

## **Hertfordshire Badminton Association**

Minutes of the committee meeting held on 4 November 2024 on Zoom

### **Present:**

Paul Kempster	PK
Dave Bartlett	DB
Simon Gouldstone	SG
Bob Green	BG
Brian Jackson	BJ
Jim Robson	JR
Colin Walker	CW

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Nick Goode	NG
Eddie Lintott	EL
Mike Newlove	MN
Steve Willis	SW

### **2. Matters arising from the AGM on 3 June 2024**

- a) CW had received information from BE showing the number of clubs and members in each county. Out of 40 counties, Herts ranked 7<sup>th</sup> in terms of members and 10<sup>th</sup> in terms of the number of clubs.
- b) SG had amended the County League Rules to incorporate the changes agreed at the AGM. They were now available on the web site and on League Republic.

### **3. Chairman**

PK had been unable to attend the last General Meeting. He highlighted the following issues from DB's notes of the meeting:

- there were to be ticketing changes for the All England
- refurbishment of the National Badminton Centre was ongoing
- there was to be further consultation on the Transgender Policy
- reservations had been expressed about the change in the format for tournaments whereby all semi-finals and finals had to be played on one day
- there were to be changes in the coaching system
- some concern was raised about the use of Babolat shuttles

DB explained that the BE Twitter feed on the HBA web site was showing out-of-date content.

**Action:** SG to investigate

#### **4. Secretary**

No report.

#### **5. Membership Secretary and Treasurer**

CW reported as follows:

- a) The current BE report showed there were 46 clubs compared with 51 last season although that might be due to some clubs not yet having renewed their affiliation. There were two new clubs, Radiant and Feathertouch, although both had only a notional number of members. The county had lost Gadebridge Junior BC due to water ingress on floor of its premises and the club was being run by Abbey BC.
- b) The financial position was satisfactory with about £17k in the bank. £2.5k had been paid to BE for the Senior County entries. The profit from the two tournaments was £490, a notable contribution to the county's funds.
- c) He expressed concern that the organisers of the Senior County teams appeared to have taken no action in relation to the trophies traditionally awarded to the player of the season for each team. The trophies purchased by HBA for 2023 had not been presented and none had been purchased for 2024. That was disappointing given that the cost of running the Senior County teams was the HBA's major item of expenditure.

**Action:** PK to contact BV and KM.

#### **6. Senior County**

No report. It was noted that the first round of matches was on 9 & 10 November.

#### **7. County League**

There were 12 clubs, the same number as last season, running 38 teams, an increase of three.

#### **8. Hertford Area League**

JR reported that there were 12 clubs, two fewer than last season, running 31 teams, an increase of two. He expressed concern at the fall in the number of clubs and that volunteers were becoming increasingly thin on the ground. His own view was that the number of BE rules that had to be followed was acting as a disincentive to people managing clubs.

#### **9. North Herts and Letchworth**

BG had to leave the meeting early but some information had been included in DB's development report.

In addition, the Stevenage League was similar to last season with two divisions, five teams in one and four in the other. The Letchworth & District League had increased by one team to a single division with eight teams.

## 10. Masters

SW submitted a written report:

- a) The season was now up and running but with some mixed results. There was more of a struggle with numbers this season, some with players missing through injury but also with people not playing as regularly.
- b) Several players were represented Herts in the Kent Masters: Jon and Liz Austin, Chrissy Batty, Don Burden, Caroline Hale, Sandra Ingham. Kiyoko Pullen, Ed Lintott, Mike Wong, Anita Harris and Joe Rayappan. There were some outstanding results from our players:

### ***Winners:***

Chrissy Batty in o45s Womens Singles  
Caroline Hale in o55s Womens Singles  
Caroline Hale + Liz Austin in o55s Womens Doubles  
Don Burden + John Bowker (Lancs) in o60s Mens Doubles  
Joe Rayappan in o75s Mens Doubles

### ***Runners Up:***

Joe Rayappan in o75s Singles

### ***Semi Finalists:***

Don Burden + Caroline Hale in o55s Mixed Doubles  
Jon Austin + Sue Crompton (Essex) in o55s Mixed Doubles

- c) The Masters Challenge was scheduled for January. Herts had entries in the o40s, o50s, o55s and o65s but have unfortunately had to pull, out of the o60s due to injury and lack of availability.

## 11. Tournaments

EL reported that the proposed dates for the Senior Silver were 30 & 31 August 2025 and for the Restricted 4 & 5 October 2025.

## 12. Development

DB's report is appended to the minutes.

## 13. Coaching

BJ reported as follows:

- a) *Coaching Courses*

A foundation course was run at the end of September at Beaumont School, St Albans. There were 23 candidates, 9 Hertfordshire-based. Sue Ruston and Carl Barnard were the tutors.

Liam Cooper (BE) had asked about arranging courses during Coach Education Week 2025. BJ had replied in the affirmative but with a comment about the cost of the courts at Beaumont. BJ would welcome any suggestions of cheaper courts.

b) *Requests for coaches*

BJ had been trying to find coaches for Natalie Barton in Watford, without success. The only reply he received was from Phil Adams who said he could use some help too!

Moir Hutton (Every One Active) has asked for coaches for St Albans and Harpenden. Again, BJ had been unsuccessful.

There was a shortage of coaches; on the register for Hertfordshire, there were 17 level 1s, (one of which is outside the county), 31 level 2s (eight are outside the county) and 1 level 3 who is outside the county. So there were only 23 Hertfordshire-based level 2 coaches!

c) *Letter from Lee Bent, BE Coach Education Manager*

In response to the specific questions LB had asked, BJ had replied that:

- (i) BJ was the HBA coaching contact
- (ii) HBA would support a mentoring system for Level 2 candidates
- (iii) HBA would run a Coach Development Day. BJ would put the proposal on the Facebook page and ask those interested to contact him.

d) *Other item of interest*

Joe Gambler had set up a club welfare officer forum on Facebook and was running an introductory session (on Teams) tomorrow evening. His role was to support sports clubs' welfare officers and he hoped the Facebook page would provide a vehicle for discussion. BJ intended participating.

## **14. Social Media/Publicity**

No report.

## **15. HJBA**

MN provided a written report. HJBA had a full set of Squads. The first Shires matches had been played, some won, some lost. The numbers each week are quite full, 23 to 28 in u15 and U17, the U10 are looking to produce some future stars under Nick and helpers.

The open tournament was a success with 164 games and about 90 players. The next tournament was for U13 on the 7th December.

BG was assisting Ben in his role as the Junior Club Representative. To date, he had visited nine clubs and had arranged three more visits.

## **16. BE Policy on Transgender and Non-Binary players**

The committee was fully aware of the policy and there had been a partial implementation of its provisions by having introduced into the Open and Restricted Tournaments 2024 the Open designation for both singles and doubles.

It was agreed that it was impracticable for the current season to recategorise the Mens Doubles as Open Doubles in the County League. The issue would however be on the agenda at the AGM 2025.

## **17. Any other business**

DB explained that he was still suffering regular cancellations at HSV for the Comets Junior club. This was proving to be massively frustrating.

## **19. Future meetings**

Next Committee Meeting                      End January/early February 2025 on Zoom.

**Action:**              SG to circulate possible dates

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# Development Report to HBA Committee 3 November 2024

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## 1 BE Head Office Club & Coach Conference 12th & 13th October:

DB attended a well organised, very interesting, and useful conference covering several aspects of junior and adult coaching and club organisation. One of the most interesting I found was 'Nero-inclusion' on Neurodiversity – examples of which we are seeing increasingly in our Comets JBC. Although the Conference had a record attendance there seemed to be very few from Herts tis year. Conference documents can be accessed from my OneDrive [folder](#).

## 2 County-wide

### .2 Facilities

Potentially 2 large facilities are planned over the next 4 years, 12 court hall at Oaklands College, St Albans, as part of their Aspirational Master Plan, and an 8 court hall at Gosling Sports Park, Welwyn Hatfield.

#### **Oaklands College**

No news, communication with us has cooled. Also, they are unable to accommodate going forward the Badminton Academy we had pre-covid.

#### **Gosling Sports Park**

At the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Facilities Strategy Meeting in October. BE's Liam Cooper, BE, represented BE and HBA interests. Minutes yet to arrive, but Matt Rayner, HSP, told me that Herts Highways have serious concerns about the building of houses on part of the site (that would realise capital for the development) owing to the already very busy exit junction. Local councillors have expressed concern about the lack of facilities and for more facilities. The new 150 houses due to be built on the B&Q site will release Section 106 funding some of which may fund a facility in Peartree area. I have had an invitation to discuss the problems of lack of Welwyn Garden facilities with new Labour MP, Andrew Lewin: Matt Rayner will attend.

Birchwood LC: plans to demolish are still a possibility. £92k in total spent 2012 for the badminton hall new floor lights heating and walls painted. No update.

Welwyn Garden City schools: Onslow St Audrey School, WGC, Sports hall now in use: Nick and Steve visited it in October. Monks Walk has DoE funding for 4-court hall – design is progressing.

## 3 Live Longer Better 50+ Badminton with SE grant £10366

Each CBN has progressed their project. Countywide support continues to be excellent from HSP's Will Slemmings, Strategic Lead for Health, and Charolotte Bird, Active Ageing Officer, although SE funding for her Active Local Team

was not renewed for the year. Owing to the delays in some sessions getting started and completing we have successfully received a 3-month extension to 15 March from SE.

#### East Herts Community Badminton Network

- BJ and IR attended the meeting in August that was set up by Dave Bartlett to discuss the current situation regarding this initiative. Bob Green joined the group using Teams, but there were only 4 in total at the meeting
- It was noted that Bob had been very successful in setting up a group in Stevenage
- The group set up by Dave Bartlett in Welwyn is now self-sustaining. Dave has worked very hard on this cross-county initiative
- A group operating at Bushey has been rather late in “joining the party” but is now beginning to operate
- The group set up by IR at Laura Trott will be funded until 9th December, when IR hopes to be able to step back and for that group to be self-sustaining. The rest of the money from the grant given to East Herts will go towards funding this
- IR attended the celebration event held on Thursday 5th September. Badminton was not the only sport made available for the over 50s. There was indoor cricket and walking football amongst other things. IR said that it was a good event and quite well attended
- It was felt that our support of this initiative in some ways balanced out the focus we have otherwise given to juniors
- BJ is compiling a spreadsheet outlining expenditure to date and said that we will be slightly overspent, but this will be accommodated by using funds from the EH CBN account.

North Herts and Stevenage, Bob Green 16October) wrote:

I booked Baldock Community Centre for sessions in November and December.

I am also showing up at the Letchworth No Strings on Wednesday mornings, as they have mainly have older attendees. So am signing them up.

Looking at the possibility of setting something up in Royston or one of the North Herts villages. Have indeed been in discussions Helen.

I will also be running sessions at the North Herts Live Longer Better day in November.

Just extended the second Bedwell group for another 6 weeks, to the Christmas break.

#### Herts West Badminton Development Group, October minutes report

- Potentially starting a session in St Albans Westminster Lodge.
- We will speak to adult members at Abbey BC if anyone would like to become an activator and look after that session. Keith will also ask Kirsty to see if there is anyone who works at the centre if they want to run the session. An alternative is asking the LLB champions or newsletter recipients.
- Bushey [Hertsmere] – 10-20 attendees per week. Looking to get more courts
  - South Oxhey (Craig) – have now started advertising but maximum participants is 1 person. Amy Alman is now in charge of 3 rivers as Craig has been promoted.
  - Helen Hopkins, SDO in Aberford [Hertsmere] – 18 participants
  - Caroline Roche [Watford] – She would like LLBiH funding for those with dementia, perhaps combining the over 50s badminton and this.

#### Welwyn Hatfield Community Badminton Network

The Gosling Saturday morning session has an average of 8 participants with L1 Sam Rusling manging the sessions, and it is now self sustaining. Peartree's Hall Grove fortnightly sessions had too few participants and was replaced by sessions in Woodhall Community Centre: these, too, have too few participants to break even and will stop 16 December.

#### Countywide:

Events:

Living Longer Better Conference day, HSV, 5 Sep23: HBA Market stall and 4-court sessions (some 50 participants) had support from: Bob Green, Ian Robinson, Sam Rusling, Jim Rusling, Gill Barlett, and DB.

Hertfordshire Clubs Conference on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September. 100+ delegates of clubs attended from across the county. Very useful workshops: the slides are available to freely download:  
<https://sportinherts.org.uk/Hertfordshire-Clubs-Conference-2024>

#### 4 Herts' Schools' Participation in BE Inter Schools Championships

For those schools participating, the finals are on Friday 6 December organised as usual by Tanya Angus, Herts Schools Tournament Organiser. BE are trying to increase participation by minimising fees necessary to participate. We look forward to the coaches who can help.

Tanya reports: Most of the SGO's still run the local rounds but appreciate we now have 6 new SGO's that have been finding their feet. Offers of coaching from coaches for the local rounds might encourage more schools to participate. Our CBNS could ask the School Games Organisers in their areas.

Herts Primary schools conference Friday 10 January 2025

Liam Cooper says the Head Office will provide helpers and kit to promote the new Shuttle Stars. Hopefully some Herts coaches will again help.

#### 5 HBA Media

The website is maintained by Simon Gouldstone and DB. DB has also added items to HBA FB.

#### 6 CBNs Meetings and Reports

East Herts CBN webpage: [www.hertsbadminton.net/east-herts-community-badminton-network/](http://www.hertsbadminton.net/east-herts-community-badminton-network/)

Meeting [Minutes](#) are on HBA EH CBN webpage. Next meeting 21 November 2024.

Herts West Badminton DG webpage: [www.hertsbadminton.net/herts-west-community-badminton-network/](http://www.hertsbadminton.net/herts-west-community-badminton-network/)

Meeting [Minutes](#) are on HW BDG webpage. Next meeting 23 January 2025.

NH CBN contact Bob Green e: [bob@abcegg.co.uk](mailto:bob@abcegg.co.uk)

WH CBN webpage: [www.hertsbadminton.net/welwyn-hatfield-community-badminton-network/](http://www.hertsbadminton.net/welwyn-hatfield-community-badminton-network/)

[Annual Report](#)