

It is with much pleasure that I was voted in as Chair at the AGM and I would like to thank Mike Stannard and Clive Morgan for their long reliable service. To keep the team numbers healthy and an keep an effective county committee together is a huge success in what has been a difficult time for squash.

Ladbrokes has opened betting on when Mike will return!

I very much welcome Nick Hartley as Vice-Chair, Ben Taylor (Treasurer) and Sarah Bailey as Welfare Officer.

I would hope that Wiltshire can buck the trend of closing courts and the corresponding reduction in playing numbers. To help with that Broome Manor and another venue in Salisbury could be in a position to boost playing facilities in the near future. Facilities are one thing – running them successfully is another story. Dax Mellor has shown that with effective coaching, dedication and the right personality, young people can be encouraged to play squash but it is the fitness and social aspect of the game keeps people interested.

Good management and governance do help and it is likely that a FREE England Squash ‘Club Matters’ workshop will be run in conjunction with ‘Sport Structures’ probably in Cheltenham. The workshop topics include Club Structure, Marketing Strategy, Business Planning, Club Participant Experience, Club Volunteer Experience. You can find out more about each workshop [here](#). it provides a useful tool for clubs to support their club management structure and operation, offering insight and information to assist in such matters as committee structure, legal requirements, etc. If you are interested, please let me know.

On the topic of “good governance” as agreed at the AGM ‘**Wiltshire Squash**’ has a new name and constitution and will soon be a **Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)** which has many advantages albeit at the expense of a little more bureaucracy!

The application is nearly finished with just some financial matters (amalgamating accounts) and restructuring the website to complete the process. I fully expect the charity commission to question some aspects of the application so, the sooner this is done the better. The target is to have the application approved and bring a new set of Wiltshire Squash rules (basically our current constitution) and County League rules as bylaws to the CIO constitution to you for approval at the January 2nd committee meeting.

Mike Hyland will be publishing the constitution as approved at the AGM shortly. Should you have any suggestions or questions please do not hesitate to contact Mike or Myself.

There has been some justified criticism of the organisation of the Inter-County tournament and the clash of diary dates across county, regional and national competitions. The feeling is that some of the problems could be avoided, one of the tasks of the website will be to publish dates as soon as they are known, our policy must be to stick to ES calendar dates if at all possible.

I have not yet talked to Nev or Nick Hartley about the winter league structure of fee’s, but it is on my agenda and I know Nev is keen to finalise the arrangements asap. As far as I can see the current arrangements work well and any review can wait until next year. If there is opposition to that or constructive suggestions, please talk to Nev or Nick.

The Summer Leagues are a different matter, they not working well! I will be talking to all interested parties about a new competition based on a ‘Wiltshire Squash – Summer Tour of Tournaments’ where we organise a number of small tournaments or matches at different locations and bring the winners together for a final of play off and maybe a ‘Wiltshire Squash BBQ’? Again, all ideas on the summer league to be brought to the January 2nd committee meeting.

So please get in touch!

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