

Swindon Sports Forum (SSF) - Chairman's Report 2019/2020 - Ian Jankinson



This year we have decided it would be too difficult to convene an AGM and all the Officers have agreed to continue in their positions for a further year until we can meet again face to face. My report along with **Sue Gravell**, our Treasurer's Report and **Chris Baker's** Coordinator's Report will keep you up to date with where we are and what we have achieved. We are now a Charity (Charitable Incorporated Organisation - CIO) which achieves one of our prime objectives for the Forum. I would like to thank all the members of the Steering Group who have helped us shape who we are, and our key partners Swindon Borough Council and WASP who continue to help us with funding. Our Steering Group Members are **Gerry Hannon** who is Secretary, C.E.O. **Steve Boocock**, **Alan Low** and **Stuart Arthur** from WASP, **Gladys Barr** who gives us an insight into Parishes, **Trish Cowie** and **Ben Humphrey** representing SBC Health and Wellbeing and with **Lewis Bird** supporting disability activity, **Charlie Marillier**, **Mark Townend**, **Neil Bromley** and **James Moss** from Voluntary Action Swindon who supports our meetings,.

Our new year began in December with such great hope and expectation:

- The 32nd Olympic Games - Tokyo 2020
- The 16th Paralympic Games - Tokyo
- Swindon's Big Pledge - Race to Tokyo
- Swindon Sports Forum
 - o Activity Week
 - o Senior Games
 - o Talented Athletes Academy

Then as we all know everything came crashing to a halt in March with cancellation after cancellation. Well most things did but many of you inventive members set up Zoom and video sessions to keep your members working. We all walked, cycled, jogged and rode to keep ourselves fitter and to ward off the 'lockdown lump'. We grew hippy hair and worked from home and spent much more time with our families.

Participation

Our key partner, Wiltshire and Swindon Sports and Activity Partnership (WASP) did an amazing 'virtual' School Games where more participants than ever have actually turned up at previous Games events took part with massive enthusiasm and skill, encouraged by many celebrity athletes. What a triumph.

Another triumph was our Virtual Senior Games in October, where we engaged 6 local care homes to perform 4 fun sport-based activities and record their performances. Many care homes entered the spirit of the Games with torch relays, banners and Olympic style decorations. More than 60 residents, over the age of 75, took part with some tremendous scores and results and all the winners were awarded medals and all participants received certificates. The winning care home was Guinness Care at Prince Rupert Court in Freshbrook, who took away the Senior Games Trophy for 2020. This was an amazing event and is a precursor for an all-inclusive games in the autumn of 2021.

Here we are in November and locked down again, with a small glimmer of a light at the end of a very long tunnel, with the promise of vaccines for the dreaded and lethal Covid 19.

We all had some respite during the summer when in a limited way we could re-open our doors to members and a lot of you took advantage of our 'Back on Track' funding to help make your spaces Covid Secure. We funded around 20 projects to increase participation across the town and awarded about £20,000 to help you do it.

Advocacy

Chris Baker our SF Coordinator has worked hard to increase our membership over the year and has created the Club Directory on our website and has been working with you to create a unique Club Profile for your Club or Association that we can publish as a link to the directory. We had plans suggested at our last AGM to act as a 'marcomms hub' to help share your offers, successes and needs, and that is still our intention so please continue to work with him on that. We now have an associated YouTube channel which again we will use to help promote our members. He will continue to come and visit (where safe) and Zoom/WhatsApp/Facetime with you all and help to resolve any issues or needs you have. Or maybe help you with funding or direct you to sources of help or funding to deal with any barriers you can't get past.

Development

We will continue to run courses and seminars and training days to support you – First Aid, Safeguarding Club Matters workshops to analyse your performance or your proposition or your finances or just your customer service. Now in the 'down time' is a good time for analysis. We can help you with Coach Bursaries and Committee training and work with you on your business plans for the coming difficult times. Don't despair, we are there to help where we can or point you to someone who can.

Objectives for 2020/21

We will continue to complete the projects we planned for this year, Covid Permitting,

- **Activity Week** will probably have much more value to clubs this year with the pent-up demand.
- **Back On Track** funding will still be available to help you ensure that when you restart your activities that you are Covid Secure.
- Physical Activity providers will continue to be one of our target groups for help and support
- **The Talented Athletes Academy** will start again, whether virtual or safely face to face.
- **The Senior Games** will also happen again this year and we plan to involve other Sports Forums in Wiltshire to set up an County event if possible
- **Pitch It** will become our small grants funding platform this year. Chris will provide details on Facebook soon but it is a simpler system for all activity providers to pitch for funds to help them increase participation – look out for his posts.
- We will facilitate a networking and sharing media link called '**This is how we stay Covid Secure**' to distribute 'Best Practice' and product sources etc.

We are all looking forward to an exciting spring and Swindon Sports Forum will be there to help you all capitalise on everyone's wish for the 'New Normal'.

Good luck, stay safe and have the best Christmas and New Year you can.

Ian Jankinson – Chairman Swindon Sports Forum – November 2020.

