



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

GLL SPORT FOUNDATION  
ANNUAL REVIEW 2024

BETTER



GLL







# GLL SPORT FOUNDATION

GSF supported athletes  
Croydon 2024





## CONTENTS

- 4** Welcome
- 6** Our Mission
- 7** GLL Sport Foundation in Numbers
- 8** A View from the Board
- 9** Widening & Deepening Athlete Support
- 10** Paris 2024
- 13** Making a Difference
- 14** Partners
- 16** National Sporting Partners
- 17** Sponsors & Supporters
- 18** GLL / Better



### COVER

GSF supported athletes  
Barnet 2024

# WELCOME

---

Welcome to the GLL Sport Foundation 2024 Annual Review.

The GLL Sport Foundation was created by Charitable Social Enterprise GLL to support talented athletes across the UK.

In 2007 GLL became aware of young talented athletes having to give up on their dreams because of the high costs of training, travel and competitions.

In many cases, local young people were unable to fulfil their potential through lack of funds or access to facilities. This was having a significant impact on young people, local communities and sports clubs. GLL was determined to develop a scheme to counter this problem.

The GLL Sport Foundation was born and launched in 2008 with the support of Sally Gunnell OBE who became the Foundation's Patron.

As a leading Charitable Social Enterprise, GLL is proud to be able to make this positive impact on our communities through the Foundation.

Now celebrating its 16th Anniversary the GLL Sport Foundation continues to help aspiring athletes to reach their goals, based on a commitment to support athletes from all backgrounds, across some of the toughest areas of the UK and help them overcome adversities and challenges to realise their sporting potential.

The Foundation has been built on the collaboration of all of its partners, stakeholders, sponsors and athletes to which we are very grateful.

We are very proud of what the GLL Sport Foundation has achieved in the last 12 months and we look forward to the next year as we support our talented athletes.

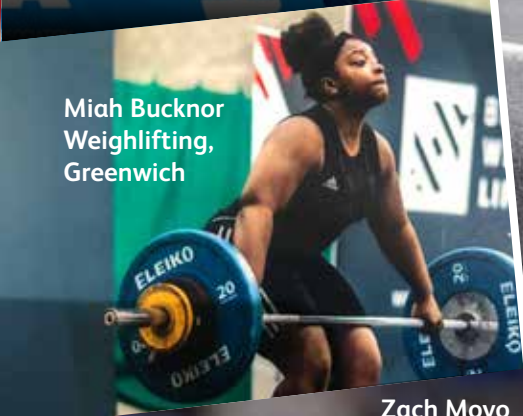


Brooke Fawcett  
BMX Racing, Manchester





Janice Jin  
Taekwondo, Camden



Miah Bucknor  
Weighlifting,  
Greenwich



Zach Moyo  
Swimming,  
Belfast



Lara Yilmaz  
Gymnastics,  
Barnet



Erin O'Flaherty  
Para Athletics, Croydon



Issa Batrane & Frederick Bialokoz  
Volleyball, Crystal Palace



Michael Gar  
Triathlon, Cardiff



# 6/ OUR MISSION

*"Sport is such an important part of all our lives and has the power to inspire young people to excel and harness their talent towards their future. From my own experience starting out as a young athlete and progressing through my sport, I understand how important the recognition and support from organisations like the GLL Sport Foundation can be to a young athlete. It can make the difference in achieving sporting ambitions."*

*This is ever-more important today as we are faced with new financial challenges and athletes have to consider whether they can continue to follow their dreams. The support of the GLL Sport Foundation helps to bridge this gap and can be the difference in an athlete making those dreams a reality."*

**Sally Gunnell OBE**  
GLL Sport Foundation Patron



**To support young people with athletic talent to achieve their full sporting potential by reducing the financial burden of training and competition costs.**

**To bridge the gap in sports inequalities and giving athletes a range of sporting services to aid their journey.**

**To inspire local communities to participate in physical activity and aspire to achieve in sport, using our Ambassadors and athletes.**

**To seek long-term sporting legacy and coordination with national talent development pathways.**

**To be the largest independent athlete support scheme for talented young people striving for national and international sporting success.**



**Sebastian Reeves**  
Canoeing,  
Lee Valley  
Regional Park Authority



**Michael Girvin**  
Hockey,  
Belfast



**Eli Francis**  
Basketball,  
Enfield

# GLL SPORT FOUNDATION IN NUMBERS

17



2,252

Athlete awards in 2024  
Support Value:

£1,295,600



88%

No other funding



117

Sports supported



65%

Athletes aged under 21



78

Areas of the  
UK supported



28,146

Total athlete awards

£15,386,230

TOTAL SUPPORT VALUE (2008–2024)

# 8/ A VIEW FROM THE BOARD



**Peter Bunday**  
GSF Chair and  
GLL Chief Executive



**Emma Lewis**  
Trustee and GLL National  
Aquatics Manager



**Mark Sesnan OBE**  
Strategic Advisor

2024 was a fantastic year for the GLL Sport Foundation with the athlete cohort increasing to over 2,200. We were delighted to welcome new partnerships to the scheme in Bedford City Council, London Borough of Enfield and Mole Valley District Council giving talented athletes access to the largest independent athlete support programme in the UK. The GLL Sport Foundation is now active in over 78 areas across the UK.

Focusing on supporting those athletes that need it most continues to be the mission of the GSF and that is why we are proud that on average 88 % of athletes receive no other funding. This could mean the difference between an athlete continuing in their sporting journey or having to give it up.

Making a positive difference to as many people as possible is a cornerstone of the Foundation and now in its 16th year we are delighted to have

distributed 28,146 athletes awards with a total financial value of £15,386,230.

2024 has been a special year for sporting achievement from the Euros through to the fantastic sporting celebration of Paris 2024. Many of our GSF athletes past and present have competed at the highest level with great success and we congratulate each and every one of them on their achievements. The GSF is very proud of you.

The Foundation's success would not be without the fantastic support we receive from our partner council and authorities, our sponsors that provide much needed financial support and our wider stakeholders that provide additional support such as physical rehabilitation, mental well being support and athlete ratification. We would like to thank them for their continued support.

## WELCOME TO THE BOARD — ABDUL BUHARI OLY

We are delighted to welcome to the GSF Board as athlete representative Abdul Buhari OLY. Abdul is a former international athlete and Olympian competing the Discus at London 2012. As well as Abdul's sporting achievements he also brings a wealth of experience having held several positions on sports advisory boards including British Athletics Athlete Commission. Abdul will bring the 'athlete's perspective' front and centre ensuring the athlete is at the heart of everything we do. Welcome Abdul.

*"I am thrilled to join the GLL Sport Foundation Board and contribute to its mission of empowering aspiring athletes across the UK. By providing vital support and resources, the Foundation enables talent to thrive and ensures that young people have the opportunity to achieve their sporting dreams. I look forward to working alongside a team committed to making a lasting impact in the world of sport."*

**Abdul Buhari OLY**  
Trustee and  
British Athlete





# WIDENING & DEEPENING ATHLETE WELLBEING SUPPORT

*"The tailored U18 masterclasses by Switch the Play have been hugely beneficial to me as a junior golfer. The variety of topics covered around mental health, in detail, are sport, life and well-being related. The sessions covering mindfulness and resilience have helped me in the way I think and carry out tasks. A great insight is listening to the guest speakers about their experiences and views. I enjoyed having this be a part of my GLL award, a valued addition."*

**Jai Higgins,**  
Golf, Training, Manchester

*"The physiotherapy sessions included in the membership have also been fantastic, particularly during times of injury. The expertise and guidance provided during these sessions have been crucial in ensuring my recovery is effective and well-supported, allowing me to address specific issues and prevent further setbacks."*

*"In a nutshell, I truly believe I wouldn't have been able to navigate the challenges of training and recovery, especially during injuries, without the comprehensive support provided. It has been a lifeline that has kept me moving forward when I needed it most."*

**Gilda Trapani,**  
Weightlifting, Training,  
Welwyn / Hatfield / Gosling

**The GLL Sport Foundation has teamed up with a number of athlete support organisations that cover both physical (physiotherapy) and mental health awareness programmes. Access to these additional services are increasingly as important as financial support.**

## MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Athletes awarded through GSF can access Switch the Play services while they are training, when competing at the highest level and after their athlete careers have finished.

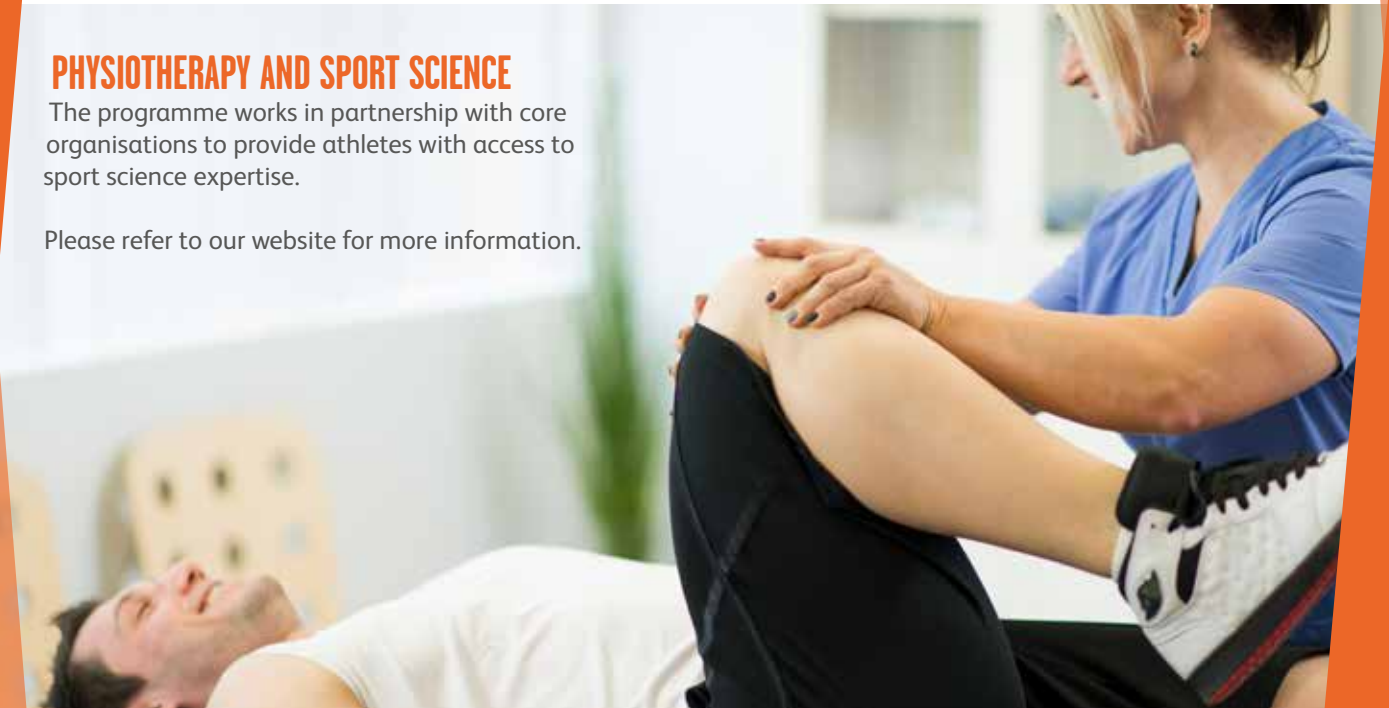
Support services consist of a telephone helpline, masterclasses on self-care and resilience – and access to video resources, guides and podcasts providing top tips.



## PHYSIOTHERAPY AND SPORT SCIENCE

The programme works in partnership with core organisations to provide athletes with access to sport science expertise.

Please refer to our website for more information.



# 10/ PARIS 2024

## individual Athlete Olympic Medals Won



## individual Athlete Paralympic Medals Won



Erin Kennedy MBE  
Para Rowing, Ambassador  
for South Oxfordshire.  
*Paralympic Gold Medallist,  
PR3 Mixed Cox Event, Paris 2024*





*"The GSF foundation has supported me for a number of years now and their help has been fundamental in getting me through some very hard times and back on top of the podium. I was diagnosed with breast cancer just after winning gold in Tokyo and access to my local gym helped me to maintain fitness through chemotherapy and importantly, supported my rehab after my double mastectomy. Without access to the pool, I definitely wouldn't have come back so quickly! The GSF foundation also really helped me with their support on the more holistic side of being an athlete too, and I was very grateful to have them in my corner when I went to successfully defend my gold medal in Paris."*

**Noah Williams**  
**Diving, National Ambassador**  
**for Hackney.**

*Olympic Silver Medallist,  
 Men's Synchronised Platform Diving  
 & Olympic Bronze Medallist, Men's  
 Individual Platform Diving, Paris 2024*

*"GSF has helped me immensely in my career especially when I was a young athlete trying to break through into Team GB. The financial support gave me the opportunity to go to competitions, which I wouldn't have otherwise been able to and eventually qualify for international events which kick-started my whole career."*



**Joe Clarke MBE**  
**Canoeing,**  
**National Ambassador**  
**for Lee Valley Regional**  
**Park Authority.**  
*Olympic Silver Medallist,  
 Men's Kayak Cross, Paris 2024.*





**Blaine Hunt**  
**Para Cycling,**  
**Ambassador for Islington.**

Paralympic Silver Medallist,  
 Men's C4-5 Track Cycling, Paris 2024

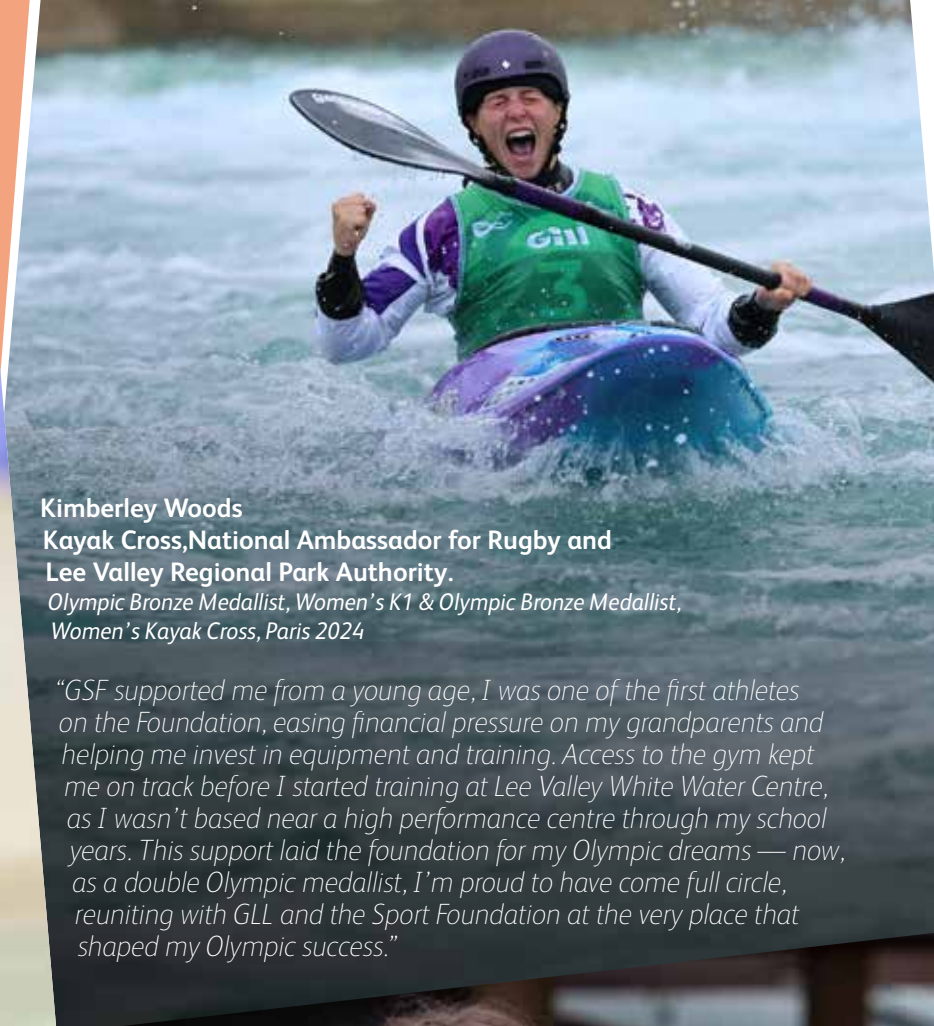
"GSF has been a game-changer, with the rising cost of living, helping to ease the financial pressures of being a full-time athlete and allowing me to focus fully on my sport. Their support has been invaluable, and I'm incredibly thankful for it."



**Kimberley Woods**  
**Kayak Cross, National Ambassador for Rugby and**  
**Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.**

Olympic Bronze Medallist, Women's K1 & Olympic Bronze Medallist,  
 Women's Kayak Cross, Paris 2024

"GSF supported me from a young age, I was one of the first athletes on the Foundation, easing financial pressure on my grandparents and helping me invest in equipment and training. Access to the gym kept me on track before I started training at Lee Valley White Water Centre, as I wasn't based near a high performance centre through my school years. This support laid the foundation for my Olympic dreams — now, as a double Olympic medallist, I'm proud to have come full circle, reuniting with GLL and the Sport Foundation at the very place that shaped my Olympic success."





# MAKING A DIFFERENCE /13



Peggy Knox  
Cycling, Lewisham  
Talent Award



Sai Kannan  
Badminton, Basingstoke  
Talent Award

## PEGGY KNOX

Age 15 from Lewisham

"I race road, track and cyclocross. I am currently ranked first nationally for cyclocross in my age and gender category. I am the cyclocross U16 National Champion of 2024 as well as the National Trophy Series Winner of 2023/24. I have also now won the National Trophy Series of 2024/25. In the 2024 road season I raced in Belgium and came 6th in Ghent Wevelegem and 3rd at Zedelgem. This cyclocross season I won my first international race, the Telenet Superprestige at Ruddervoorde. That moment stood out to me this season, because it was a first, and the course was way more difficult than any I have encountered yet.

My plans for next cyclocross season are to race World Cups with the GB Cycling Team and learn as much as I can about the courses and generally improve myself as a rider.

For the coming road season I am aiming for a podium in Ghent Wevelegem and Tour of Flanders, but try to balance it with my GCSEs. In the future I would like to become World Cyclocross Champion and race road with a pro team.

The GLL Sport Foundation has helped me improve my off-bike training. I use the gym once or twice a week, which has clearly led to me getting stronger. The award means I can go regularly and not worry about the cost. Also, last road season I had a nasty crash and I was able to get a physio appointment; that was awesome because I was given some exercises to recover. I used the award to pay for the Evo Devo Cyclocross training camp, which was an amazing experience."

## A PARENTS VIEW — SAI KANNAN

Age 10 from Basingstoke

The Badmintonplanet Youth Tournament 2024 U11 is one of the most prestigious international level tournaments for various age groups (U11, U13, U15 and U17) held in Hoensbroek (Netherlands).

Sai Kannan demonstrated remarkable achievement, determination, and sportsmanship throughout the tournament, earning widespread recognition and applause. The only player to make it to the semi-finals in all three events – Singles, Doubles, and Mixed Doubles – following an incredible 26-match winning streak.

Sai aims to compete in more national and international badminton tournaments under his age level, enhance his technical skills, and improve his overall fitness and agility.

In the long term, Sai aspires to represent his country in international badminton tournaments. His ultimate dream is to pursue a professional badminton career while inspiring other young athletes along the way. We truly appreciate the continued support from the GLL Sport Foundation in helping him work towards these goals and it has played a crucial role in Sai's sporting journey. His progress would not have been possible without the invaluable assistance in securing badminton court bookings. This extended practice time has significantly enhanced his shot precision and agility. We are truly grateful for your continued support.

# 14/ PARTNERS

The GLL Sport Foundation works with a number of partners that enable us to have the impact we do. Including our council partners, without who GSF would not be able to support athletes and communities across the UK.

## ENGLAND

- Basingstoke – Basingstoke Sports Centre
- BSTFitness Newbury
- Bath and North East Somerset Council
- Bedford Borough Council
- Birmingham – Better Gym Mere Green
- Bradford – Better Gym Bradford
- Brentwood – Better Gym Brentwood
- Cambridge City Council
- Cornwall Council
- Cumberland Council
- East Cambridgeshire District Council – The Hive
- Epsom & Ewell Borough Council
- Gosling Sports Park
- Guildford Borough Council – Ash Manor / Guildford Lido / Guildford Spectrum (Freedom Leisure)
- Herefordshire Council (Halo Leisure)
- Lee Valley Regional Park Authority – White Water Centre
- Manchester City Council
- Mole Valley District Council
- Newcastle City Council
- North Kesteven District Council
- Preston City Council
- Reading Borough Council
- Reigate and Banstead Borough Council
- Rugby Borough Council
- Sleaford – Better Gym Sleaford
- South Bucks District Council
- South Cambridgeshire District Council – Cambridge Ice Arena
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Swindon Borough Council
- Vale of White Horse District Council
- Walsall Wood – Better Gym Walsall Wood
- Westmorland & Furness Council
- West Oxfordshire District Council
- Woking Borough Council (Freedom Leisure)
- City of York Council
- Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

## LONDON

- Barking Sporthouse and Gym
- Bexleyheath – Better Gym Bexleyheath
- Gunnersbury Park Sports Hub\*\*
- London Borough of Barnet
- London Borough of Camden
- London Borough of Croydon
- Crystal Palace National Sports Centre – Mayor of London
- London Borough of Enfield
- Royal Borough of Greenwich
- London Borough of Hackney
- London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
- London Borough of Hillingdon
- London Borough of Islington
- Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
- Lee Valley Regional Park Authority – Velopark / Hockey & Tennis Centre / Riding Centre / Ice Centre / Athletics Centre
- London Borough of Lewisham
- London Borough of Merton
- Pinner – Better Gym Pinner
- Copper Box Arena – Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London Legacy Development Corporation
- Romford – Better Gym Romford
- Sidcup – Better Gym Sidcup
- Sutton Sports Village
- Teddington – Better Gym Teddington
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- Vauxhall Leisure Centre – London Borough of Lambeth\*
- London Borough of Waltham Forest
- Walthamstow – Better Gym Walthamstow Stadium
- Wembley Leisure Centre – London Borough of Brent

## NORTHERN IRELAND

- Belfast City Council\*

## WALES

- Bridgend County Borough Council (Halo Leisure)\*
- Cardiff City Council

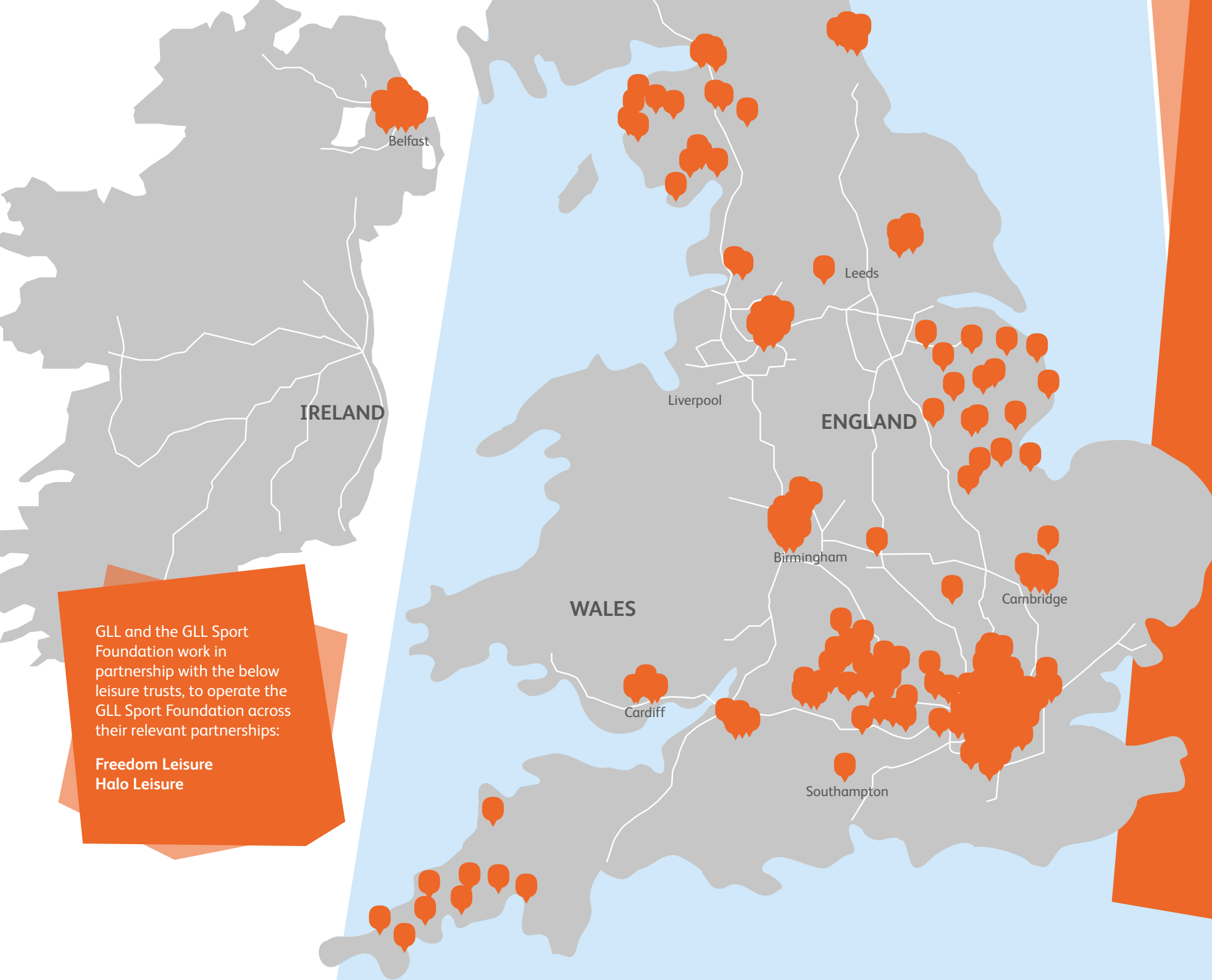
In the following Local Authority partnerships, the GLL Sport Foundation works in partnership with the identified localised athlete support programme. Awards and award terms and conditions will be aligned to the partnership agreements:

- Halo Sport Foundation
- Manchester Sport Foundation
- Rugby's Excellence in Sport Awards
- West Oxfordshire Sports Awards
- Hackney Youth Sport Fund
- Sport Islington
- Sports Funding
- Belfast Sports Awards / Mary Peters Trust
- Halo Sport Foundation

\* Local Authorities operate localised athlete support programmes and are supported by the GLL Sport Foundation.

\*\* Operated on behalf of London Boroughs of Ealing and Hounslow





GLL and the GLL Sport Foundation work in partnership with the below leisure trusts, to operate the GLL Sport Foundation across their relevant partnerships:

**Freedom Leisure**  
**Halo Leisure**

# 16/ NATIONAL SPORTING PARTNERS

**Mary Peters Trust Patron**  
Dame Mary Peters explained  
“The partnership with the  
GLL Sport Foundation ensures  
that not only are developing  
athletes correctly supported but  
that athletes beginning their  
pathway are also recognised  
and their success celebrated.”



The GLL Sport Foundation has built strong connections to UK sport talent pathways through its national partnerships with SportsAid in England and Wales, and the Mary Peters Trust in Northern Ireland. These partnerships have enabled engagement with core National Governing Bodies of Sport, ensuring the right athletes are supported with the right support at the right time.

SportsAid have been the central pillar to the GLL Sport Foundation since the partnership began in 2009; since those early beginnings, nearly 652 athletes have benefited from direct funding and support.





*"We're especially proud of the lasting impact the GSF has had since its launch in 2008. From providing essential financial support for training, kit, travel, and more, to developing future champions, GSF has truly transformed the landscape of UK sport."*

*"It's an honour to be in partnership with such a dedicated organisation that works tirelessly to uplift athletes and local communities through sport."*

**Chris Martin**  
Director of Pro Event Solutions



# SPONSORS & /17 SUPPORTERS

The GLL Sport Foundation recognises the significant contribution of our sponsors and supporters; it is their shared commitment that has enabled the Foundation to be the largest independent supporter of sporting talent across the UK, and in doing so support thousands of athletes to achieve sporting success.

In 2024 we were delighted to welcome 4 new sponsors to the GSF family. They were

- Brake brothers
- Jacksons
- Pro Event Solutions
- Wise Security

We thank them for their support.



# 18/ GLL / BETTER

## OUR PURPOSE

To improve the physical, mental and social wellbeing of local communities.

*We manage approximately 400 facilities, including public sport and leisure centres, libraries and childrens centres in partnership with local councils, public agencies and sporting organisations.*

*This makes us the largest UK-based charitable social enterprise.*

## WHAT WE DO

We are committed to the provision of leisure, fitness and cultural activities and facilities at affordable prices. It is our aim to ensure the financial viability of our organisation, meeting our charitable social objectives, harnessing employee ownership and maintaining and expanding our existing services. We endeavour to continually exceed customer expectations.

## OUR VALUES

Partner of Choice

Customers and Communities at Our Heart

Tackling Health Inequalities

Respecting the Planet

More Than a Job

The Better Way of Doing Business

**GLL IS A NOT FOR PROFIT CHARITABLE  
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE WHO MANAGE PRODUCTS  
AND SERVICES THROUGH THE BETTER BRAND**







**PARTNER  
OF CHOICE**



**CUSTOMERS &  
COMMUNITIES AT OUR HEART**



**TACKLING HEALTH  
INEQUALITIES**



**RESPECTING  
THE PLANET**



**MORE THAN  
A JOB**



**THE BETTER WAY OF  
DOING BUSINESS**





GSF supported athletes  
Islington 2024



GLL SPORT  
FOUNDATION



GLL BETTER

[www.gllsportfoundation.org](http://www.gllsportfoundation.org) / [www.gll.org](http://www.gll.org)

GLL is a registered trademark of Greenwich Leisure Limited, a charitable social enterprise and registered society under the Co-operative & Community Benefit & Societies Act 2014 registration no. 27793R. Registered office: Middlegate House, The Royal Arsenal, London, SE18 6SX. Inland Revenue Charity no: XR43398 VAT registration no: 219749179.