

Welsh Judo Association Independent Directors

Independent Directors recruited based on their skills and experience

Marc Longhurst

Chairman Marc Longhurst has a long history with Welsh Judo having started as a novice with Neyland Judo Club over 30 years ago. He obtained his black belt at 15 and represented both Wales and Great Britain before a period focused on his professional career. Most recently, Marc was Head Coach at Maxim Judo Club and joined the Welsh Judo Board as a Non-Executive Director in 2018.



Marc is currently Digital Development Director for Atkins (part of the SNC-Lavalin Group) where he is leading a global digital transformation programme. Previously Marc held a number of senior roles in Faithful+Gould where he was responsible for business services, strategy and digital across their worldwide operation. His professional background and experience will undoubtedly be of great value to Welsh Judo over the years to come.

Wyn Griffiths

Wyn is a Welsh speaking farmer's son from North Wales. Judo was an important part of growing up as it was an affordable sport during a tough financial time for farmers. In 1992 Wyn came to Cardiff University to study Town Planning, met his now wife at Uni and has stayed in Cardiff ever since. At 22 he started Pinnacle Letting Agents and 25 years later still runs the company. He also created and ran a national lettings software company for 10 years before selling it. Wyn and his journalist wife Sarah have three teenagers and also volunteer as school governors.



Laura Samaroo

Laura was appointed as the Finance Director for the Welsh Judo Association in November 2022. After completing her undergraduate studies in law, Laura took a number of gap years, which were spent coaching tennis, surfing and doing gang-rehabilitation work on Chicago's notorious South Side. After post-graduate study in the USA, where she obtained a LL.M in International Comparative



Law, Laura worked as a lawyer in a large UK commercial law firm where she specialised in corporate law.

In August 2011, Laura joined Liverpool John Moores University School of Law as a Senior Lecturer where she teaches a range of corporate subjects at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Her academic research area is in sports law, particularly the corporate, regulation and governance aspects of sport. Away from work you will find Laura playing / coaching tennis, running or playing the piano – not all at the same time though!

Kate Howey MBE

Kate has had success at all levels of the sport internationally, both as a coach and as a player having attended 8 Olympic Games. She is a multiple Olympic Medallist and former World Judo Champion who has successfully progressed through the Great Britain Judo coaching pathway from Regional Co-ordinator through to GB Head Coach and National Centre Coach. Kate started judo at the age of 7 years old at their father's local club in Andover and has been passionate about judo ever since. Having grown up in the judo community Kate is now at the stage of my life were she wants to give back to it.



Lee Shinkin

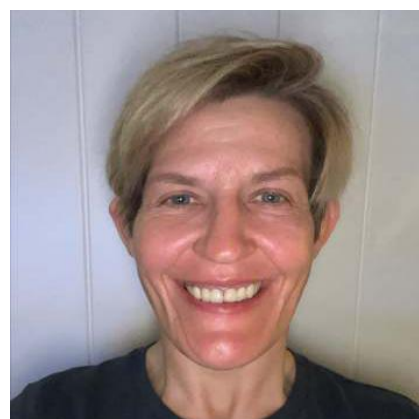
Lee Shinkin is new to the board and will be accountable for Business Development & Commercial. Lee is currently the Business Development lead for Atkins limited with responsibility for the Digital, Technology and Transformation consultancy business facing into a key Critical National Infrastructure sector. His consultancy experience spans security, defence and aviation sectors.

Lee brings years of experience of being a member of the GB team



Jo Melen

Jo has been involved in judo for nearly 40 years and started her judo career in Pontardawe Judo club. As her involvement developed Jo was fortunate to train at the legendary Afan Lido club under John Reynolds. Following this Jo moved to



the Renbukai club, where she was coached by the great Bob Edwards.

Alongside side, as part of the Welsh and GB teams Jo was coached by Alan Jones. During her competitive career Jo was fortunate to train under a number of world-renowned coaches. Following a competitive career, Jo entered the world of work where she forged a career largely within the criminal justice sector. Jo has worked within prisons and policing. Jo was Head of Equality & Diversity for G4S prisons before moving into Policing. As a Police Officer I have undertaken many roles both on an operational and strategic level. Jo currently works within specialist operations, which is a highly challenging and rewarding role. Welsh Judo remains very important to Jo and she is passionate about ensuring that future generations have the same experience as she did after walking into Pontardawe judo club all those years ago - a long life in truly rewarding sport with global exposure!