

## Chair's Report 2023 – 2024

There has been plenty to celebrate over the past twelve months for Weightlifting Wales, as well as opportunities to grow and develop as an organization. I want to personally thank Darren Rogers for his commitment and service to Weightlifting Wales, and moving into a new strategic direction with the support of the board, staff and members.

Whilst we have the exciting news of the Commonwealth Games confirmed in 2026 in Glasgow, we are yet to find out which sports will be in the sports schedule, and therefore, until this has been announced we can only hope through the success of Commonwealth weightlifting will prove valuable in the short listing of sports included.

In May, we appointed a new Performance Pathway Manager in Christian Pszyk and Head Coach in Gareth Evans, both bring a wealth of experience to the team and creating positive change to the performance programme to build and develop a world class performance programme. Their impact has already received positive feedback amongst our members and our stakeholders, and I am excited for the future of the performance programme.

The year has seen increases in both participation and competition numbers which has supported an increase in our membership. This year's British Senior Championships saw the largest ever representation from Welsh athletes, that in turn supported the selection of a 7 athletes for the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships in Fiji, who secured a total a 4 medals with plenty of promise for the future. We also saw great success in the Masters scene, with 3 Welsh athletes winning gold in Norway. It is fantastic to see our sport being enjoyed across all age groups and a real testament to lifelong participation.

In June, the hard work of our development team, clubs & members were recognised at the Welsh Sports Association Sport Industry Awards by winning the 'most influential campaign' award for our Raise the Bar programme. It is a testament to all the academy centres delivering the initiative to over 1000 young people who have participated in this ongoing and extremely successful programme since the start of the project back in December 2021, as part of the Winter of Wellbeing initiative funded by the Welsh Government. Since the Covid pandemic, the importance of physical and mental wellbeing has been a primary focus across Wales, and the we have seen some incredible success stories throughout the process.

The summer continued to see success across participation initiatives with New Wave Weightlifting securing Sport Wales Be Active Funding to support junior development and HAWFC receiving National Lottery Funding for the Nifty60's project in Anglesey.

We continue to work with our key stakeholders ensuring good governance and compliance, whilst exploring new opportunities, as we are work towards our new strategic plan and objectives. It is important to build on our success and continue to develop in areas open for improvement, and I am excited to work with the board and staff to achieve positive change to support the success of weightlifting and para powerlifting in Wales.

I would like to thank Sport Wales, Team Wales and British Weightlifting for their ongoing support, but most notably our members.