



ANNUAL REPORT

Year ending 31 May 2021

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The past year has been challenging for everyone and unsurprisingly squash has not been front of mind for many of us as we have dealt with the consequences of the pandemic. Despite the challenges, clubs and players across the county have proved adaptable and have responded positively to the gradual easing of restrictions and the slow reintroduction of squash. No competitive squash has been possible during this period but there are signs recently that participation levels at clubs are starting to increase and there has been an enthusiastic response to enquiries about the restart of league squash later this year.

With little outgoings during the year, OSRA has maintained its healthy financial position and this is expected to continue with the anticipated return of league squash later this year.

The county development strategy that was referred to in last year's report has now been finalised and approved and with the gradual return of normal squash can now be deployed. The main emphasis of the strategy is on the development of grass roots squash and in particular on increasing awareness and participation across the county. A big part of the deployment programme will be to work with local clubs to help create initiatives and local events that will help increase membership squash in their area.

The committee have continued to meet on a regular basis via Zoom and have largely dealt with items related to government and England Squash (ES) guidance and more recently on preparations related to the return to squash. During these meetings and through considerable additional correspondence it has been striking that committee members have collectively sought to protect players and ensure a smooth and safe return to normal squash.

During the year OSRA has played an active role in ES Council meetings, the South Region Forum (SRF) and other squash fora and continues to lobby on behalf of the squash playing community in Oxfordshire. We also petitioned



Oxfordshire MPs to put more pressure on the government to provide funding to support small clubs as opposed to those involved in the bigger team sports. Wherever possible we have tried to ensure support and guidance from ES in sustaining squash during the pandemic has been forwarded to club contacts.

On the wider front, the SRF consisting of Oxfordshire, Hampshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Wiltshire, which has been in existence for over 5 years, will be wound up as a formal body. It is anticipated that funding to support the development of grass roots squash that used to be channeled through the SRF will now come direct from ES. The SRF will continue as an informal networking group.

COACH'S REPORT

It has yet again been a very difficult year for junior squash. Sadly, no competitions on the junior front have taken place. It looks like in September things will start back up again in earnest with England Squash restarting all of the junior competitions and county programme. We still have several pots of funding that we have allocated for junior development which will be drawn upon during the coming season. These are focussed on grass root initiatives and also to support our county juniors. We have run a number of ad hoc county training sessions throughout the year when the restrictions have allowed which have been well attended. The county junior closed event in September will look to be the launch pad for the junior programme into 2022.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Monies in our bank account increased from £9,978 as at 01 June 2020 to £10,016 as at 31 May 2021, although please note that £2,231 of this is funding received from England Squash which is largely earmarked for specific projects. This leaves £7,785 as available funds.

Income for this year was just £104, being a small rebate from England Squash for Oxon clubs' affiliation, with no league entry fees or other income.

Expenditure was much reduced at £1,416, containing only overhead costs, such as the website, plus some monies paid out to support coaching



qualifications and costs for the restart of the county's junior programme in May 2021.

Pre-pandemic, our average reserves were £9,500, which covered one year's (average) expenditure of £8,700. Our current reserves of £7,785 represent almost one year of average expenditure but it would be prudent to ensure they are not depleted much further.

WELFARE REPORT

During the last year, as you would suspect, there has been minimal contact from the welfare officer with squash clubs around the county due to COVID restrictions.

I have completed the "Time to Listen course" which is a specific course designed for welfare officers working with sports clubs. This was informative and gave a good insight into how the role of welfare officer across Oxfordshire Squash can be developed.

I plan to visit each club and display a poster explaining the role and what to do should a safeguarding concern arise.

OSRA Committee

11 August 2021