



# CEO Update

## May 2025 Edition

Welcome to the May edition of the Table Tennis Wales CEO update.

A big congratulations to everyone who competed in the Veteran Team Championships of Wales, the Raiffeisen Youth Championships, and especially to Anna Hursey for her outstanding performance at the European Under-21 Championships in Bratislava. These are just a few of the many recent highlights showcasing the incredible talent emerging through our performance pathway squads. Our clubs play a vital role in discovering and developing future stars. If you've identified a promising young player or need support, please don't hesitate to contact our regional development officers — we are here to help. As we gear up for the new season, our regional development officers are available to assist with your club's plans. If you have suggestions on how Table Tennis Wales can improve or better support your efforts, I would love to hear from you so feel free to get in touch at: [owen.rodgers@tabletennis.wales](mailto:owen.rodgers@tabletennis.wales)

Owen Rodgers

CEO, Table Tennis Wales



# Second weekend of Veteran Team Championships of Wales provides thrills

The second weekend of matches in the Veteran Team Championships of Wales, hosted at North Gwent TTC, certainly did not disappoint, with plenty of intense matches occurring across both divisions to conclude a fantastic tournament. Thank you to all of the staff and volunteers involved in delivering another great Welsh event. Well done to all of the teams and players from both divisions for competing extremely well throughout.

The Premier division saw new winners crowned. On the final day, Gwent C looked to retain their title but Cardiff beat the 2024 champions 4-2 in a decisive match to tie level on points. Cardiff A secured the victory on match difference to earn back the trophy that they won in 2023. Cardiff's team consisted of Stephen Eades, Jeff Rigby, John Hook, Gavin Jones, Owen Clutterbuck and Bryan Fernandes, with all players in the team contributing essential wins throughout the season.



At the other end of the table, matches were fiercely contested between the other 4 teams (Gwent A, Gwent B, Swansea A and Wrexham) throughout both weekends, which ensured a competitive environment for all involved.



In the final averages, Owen Clutterbuck (10/10) and Daniel Petit (8/8) remained undefeated across the games that they played in the competition. Division One was also very tightly contested. Going into the final day, three teams were all fighting it out to be crowned champions, with Trehafod, Gwent D and Swansea C all battling for every match. Trehafod prevailed as champions after the final round of matches. With both Trehafod and Gwent level on points, the former were victorious with a superior games difference. Trehafod consisted of captain Bhanureka Sabaratnam, Alan Thompson and David Griffith, providing fierce competition to Gwent throughout the season. A special mention goes to David Griffith from Trehafod for maintaining a 100% win record (20 of 20 matches) throughout the season. Kevin Gertsen for Swansea B (4/4) also remained undefeated.

Gwent D finished as runners up after a decisive victory over Swansea B early Sunday morning; on track to win the title, they suffered a shock draw to Cardiff B in the afternoon. Gwent D consisted of Michal Lukanic, Georgi Anastasov, Nigel Gore, David Grounsell and Julie Hughes, all of whom competed well across the two weekends of play and earned the silver medal. At the other end of the table, Cardiff B, Gwent E and Gwent F all fought well across the two weekends and will look forward to competing again next year.

Well done to all of our competitors, we look forward to seeing the competition back again next year! With the sport and competitions continuing to grow, be sure to get your entries in early to avoid disappointment!



## Historic milestones set as Anna Hursey shines at 2025 European Under 21 Championships in Bratislava

Anna Hursey returns from the 2025 European Under 21 Championships in Bratislava having made history. She became the first Welsh player in history to win a European table tennis title in a women's or youth event, as she claimed gold in the U21 Women's Singles and Women's Doubles.

Anna defeated reigning champion Veronika Matiunina of Ukraine in the final, before securing her second gold of the event as she triumphed in Women's Doubles alongside her German partner Mia Griesel. The accolades made Anna the most successful woman at the 2025 Championships. On her way to the final, she stormed through the group stage, overcoming Germany's Eireen Kalaitzidou 4-1, Sweden's Leah Tveit Muskantor 4-1, and Poland's Katarzyna Rajkowska 4-0.





And her dominance continued as she went into the knockout phase of the tournament, dropping just one set en route to the final. After beating Germany's Koharu Itagaki 4-0, Italy's Nicole Arlia 4-1, and Romania's Ioana Singeorzan 4-0, Anna lifted the trophy courtesy of a 4-1 win over Matiunina in the showpiece event. The duo of Hursey and Griesel was newly formed heading into the Championships, but pulled together to end the reign of last year's champions, Elena Zaharia and Bianca Mei Rosu, and secure this year's title. Mei Rosu had a rare opportunity to become the first player to win three consecutive U21 titles, but the story took an ironic turn as she lost to her former partner Griesel – with whom she had won the title in 2023. While Griesel regained the crown, it was a first-ever European title for Anna Hursey, following her runner-up finish at the 2022 European Youth Championships with Sophie Earley.



# Anna Hursey's Triumph Fuels Optimism in GB Table Tennis Pathway

Anna Hursey's remarkable performance in the European Under-21 Championships has underscored her position as one of the brightest talents in table tennis while also highlighting the momentum building within the GB table tennis programme. In Bratislava, Hursey won both singles and doubles gold, marking her fifth consecutive tournament victory since early April, including a win at the WTT Feeder Manchester event. Her achievements follow a series of impressive results for the GB squad, with Liam Pitchford, Paul Drinkhall, and Sam Walker also securing gold in Manchester, while Connor Green and Sophie Earley claimed silver medals. The Elite Training Centre in Sheffield, now a hive of activity and optimism, is fostering a new era of success for British table tennis. Anna Hursey's Triumph Fuels Optimism in GB Table Tennis Pathway The GB programme, headquartered at EIS Sheffield, consolidates top talent and expertise from all Home Nations. Led by Gavin Evans, Director of Performance Development, and Head Coach John Murphy, the programme is managed by Table Tennis England as the designated Home Nation, with the primary objective of securing Great Britain's first Olympic table tennis medal. Gavin Evans emphasized the significance of Hursey's trust in the programme, stating: "With the new structured pathway we have created to bring alignment across Great Britain, it enables greater performance, and the new centre supports athletes to be truly professional. "Anna's placed her trust in the GB programme and the programme we have set for her, and it's given her the confidence to go out and perform. "Table Tennis Wales have also trusted the programme and have enabled GB to run Anna's programme. When the Home Nations work together and are aligned and trust each other to deliver in their space of expertise, you can get amazing results. "Anna's success is testament to the work she's done and the team has done – and it is a team effort, with the sports psychology and strength and conditioning support in our partnership with Sheffield Hallam University, and Justin the physio has been brilliant."



Owen Rodgers, CEO of Table Tennis Wales, echoed these sentiments: “I’m 100 per cent behind what Gavin and the performance team are doing and it’s proving to be very successful. “The continuity of coaching is key and producing amazing results for Wales and Great Britain.” Gavin believes further success is within reach and that Anna will inspire the other athletes in the pathway. “I genuinely believe Anna has all the ingredients in her game and set-up to be a European Senior champion and win a World Championship medal one day,” he said. “It’s also exciting that she’s got three more goes at this competition (the European Under- 21s), and Connor Green has as well – he reached the last 16 in the singles and was very close to winning a medal in the doubles. “What Anna is doing is giving belief to other athletes coming through. She leads from the front with incredible professional behaviours – we’re lucky to have such a professional athlete leading the way for the other athletes coming through. “To have an under-21 double European champion in the programme gives that belief. It shows that if you’re committed to the programme and you are professional and believe in yourself, everything is possible.”





## Plenty of positives at Raiffeisen Youth Championships

Wales enjoyed a positive Raiffeisen Youth Championships in Linz, with the team competing in the team and singles events over six days. There were lots of matches and positive results, with some standouts being the U19 Girls Team (Lowri Hurd and Ruby Elliott) just missing out on a bronze, losing in the fifth match in the final set with a big fight back after going 2-1 down in the over match score. The U17 Girls Team (Lily Walters and Isabella Turner-Samuels) also had a positive team event, coming fifth as they just missed out on medal positions. The U17 Boys Team (Toby Harwood and Harry Street) also played well, getting into the championship competition. Coming up against strong opposition in their group, however, the boys had to play for 13th or 14th position, winning to secure 13th. Then the singles competition started, with a match-packed final three days. There were some really strong performances from every member of the team. Lowri Hurd played very strongly in her group to top the lot and make her way into the quarter finals. She subsequently came back from a set down to win 3-1. In the final four, Lowri competed against the eventual winner from Bayern Munich; it was a closely contested match but her German opponent came out on top.



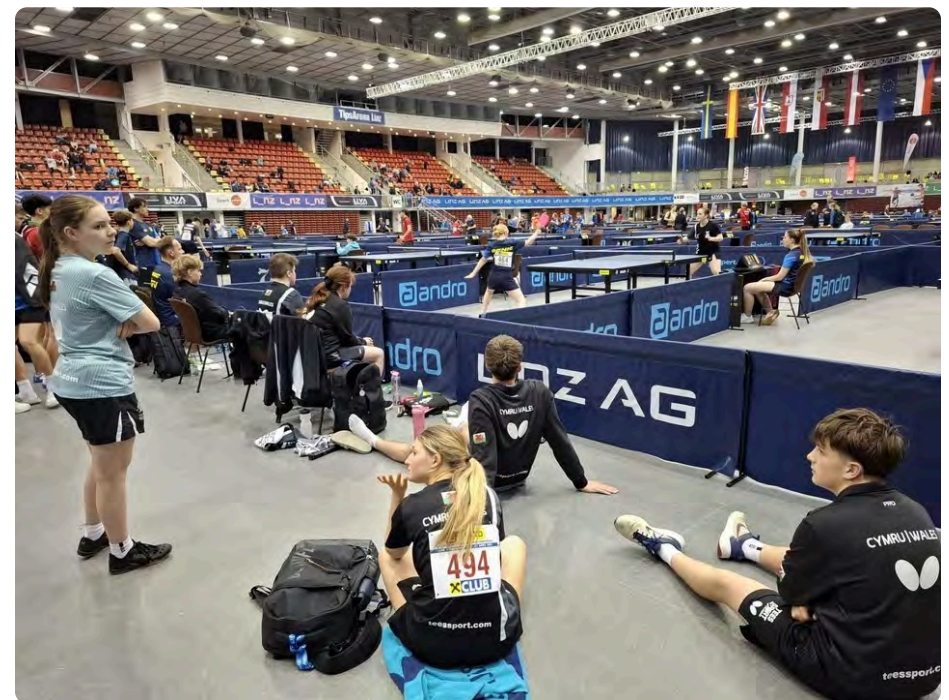


Ruby and Lily had tough group draws and ended up in the challenge section of the tournament, where both played very well and both of whom went on to win silver.

Izzy played well in her group to get into the main draw of the competition, where she lost in the semi-final of the main draw consolation. Harry and Toby both had strong performances in their groups to make it into the main draw, with Harry topping his group. The two boys then just missed out on a round of 16 place, losing in the round of 32.

## Results

- U19 Girls – 4th
- U17 Girls – 5th U17
- Boys – 13th
- Singles: Lowri Hurd – 3rd in Main Draw
- Lily Walters – 2nd in Challenge Draw
- Ruby Elliott – 2nd in Challenge Draw
- Harry Street and Toby Harwood – Top 32 in Main Draw
- Isabella Turner-Samuels – 3rd in Main Challenge





# 21 teams compete at South West Primary School Championships Final

The South West Primary School Championships were held on Thursday 3 April 2025 at the Swansea Tennis Centre, marking another successful year of competitive and enthusiastic participation. A total of 21 teams competed in the tournament—six more than last year—demonstrating the growing popularity of the event. Teams from across the region, including Bridgend, Neath, Port Talbot, and Swansea brought their best young talents to the courts. Taking home the top spot were Timmy Muil from Litchard Primary School and Oscar De Abreu from Pencoed Primary School. The pair were on top form all day, winning every match and showing off some great teamwork and impressive skills. Both schools can be proud of their players for such a standout performance! The tournament format featured five groups in the morning—four groups of four and one group of five. The top-performing teams dominated their pools, winning all their matches. In the afternoon, play continued with a reshuffled format of three groups of five and one group of six.

### Championships Final Standings:

- |                                      |                                |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Litchard / Pencoed Primary School | 11. Llangan                    |
| 2. Baglan A                          | 12. Ynysfach A                 |
| 2. Pencoed B                         | 13. Llangan B                  |
| 3. Pencoed C                         | 14. Llangan D                  |
| 4. Pen Y Fai A                       | 15. Llangan C                  |
| 5. Pencoed A                         | 16. Blaengwrach                |
| 6. Brynnau B                         | 17. Brynnau C                  |
| 7. Pen Y Fai B                       | 18. Ynysfach B                 |
| 8. Ynysfach C                        | 19. Brynnau D                  |
| 9. Brynnau                           | 20. St Illtyd's Primary School |
|                                      | 21. Cila Primary School        |

Congratulations to all players for their sportsmanship, effort, and team spirit. Here's to another exciting tournament next year!





# Meet the Table Tennis Wales Players:

## Jacob Wicks

From the first time picking up a table tennis bat while on holiday, Jacob Wicks has come a long way to now be a regular representative of his country. After getting hooked on the sport while away with family, Jacob returned home and immediately joined Gwent Table Tennis Club in Cwmbran, eventually getting spotted by Disability Sport Wales. Fast forward a little, Jacob went on to make his international debut at the Finland ParaOpen in late 2023 and has gone on to enjoy success representing Table Tennis Wales on the international stage. November 2024 saw him secure his first National title at the British Para National Table Tennis Championships with 3-0 wins against Fliss Pickard and Dan Thomson, a week after a run to the French Open quarter-final. A little more recently, Jacob featured heavily and performed strongly in competitions that spelled a new, exciting era for para table tennis, notably reaching the last eight of the ITTF Para Future Costa Brava to suggest a bright future in the sport. We chatted to Jacob about his career so far and what he hopes to achieve...



As a national athlete, what does a typical day of training look like for you?

"I ensure that I have some food plenty of time before training is due to start.

"I make sure that I am hydrated. I try to perform some light stretches and gentle movements to release my muscles before going to the training hall."

How would you describe your style, and what equipment do you use?

"I would describe my playing style as attacking with feel. I try to place the ball onto the table with lots of different spins and powerful top spin." "I use a Butterfly Primorac offensive bat with Tenergy 05 on my forehand and Dignics 05 on my backhand side."

How do you handle the pressure of representing your country on the international stage?

"Playing for Team GB on the international stage is a privilege that I try to enjoy.

"Keeping my emotions in check is something that I have found difficult in the past. As I have got older, I have learnt to try to stay relaxed and concentrate on one point at a time.

"To relieve any stress I will bounce the ball between points in order to try and relax, control my emotions and focus on how I want to play."

What advice would you give to aspiring table tennis players who dream of reaching the national level?

"Work hard and never give up.

"Give 100% every time you are at the table. Training once a week at 100% is better than training four days a week where you are not fully committed."

What challenges have you faced and how have progressed past them? "During Covid, I lost the ability to walk, due to the lack of training.

"I started using a wheelchair but I was determined to continue playing as a standing player. My parents set up a gym in our garage and I worked extremely hard to in the gym to build up my strength in order to be able to walk again.

What are your goals and aspirations in the coming years?

"My ultimate goal is to represent Great Britain at a Paralympics. I would love to represent Wales at the Commonwealth Games but need them to add class 6 to the competition.

"Over the course of the next four years, I would like to participate in as many international tournaments as possible in order to improve my international ranking.

What motto would say you go by, both in sport and daily life?

"Never give up."



# Structure Update

We are pleased to share the latest updates to the TTW team structure.

## **Business & Performance Team Support Officer**

Marc Gonzalez the Table Tennis Wales membership officer has left the organisation.

Chelsea Quickfall has now commenced in this role and will provide vital support to both the business and performance functions.

## **Head of Participation**

Claire Biddle has officially started in this position and will lead our efforts to grow and support participation across all levels.

## **Competitions, Leagues & Events Manager**

Simon Oyler will transition into this new role and will report directly to the Head of Participation.

## **Head of Performance Pathway**

Following two rounds of interviews, we have not yet appointed a permanent Head of Performance Pathway. In the interim, Craig Bryant, our current TTW Board Director of Performance, will continue to oversee the structure until a suitable replacement is found.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Nathan Thomas and Callum Evans for the excellent work they've done in coaching our squads over the past few weeks.

## **Ongoing Interim Coaching Arrangements – National Squad** (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday):

Lead Coach: Nathan Thomas

Assistant Coach: Callum Evans

Support Coaches: Nancy Yeh, Sam Slatter, Dave Webber

# Structure Update

On behalf of everyone at Table Tennis Wales, we would like to extend our thanks to Stephen Jenkins and Josh Morgan for their outstanding service and commitment to the sport over many years. As long-term national coaches, Stephen and Josh have played a pivotal role in developing our athletes, shaping the future of table tennis in Wales, and representing our country with passion and professionalism on the international stage.

Their dedication, expertise, and tireless efforts have left a lasting legacy in the Welsh table tennis community. Both coaches have successfully guided multiple generations of players, from grassroots development to elite performance. Stephen's technical expertise and methodical approach to player development has helped countless athletes refine their skills and tactical understanding of the game. Josh's innovative coaching methods and ability to inspire confidence in players of all ages has been instrumental in elevating the standard of Welsh table tennis.

Together, they have overseen some of the most significant achievements in our national team's history, including numerous international medals, Commonwealth Games successes, and the development of several world-class players who have gone on to represent Great Britain at the highest levels. Their work has been fundamental in establishing Wales as a respected force in the international table tennis community.

We are incredibly grateful for the impact you have made, both on and off the table. Your contribution has not only helped athletes grow in skill and confidence, but also inspired a generation of players and coaches alike. The coaching systems and training methodologies you've implemented will continue to benefit Table Tennis Wales for years to come.

Beyond their technical contributions, Stephen and Josh have embodied the values and spirit that we cherish in our sport – integrity, perseverance, sportsmanship, and a genuine love for table tennis. Their mentorship has extended beyond athletic development to include valuable life lessons for all who have had the privilege of working with them.

Thank you, Stephen and Josh, for your years of service. We wish you both the very best in your future endeavours and look forward to seeing your continued influence in the sport.



# Structure Update

## **Welcome to Claire Biddle, Head of Participation**



I'm thrilled to be joining Table Tennis Wales as Head of Participation. With over a decade of experience delivering innovative projects and building strong partnerships across the sports industry, I'm passionate about the power of sport to connect and inspire. I look forward to working with the Table Tennis Wales team and wider community to grow the game, break down barriers to participation, and help make table tennis a sport for everyone, everywhere in Wales.

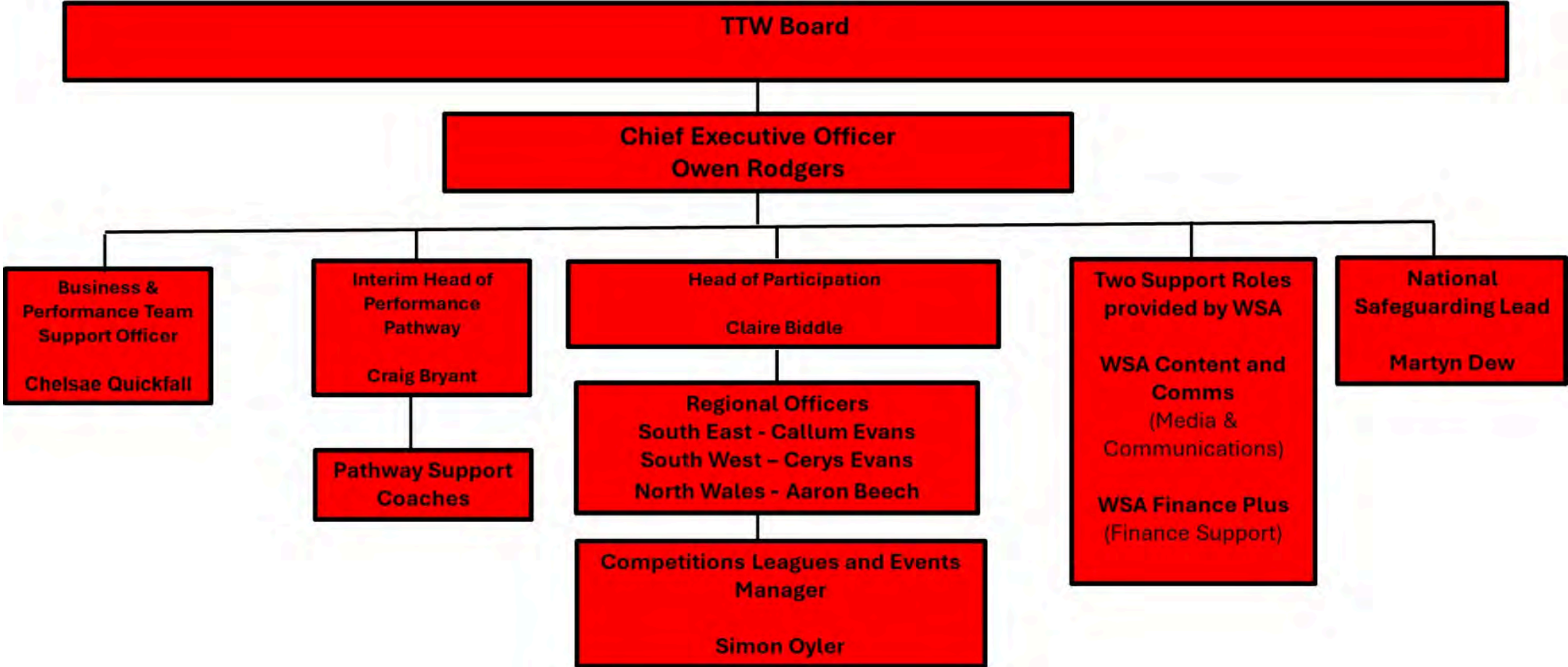
## **Welcome to Chelsea Quickfall, Business and Performance Team Support Officer**



I'm delighted to join Table Tennis Wales as Business and Performance Team Support Officer. With over a decade of experience in administration, primarily within the social care sector, I'm passionate about supporting teams to thrive through strong organisational foundations. I'm excited to contribute to the continued growth and success of the sport, and to be part of an organisation that values excellence, inclusion, and community.

# Structure Update

## TTW Organisational Structure May 2025





**#YSBRYDOLI  
#INSPIRE**

Have you thought about  
what your potential could be in

# Para Table Tennis?

If you have a physical impairment, we'd like to  
hear from you! Complete the #Inspire Form at:  
**[disabilitysportwales.com/inspire](http://disabilitysportwales.com/inspire)**

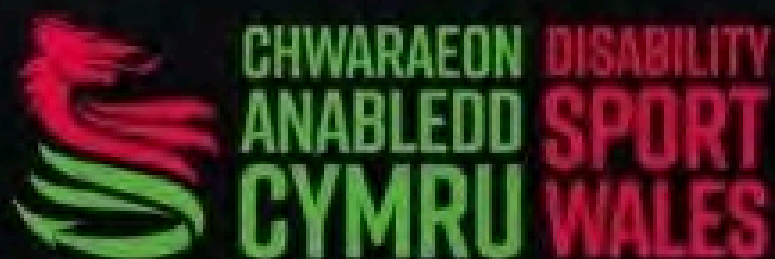


TABLE TENNIS  
**WALES**

# Safeguarding

If you have a concern that affects your safety or well-being, or that of someone else, it's crucial to report it through MY Voice. Whether it's about bullying, abuse, neglect, or any situation making you feel unsafe, your report can make a significant difference. All you need to do is scan the QR Code or click this link [Report a Concern](#). This will take you to the online anonymous form. Members will also be able to Report a Concern through their membership profile on the Table Tennis Wales membership platform.





# Stay Connected: How to Reach Us



Upcoming TTW Events

For more information about our upcoming event please refer to our events calendar [\*\*Events Calendar\*\*](#)