

WH CBN Chairman's Annual Report June 2025

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Introduction

The information in this report is from personal knowledge, and collated from colleagues. Please help with errors and to fill in the gaps.

Juniors

Clubs and Sessions

Comets Junior Badminton Club at HSV

Membership this year has been healthy with 35 members and a waiting list of 4. Unfortunately 11 of their 15 Sunday autumn sessions were cancelled by management owing to higher priority bookings (in their view): spring and summer sessions are not so greatly impacted. We are looking elsewhere for residency for autumn 2025.

Swifts at Travelers Lane, Hatfield

Owing to bouncy castle starting in the late Friday evenings, Swifts' sessions start earlier. The impact this year is not known, although a few of their members have since joined Comets JBC.

The DKWay at Gosling SP, Mondays and Thursdays

Tournaments

As well as the usual 17 HJBA tournaments, Ian Robinson and Bob Green have also organised successful cross county tournaments. Coaches, Ku and Khalid also organised 2 tournaments at Hatfield LC.

Schools

Junior

John Stobo is coaching at Creswick, Holwell, Applecroft, Commonswood, St John's Lemsford, , Peartree and schools, as well as the Monday afternoon primary school group that he has run at Gosling for a good many years.

Ian Robinson is coaching St. Philip Howard Primary school, Hatfield Sports Week, 7 July Tournaments.

Secondary

Inter-Secondary Schools Tournament results

Organised by Tanya Angus, Herts School Games Organiser, the finals were held as usual at HSV in December helped by several WHCBN members. Fewer WH schools participated this year. The finalists were:

U16 Boys – 10 teams

1st Parmiters, 2ⁿ 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

WH School Games Organiser is Natasha Ferris at The Ridgeway Academy.

Hertfordshire Junior Badminton Association Squads

Their squad nights are at Herts Sports Village on Wednesdays for U11, 13, 15, 17, & 19. All have done extremely well this year with U19s top county. HJBA organised some 17 tournaments this season.

Senior Clubs and Sessions

Clubs

BE registered senior clubs in WH include:

Comets seniors, at HSV

Hawks, at Bishops Hatfield Girls School

Kites, at Gosling SP

All information, comments and concerns welcomed.

Sessions

Birchwood Leisure Centre, No strings
Sundays, 15:00 – 17:00 run by Salam Choudhary

Gosling Sports Park
Saturdays, 10 – 11 50+, run by Sam Ruisling
Saturdays, 11- 12:30 No strings, run by Mark Wiltshire

Hatfield Leisure Centre
Tuesday 18:00 – 20:00 No strings, run by Ku and Khalid
Wednesdays 10:00 – 12:00 'Senior Badminton Drop in'
Thursday 10:0 – 12:00 No strings, run by Ku and Khalid
Fridays 10:00 – 12:00 No strings, run by Ku and Khalid

Hertfordshire Sports Village
Tuesdays, 10:00 – 12:00 No strings, HSV Activator present
Thursdays, 10:00 – 12:00 No strings, HSV Activator present
Thursdays, 17:00 – 19:00 No strings, HSV Activator present

Woodhall Community Centre
Mondays, 4-5pm 50+ No strings run by Jim Ruisling

Facilities

Hertfordshire Sports Village

HSV, with Badminton England (BE) superior facilities, is home to Comets Junior and Senior Clubs, HJBA squads and some of their tournaments. As well as HBA's Restricted and Open there were several national and international BE tournaments were again held there, and all were well attended. Availability for clubs is decreasing to almost nil.

Gosling Sports Park and the General Lack of Badminton courts in WG

Gosling, with BE standard facilities, was until 2019 the only Welwyn Garden sports facility open weekdays when Herts Police were given tenure week-days. The short information, recently, is that the Police 'will continue using the area for the foreseeable future'. WH Council has undertaken a consultation on sports facilities, and the Planning Department's Local Plan will acknowledge the shortfall. The long information is in the Appendix.

Hatfield Leisure Centre

This centre, with solid woodblock floor, now has bouncy castle in the main sports hall from Friday evening until Sunday mid-day. This has disrupted Swifts Friday evening's schedule (starting earlier), and prevented Saturday and Sunday junior and adult sessions and tournaments continuing.

Birchwood Leisure Centre

Birchwood continues to support badminton with good BE standard facilities.

Schools

Onslow St Audrey School's New Facility

Opened last year. Nick Goode and Steve Willis visited: no availabilities.

Monks Walk School's New Facility

Plans to start building the new 4 court facility in the summer. DB and BE's Facility Manager have tried without success to contact with support. Milan Johnston will try, too.

The Ridgeway and Stanborough are available for bookings.

Other Organisations

Hertfordshire Badminton Association and Badminton England

HBA AGM 2 June 2025 Summary

Several clubs are having difficulties obtaining courts, and affording the price increases: BE and HSP are aware.

Leagues are doing OK: some slightly increasing some slightly decreasing.

Countywide Membership 2025/2024

Juniors 507, +97	Seniors 840, +32	Others 77, +9	Total 1424, +138
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Clubs: 2025/2024	Juniors 10, -2	Seniors 41, nil	Total 51, -2 (one JBC may rejoin)
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Annual HBA fee: Jnrs nil, seniors £3.50 (no change since 2022) HBA finances are 'healthy'.

The senior county and masters teams are doing well. Our four community badminton networks are active and healthy.

All committee members will re-stand (see HBA website for details). Paul Kempster and Dave Bartlett are again BE county representatives to the BE General Committee.

Minutes to follow.

Badminton England General Committee AGM 21 June 2025

Head Office are encouraging all clubs to have a welfare officer: training is available as webinar.

A project is being launched to improve the relationship between Head Office and County Badminton Associations. At the AGM, as an introduction to the 18 month project, representatives will be asked to discuss:

- What are the key functions of your CBA?
- What would you like to do but can't?
- How can we work together most effectively over the course of this project?
- What initial questions do you have about this project?

All input is welcomed.

BE Club and Coach conference with two days of networking, workshops and all things badminton at the newly refurbished National Badminton Centre on Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st September.

All comments welcomed.

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

'This Girl Can' in Welwyn Hatfield returns for its ninth year between the 9th June-15th June. Sports clubs, organisations and leisure providers are offering free or low cost sport and physical activity sessions for women and girls across the week. All activities are promoted on the Councils event calendar. [Events – One Welwyn Hatfield](#)

Big Summer: Returning between the 28 July – 17 August, we're encouraging as many partners to submit a range of activities in sport, physical activity, music, dance, drama, and cultural activities for young people aged 0-19. All activities submitted will be added to the councils events calendar and promoted to the residents. If you would like to deliver an activity you can submit on the online form: [BIG Summer – One Welwyn Hatfield](#) .

WH Healthy Hub

Managed by Liz Paffrey, Health & Wellbeing Officer, the Healthy Hub has provided a forum for information and for publicising our Living Longer Better sessions.

Greenwich Leisure Limited

'GLL are running an over 60s Club games Senior Olympics on the 1 October at the Copper box arena London. Activities will include Badminton, short tennis, walking sports, short bowls. Will be looking to recruit players.' , Caroline Shillabeer, GLL Communiy Sports Manager

Hertfordshire Sports Partnership

HBA are grateful for the continued support of HSP, particularly this year, for their help obtaining the £10,360 SE grant, and assisting with all phases of our Living Longer Better 50+ Badminton project: the report is available for download from HBA website Home page.

Natalie Barton, who has played for the county more than 200 times, and Dave Bartlett (Development Coordinator) received Hertfordshire Awards for Outstanding Service to Badminton from the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire, Annie Brewster, at Natalie's junior club, 21 March.

HSP's Clubs Conference October 24 slides are available [here](#): this year's date is yet to be announced. their National Governing Bodies of sport conference is being held 1 July: BE Regional Manager, and Dave Bartlett will be attending.

Volunteers' Week Monday 2nd June to Sunday 8th June

Volunteers' Week takes place in June every year and in 2025 is taking place from **Monday 2nd June to Sunday 8th June**. So a Great BIG 'Thank You'! to the fantastic contribution our volunteers make to everything badminton. [Volunteers' Week 2025 - Wellbeing Info](#)

Finally

As mentioned at the beginning, all corrections and input very welcome, and helpful..

Appendix

Gosling Sports Park and the General Lack of Badminton courts in WG

Gosling was until 2019 the only Welwyn Garden sports facility open weekdays. In 2019 when the Herts Police took over the weekday occupancy it was to be until their facilities were built – by 2024. At the time there were hundreds of adult and junior users, including schools. As chair of WHBC in 1998 and 2009 I had got Sports England refurbishment grants for the sports hall (about £70k) , so I was personally unhappy about the situation. In February this year a letter, via our MP Andrew Lewin, from Jeremy Lake Partnership Manager GLL, stated the Police ‘will continue using the area for the foreseeable future’, and, ‘we remain open to future discussions about its continued use, particularly as it relates to ensuring the availability of indoor sports venues for the local community.’ Recently the Police have taken over one of the squash courts.

At the WH Communities1st meeting 21 May, I pointed out that whereas Hatfield has 25 badminton courts available weekdays, WG has none. By granting an extension of use to Herts Police they were given priority over the health of the people WG. Milan Johnston, Sports Partnership Officer, stated ‘that the council are aware of the shortfall of badminton courts in Welwyn garden city and the council have commissioned for the ‘built facilities strategy’ to be updated which will also identify the shortfall. Unfortunately there are many budget constraints within the council and they are not in a position to build a new sports hall but there are options to explore utilising other facilities including campus west.

In response to my subsequent emailed concern on the lack of badminton courts to WH BC Executive Member for Planning, Cllr Rose Grewal, she replied: ‘I share your view that physical and mental health and wellbeing is a key factor in promoting a healthier and a happier community. As you know we are in the process of developing a new Local Plan and I have asked officers to provide a response in relation to our emerging policy.’

So, we wait to see the public review of the consultation on the Sports Facilities Strategy later this year, and WH BC’s Local Plan: ‘ A six-week public consultation on key topics will take place in Summer 2025’.

Alternative Venues

Gosling Development. For several years, with the help of BE Head Office, we have supported WHBC’s Sports Facilities Strategy for developing Gosling with potentially 8 new courts. Owing to potential financial difficulties in developing the site WHBC have now abandoned any development at the site for the foreseeable future.

Oaklands College, St Albans £60M MasterPlan: Four years ago the college asked us to be involved in a potential 8 or 12 court sports hall, and we attended meetings and sent in our usage plans. Unfortunately, they have not re-engaged with us, despite further expressions of interest.