

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS 2021-22

This has undoubtedly been a very difficult return to play for the sport following the restrictions imposed by COVID, but at least every effort has been made by the County to normalise its activity as far as it has been possible. The management and administration of the sport in the County has continued albeit under difficult circumstances and in conjunction with Badminton England every effort has been made to facilitate a return to play in its various forms.

The County is acutely aware that facilities remain an area of concern, with most clubs operating within School sports halls. Student requirements and their stance on COVID restrictions has affected availability of venues and there have been reports of increased costs for hire. The County contacted as many facility operators as possible to maintain the flow of information about re-opening, and our thanks to many clubs who through their own efforts managed to get facilities to open early for this season and kept the County informed.

Preparations were made and implemented in conjunction with the governing body Badminton England so that the various functions of the SBA could be met, and the core activities restarted. So, County representative teams at all ages, organising and running competitions, helping coaching support, promoting, and running community play opportunities, the sports development programme and community engagement have been worked on during the 2021/22 season.

The SBA remains committed to try and find ways to broaden the appeal of the sport and will continue with a variety of initiatives to achieve that aim, such as supporting the County School Games programme. There has been some encouragement with an increasing number of juniors taking up the sport in some areas of the County, but the adult membership appears to have fallen. The Strategic Development Plan needs to reflect on the change to the sport and implement programmes to increase participation at all ages. The County will continue to fund a variety of initiatives in the next few years to support badminton development

I would like to thank all the Council Officers for all their voluntary activity and time provided. This has been a very difficult period, but we remain committed to doing the best for all badminton players in the County. The County has had to operate without a secretary placing additional work on officers so if there is a volunteer who could assist in this role the Association would be grateful. Our thanks also go to the host of volunteers, club officials, coaches and other volunteers who have done their best to promote the sport and maintain the core activities.

This year has undoubtedly been a very different one in the COVID aftermath. However, we still look forward with anticipation and hope that the County can provide as much assistance as possible to help the sport develop in the future, whilst maintaining the core activities.

Mike Tee
Chair Suffolk Badminton
25 June 2022