

## CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS 2024-25

The management and administration of the sport in the County has continued despite a few challenges and in conjunction with Badminton England every effort has been made to deliver and develop the sport across the County.

Maintaining the core activities has been difficult at times, but with the dedication and hard work of the voluntary Committee members, the County fulfilled County representative teams at all ages, organising and running competitions, helping coaching support, promoting, and running community play opportunities, School Games, the sports development programme and community engagement work. This is a significant achievement, as with vacancies on the Committee this has unfortunately fallen on a smaller number of volunteers. The County has looked for and continues to seek new volunteers.

The County is still aware that facilities are still an area of concern, particularly within School sports halls. Exam periods take the facilities away and this can cause major fixture congestion for clubs using such facilities. This has been made even harder with the growth of Pickleball taking court time at the expense of badminton. The County is working with BE to find ways to address this issue.

The SBA stays 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, new coaching courses and new junior clubs. There has been some encouragement with an increasing number of juniors taking up the sport, but more is needed as shown by the high demand for juniors, with even the new clubs already having waiting lists. It is still difficult to quantify the numbers of players in the sport, with unaffiliated clubs, pay and play casual sessions and community centre programmes difficult to quantify. However, it stays appropriate to continue with the strategic plan for the sport in the County and this will be reported separately during this AGM.

It is with a great deal of sadness, that I report the passing of Stephen Smith this year. His contribution to the sport of badminton within the County has been immeasurable. A member of Suffolk Badminton for over 75 years, and a lifelong member of Ipswich TMCA Badminton Club, he undertaken a number of roles with both Club and County Association contributing significantly to the sport in a variety of different aspects, helping to promote and manage badminton locally and in the wider community.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Council Officers for all their voluntary activity and time provided. This has been another difficult period, but all are still committed to doing the best for the sport across the County. As highlighted earlier, The County has had to run without a Minutes Secretary and Secretary placing additional work on other officers. Our thanks also go to the dedicated band of volunteers, club officials, coaches and other volunteers who continue to promote the sport and support and promote activities across the County.

We look forward with anticipation and hope that the County can provide as much aid as possible to help the sport develop in the future and that the further implementation of key actions within the Strategic Plan will go some way to achieving this aim.

Mike Tee  
Chair Suffolk Badminton  
23 June 2025