to try follow on events at their local facility. These sports included Football, Golf, Table Tennis, Dance, Cycling, Bowls and Badminton.

In partnership with Street Games, local community groups from areas of deprivation were invited to the Grassroots session. Over 50 participants were split into groups and rotated around the sports in turn, so everybody had the opportunity to try something new and discover a new lifelong passion for sport. All participants were provided with lunch, so nobody was left without a meal. For some participants, it was their only hot meal of the week.

The Gareth Bale Golf Championship was held over two

days, where 84 Under 18 golfers battled it out in a 54-hole tournament at the Celtic Manor Roman Road and Montgomery Golf courses. This junior Golf Championship enabled players to compete on a national level and have the opportunity to gain a world ranking, whilst also trying other sports at the festival.

The Gareth Bale Festival of Sport and Golf Championship was led and organised by Wales Golf, with the festival being supported by Street Games Wales. The combination of an elite golf tournament and a grassroots multisport festival provided a unique opportunity for local communities and elite athletes to give back, and be inspired to take up sport - something which makes the Gareth Bale Festival of Sport and Golf Championship stand out from other collaboration projects, as it is truly unique.



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