

Hertfordshire Badminton Association

Minutes of the committee meeting held on 10 February 2025 on Zoom

Present:

Paul Kempster	PK
Nick Goode	NG
Simon Gouldstone	SG
Bob Green	BG
Brian Jackson	BJ
Eddie Lintott	EL
Jim Robson	JR
Colin Walker	CW
Steve Willis	SW

1. Apologies for absence

Dave Bartlett	DB
Doug Clark	DC

2. Matters arising from the Committee Meeting on 4 November 2024

- a) SG had looked at the issue of outdated posts accessed through the BE Twitter feed on the HBA web site. The link now led to the landing page on which people could sign in to X and sign up to the BE X feed, so it was not possible link the HBA site to that. He suggested that, as alternatives, HBA could provide a link to the BE site or the BE News page.
- b) PK had not yet contacted BV or KM to discuss why the Senior County trophies for 2023 had not been presented nor why trophies for 2024 had not been purchased.
- c) Since the last meeting, SG had received two enquiries about whether HBA intended to adopt the BE Transgender Policy. His answer had been that it could not be adopted for the County League mid-way through season. However, the committee agreed that it should be discussed at the AGM.

Action: All committee members to reacquaint themselves with BE's policy

3. Chairman

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

- BE was developing a new web site that should be live in April
- There was no parabadminton in Europe this year
- Money was likely to be extremely tight with increases in entry and sanction fees
- No Strings was to be relaunched in the near future

4. Secretary

SG reported that he had received 10 complimentary tickets for the All England and would be circulating the committee in the very near future.

5. Membership Secretary and Treasurer

CW reported as follows:

- a) There were currently 50 affiliated clubs, an increase of four from last November but three fewer than the end of last season. There were two new clubs, Feathertouch (no members) and Radiant (four members), but five had lapsed: Gadebridge Junior, Chiltern Three Rivers, Smashit, Essendon and Herts Toppers. He was aware that Gadebridge Juniors had merged with Abbey and that Smashit was still running. He had emailed Anna Collis about the status of Smashit but had had no reply. Of the 50 affiliated clubs, only nine were junior clubs but that could increase to ten if Smashit affiliated. Total membership was 1378 which was an increase of nearly 100 from last April. Whilst the number of adults had remained the same at 808, the increase was mainly due to 83 more junior members with a small increase in other members (coaches, HVOs etc).
- b) Funds currently stood at £18400 an increase of £1500 from last April. HBA had received £2500 in county fees, some £200 down on last year. HBA had made one more award from the Ray Learney Fund and that brought the total for the year to six. There remained £1683 in the Fund.
- c) Although the HBA's funds had increased by some £1500, there were some items outstanding and some expected future expenditure. That included court and shuttle costs for the Masters of about £800 and four months hire of Presdales of around £700. There could be further expenditure on shuttles, senior county travel and other expenses. To balance that, there were anticipated match fees of about £1200 and additional county fees. He expected there to be a small profit of around £500 on the season's activities.
- d) BE had announced that it would be increasing the fees to enter the senior county competitions. The fee for the Premiership would increase from £875 to £1085, a rise of 24%, and it would increase by a further 20% in 2026-27. The fee for Regional teams was to increase by 12% from £825 to £920. If the first team remained in the Premiership, the cost to HBA of entering three teams would £2930, an additional £405.
- e) CW's view, at the date of the meeting, was that affiliation and match fees should remain unchanged next season and that was endorsed by the committee.

6. Senior County

No report. After the first two rounds of fixtures, the position of each team was as follows:

First team (Premiership)
Won 2 Lost 4
Ninth out of 10 teams

Second team (Division 1 South)

Won 3 Lost 1

Fifth out of eight

Third team (Division 2 South East)

Won 3 Lost 1

Fourth out of eight

NG raised two issues:

- a) The Senior squad intended reintroducing weekly training sessions to be organised by Harry Goode. The players would cover the costs but HBA would meet the upfront cost of booking facilities. The committee agreed to that proposal. The committee also endorsed the principle that there should be a greater degree of organisation of the senior county teams, and communication with the committee, factors that seemed to have disappeared since Paul Widdicombe retired. NG was to approach Harry Goode and Natalie Barton to take on more prominent roles.
- b) He also suggested that the best junior players were not being given sufficient opportunity to play in the three senior county teams. He accepted that there would always be arguments about their ability compared with established players but he was concerned that younger players might lose interest if they did not get playing opportunities. CW mentioned that playing juniors in the senior county teams had worked well when he ran the fourth team and Pat Walker ran the U17 squad as she could advise on the players' suitability and availability. PK commented that there had been talk last year about entering a fourth team but the BE deadline had been missed. BG suggested that HBA should find out what BE's deadline was and see what came out of the collective training events. The committee agreed with that proposal. NG would follow that up with Ben Vrankovic, Kelly Matthews and others currently involved.

7. County League

PK reported that the League was progressing satisfactorily but he was concerned that there might be a backlog towards the end of the season which could mean extending the closing date. CW agreed to provide PK with the BE County League printout so that he could check the players' eligibility.

8. Hertford Area League

JR reported that League Republic showed that the season was progressing well with all six divisions having played more than 50% of their matches.

9. North Herts and Letchworth

BG reported as follows:

- a) The Stevenage, Letchworth and Biggleswade leagues were ticking over albeit with fewer teams than previous seasons.
- b) Junior clubs were doing well with Anna Collis considering starting another group in Hitchin. The only exception was Shuttles in Letchworth which was struggling with low numbers.

- c) As part of his Club Rep role for HJBA, he had organised two friendly junior events before Christmas, the first a match between Baldock and Comets, the second a four-way match between Abbey, Baldock, Comets and Hitchin. He hoped to organise at least one more, maybe two. before the end of the season.
- d) The Live Longer Better in Hertfordshire initiative was due to finish in mid-March. One group in Stevenage had already become self-sufficient, another in Stevenage and the one in Baldock also looked very likely to continue after the funding finishes. Almost 60 over 50s have started playing regularly in this area due to the initiative, which had also boosted numbers at the Letchworth No Strings. The aim was to pop in occasionally once the funding stops, to see how they are all doing and to maintain enthusiasm.

10. Masters

SW submitted a detailed written report which would be put on the web site. The highlights were:

- a) The Over 40s were second in their division, the Over 50s won their division, the Over 55s were third, the Over 60s were fifth and the over 65s seventh in their respective divisions
- b) Four teams entered the Masters Challenge 2025 with great success. The Over 40s and Over 50s both won their leagues.
- c) There were some notable performances in the Masters National. Winners were Christine Batty in the Over 45s Womens Singles, Caroline Hale in the Over 55s Womens Singles and Don Burden & John Bowker in the Over 60s Mens Doubles. Runners Up were Liz Austin & Caroline Hale in the Over 55s Womens Doubles, Don Burden & Caroline Hale in the Over 55s Mixed Doubles and Anita Harris in the Over 70s Womens Singles. Eddie Lintott & Mike Wong were semi-finalists in the Over 55s Mens Doubles.
- d) In the Middlesex Masters Tournament, runners up were Bogdan Catargiou in the Over 45s Mens Singles and Martin Haddon & Eddie Lintott in the Over 55s Mens Doubles.

11. Tournaments

EL had nothing to report.

12. Development

DB's report is appended to the minutes.

13. Coaching

BJ reported as follows:

- a) He had responded to Lee Bent's letter regarding Coach Education and Development (30 October 2024) and posted the possibility of a Coach Development Day in Hertfordshire which had not attracted much interest.

- b) Ian Robinson had taken up the coaching opportunity at Haileybury College which he understood he was sharing with Anna Collis.
- c) BJ was still looking for coaches for Natalie Barton in Watford, Harpenden and St Albans.
- d) Badminton England had organised a foundation course on 29 and 30 March at Beaumont School, St Albans and a level 2 course starting on 29 March at Beaumont School, St Albans and Katherine Warrington School, Harpenden.

14. Social Media/Publicity

No report.

15. HJBA

MN provided a written report:

- a) HJBA had got off to a busy start to 2025 with three closed tournaments for Herts only players, one for U13 In the A category meaning county players may enter, and two in the B category. All were well attended and well organised by June Goode, helped on the day by various volunteers.
- b) Squads had been much busier having got school Christmas events out of the way. Shires league matches were showing mixed results. Hopefully U13, U17 and U19 would make their respective finals. U15 probably would not with two matches left having lost three and won one by 12-8, it would depend on other results. Younger players were hopefully getting some experience ready for next year.
- c) There was disappointment at not being able to enter a team for the RIO tournament in January as players were not willing to commit. There would be a team for ICT in April, which had the possibility to do very well.
- d) HJBA was now booking dates at HSV for 2026, to hopefully avoid last minute changes of tournament dates and non-availability.

16. BE Issues

There were no issues for discussion.

17. Any other business

There was no other business.

18. Future meetings

Next Committee Meeting 19 May on Zoom.

AGM 2 June

Action: SG to contact DB about AGM location

Development Report to HBA Committee 3 November 2024

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1 BE General Meeting

My Notes forwarded 23 January.

2 County-wide

.2 Facilities

Oaklands College Aspirational Master Plan

No further news

Gosling Sports Park

HSP director, John O'Callaghan, and I met WH MP, Adrew Lewin, regarding Herts Police not yet vacated GSP originally in 2019 due to be 2024. He wrote to GSP management who wrote back stating Herts Police have it 'for the foreseeable future' and 'not much demand for badminton as evidence by Hatfield Leisure Centre demand'. Andrew queried getting a campaign up and I furnished details of badminton and other usage of GSP the month before Herts Police took over as evidence of need.

At the WH Inclusion Committee, 5 February I raised the concern of the lack of any sports facilities open weekdays in WG compared with 25 courts in Hatfield. WH Sports Partnership Officer, Milan Johnston, said they have contracted Strategic Leisure to consult the public on sports need within the borough.

Welwyn Garden City schools: Monks Walk's 4-court hall building works to start 'in the summer'..

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

HSP have offered to help collate the data and write the report to SE for 15 March.

4 Herts' Schools' Participation in BE Inter Schools Championships

The finals were on Friday 6 December organised as usual by Tanya Angus, Herts Schools Tournament Organiser with help from several of our coaches. Results:

U16 Boys – 10 teams 1st Parmiters 2nd Sir John Lawes 3rd Watford boys 4th Chauncy

U14 Boys – 9 teams 1st Watford Boys 2nd Parmiters 3rd St Christopher 4th Sandringham

U16 Girls – 11 teams 1st Dame Alice Owens 2nd St Francis 3rd Parmiters 4th St Albans High school

U14 Girls – 9 teams 1st Dame Alice Owens 2nd Parmiters 3rd Sandringham 4th Queenswood

I haven't heard when the Regional round is.

Herts Primary schools conference Friday 10 January 2025

Brian Jackson, Ken Winchester, Gill Bartlett and I had a promotional stand. Much less interest this year.

5 HBA Media

The website is maintained by Simon Gouldstone and DB; CBN webpages have been maintained with minutes, etc.

6 CBNs Meetings and Reports

East Herts CBN webpage: www.hertsbadminton.net/east-herts-community-badminton-network/

Meeting 21 November 2024 [Minutes](#) are on HBA EH CBN webpage. Next meeting 13 February.

Herts West Badminton DG webpage: www.hertsbadminton.net/herts-west-community-badminton-network/

Meeting 23 January 2025 [Minutes](#) are on HW BDG webpage. Next meeting 24 April

NH CBN contact Bob Green e: bob@abcegg.co.uk

WH CBN

Owing to HSV cancellation of Comets JBC 10 of 16 bookings in the Autumn term and several in the Spring term membership is down by some 25% this year. Club viability is a serious concern,

WH CBN [webpage](#)