

Annual General Meeting

Monday 10th July 2023 - Minutes

The meeting was held via Google Meet @ 8pm

Reports available via <http://www.suffolkvolleyballassoc.onesuffolk.net/home/reports/>

Attendees

Andrew Whitefield (SVA Chairman, Stowmarket), Steve Hicks (SVA Treasurer, Seagulls, Ipswich Ravens, Stowmarket), Amy Scrivener (SVA Committee Member, Ipswich Ravens), Nathan Derbyshire (SVA Committee Member, Team Suffolk, Newmarket), Tom Foster (SVA Committee Member, Ipswich Ravens), Sam Langley (SVA Committee Member, Bury Bobcats)

Apologies

Kevin Kent (SVA Committee Member, Stowmarket), Sam King (Newmarket), Guin Batten (Volleyball England Deputy Chief Executive), Laura Allcoat (Volleyball England Strategic Manager for An Ace Service), Arie (Ipswich Ravens)

Minutes of 2022 AGM

These were accepted as an accurate record.

Treasurer's report – Steve

Steve took as through the accounts and report which show an unrestricted true balance of £810.32; £26.78 less than this time last year.

Officials - respect, recognition, arriving as a team – Andrew / Steve

From chairman's report:

Information we learnt from Berkshire via the Regions and Counties Community of Practice: Officials for matches in Berkshire all arrive at the venue together – this helps them feel part of a team. Could this work in Suffolk?

Steve feels officials in Suffolk are likely to know the teams and didn't see much benefit for us. Nathan felt it could be helpful for new officials.

Suffolk Community Restart Fund developments @ Suffolk New College – Steve

From chairman's report:

The completion of our project with Suffolk New College is a significant achievement. Big thanks to Steve for the drive and attention to detail to get this completed. As well as allowing 6v6 training court configuration in half the hall, it is also possible to book a single badminton court. This allows smaller groups to play in a cost-effective manner. Details of how to book have been added to our website's [Venues and Equipment page](#).

Trudy from Suffolk New College has let Steve know that various members of the public have been booking single badminton courts for small-sided volleyball – this was one of the goals of the project as we know sessions available at clubs can't work for everyone.

Amy reported Ravens used the 2 x 6v6 training court configuration at the weekend. One point to be aware of: People coming through the door can be in the firing line for attacks.

Public booking of other venues

Members of the public have been booking Bury St Edmunds Leisure Centre – there was even a 6v6 game!

Andrew continues to work with Stowupland Sports Centre and Mid Suffolk Leisure Centre to allow members of the public to book small-sided volleyball at these venues.

Commented [WA1]: Suggestions

- Aim to have strongest hitters on court at far end from entrance
- Structure one-sided drills to hit away from entrance

Update on schools volleyball – Andrew

We helped organise / host more events and had more students participating than ever before. 421 participants in area events compared with 289 in 2018-19 prior to the pandemic. The 2022-23 figure does include more double-counting than previous years as we now aim to run events for every school year from Year 8 – Year 11 plus U19 whereas prior to 2020 U13, U15 and U17 were offered.

See Chairman's Report for details.

Local gender disparity – Andrew

Item added to agenda due to only one girls post-16 team entering U19 schools / colleges event despite broad gender-parity in earlier age groups.

Newmarket and Stowmarket both run men's sessions but Bury's ladies session has up to 24 players whereas their men's first team is a core of six supplemented by a few intermediate males (6 or 7). Seagulls has around twelve ladies plus two men. Stowmarket's Sunday session is around 50/50 split. Team Suffolk have more boys than girls, particularly over 16s but do have quite a few younger girls. Stowmarket's Volley2s session has significantly more boys than girls. Ipswich VC usually have close to twelve ladies but fewer men / boys.

Conclusion: Some club sessions have clear gender disparity. The balance across all clubs is Suffolk appears to be roughly even. No specific action to be taken.

Workforce development – Andrew

Volleyball England will designate one weekend each September and another each May for workforce development, i.e. training for coaches and officials. No VE competitions or training camps will run on these weekends to ensure workforce development gets the attention it needs. We can expect Assistant Coach, Coach and Grade 4 referee courses to be available on these weekends.

Given our lack of coaches and officials Andrew suggests each September we aim to host our own local workforce development sessions on the designated weekend for those not attending formal VE training.

Sam and Amy are both unavailable on 16/17 Sept. Suggested focus on officiating this year with a day where entry-level players get the chance to play lots, officiate a bit with games punctuated by discussions on interesting scenarios and how to deal with situations that arise.

Team Suffolk – Nathan

Increased numbers, mostly boys

- Performance – mainly U18/19 boys – Entered all Eastern Region events, top 4 twice, top of bottom half most other times
 - Many now accepted to unis with volleyball scholarships
- Intermediate – team entered entry-level
 - Confident girls + developing boys
- Beginners – From age 12 / 13

Anne-Marie & Mark happy to continuing coaching. Chris Watson has also been helping and will continue. The intermediate and beginners sessions also benefit from higher level Team Suffolk players helping out.

Healthy bank balance - considering contributing some of this to a partnership with Suffolk New College to purchase better posts.

With most of the Performance group leaving to go to university Team Suffolk are planning to run two groups in 2023-24.

Sessions are approx. once every three weeks during indoor season. Three-hour session is £16.

Andrew asked for an update on forming an independent club. Nathan to discuss with his colleagues.

Mixed Intermediate League Proposal – Steve

Likely Suffolk teams:

- Bury – 1 team
- Team Suffolk – 1 team
- Ipswich VC – 1+ teams
- Seagulls – 1 team
- Stowmarket (Sundays) - ?
- Newmarket – no
- Ravens – not in 2023-24

Agreed should be open to teams from outside Suffolk but all matches to be played in Suffolk.

Call to allow interested clubs to debate and agree the rules will be held in August.

Election of officers

- **Chairman** - Andrew Whitefield - chair@suffolkvolleyball.org.uk - 07508 351875
- **Vice Chairman** - vacant
- **Secretary** - Amy Scrivener - secretary@suffolkvolleyball.org.uk
- **Treasurer** - Steve Hicks - finance@suffolkvolleyball.org.uk
- **Competitions Officer(s)** - vacant
- **Refereeing Officer** - Steve Hicks - refereeing@suffolkvolleyball.org.uk
- **Junior Development Officer** - Andrew Whitefield
- **Welfare Officer** - vacant
- **Website Officer** - Steve Hicks - website@suffolkvolleyball.org.uk
- **Data Protection Officer** - Andrew Whitefield
- **Committee Members**
 - Nathan Derbyshire, Tom Foster, Sam Langley
 - The newly elected committee agreed that the following who were unable to attend should be consulted to confirm whether they wish to continue on the committee: [Ann Marie Matthews](#), [Rob Dovaston](#)

Goal Setting

- 16/17 Sept – Workforce Weekend

Adoption of Volley3s / Volley4s principals in schools events

From chairman's report:

Volleyball England launched Volley 3s & 4s festival packs for junior event organisers. At the heart of the guides sit a number of key principles. These are similar to those we use to guide our schools events. Two key differences:

- VE recommend success is recognised through praising performance not publishing results or awarding trophies.
 - We do announce results and send them to the schools so they can include in newsletters etc, but have not publicised on social media since before the pandemic
- VE recommend Volley3s for 11-14 year olds and Volley4s for 14-16 year-olds
 - We play 4-a-side on doubles badminton court for ages 12-19 as this makes most effective use of the space available and avoids confusing the teachers with different formats for different age groups

Broad agreement we should continue to let people know who's won but don't need to read out the positions of all the teams.

Andrew explained in the early days of our U13 competitions, whilst advertised as 3-a-side

Commented [WA2]: Since the meeting Ann Marie Matthews has confirmed she is willing to continue.

Commented [WA3]: Since the meeting Rob has confirmed that he is willing to continue. He would be happy to take on a vice-chair role.

some schools were turning up expecting 4-a-side and there was very little three-touch (or even two-touch) volleyball happening. Having a fourth player on court therefore allowed the "tennis" rallies to last a bit longer than with three. Standards have improved significantly since those days.

Nathan felt it is better to stick with 4-a-side as if a 3-a-side team gels well in younger age-group they may struggle to fit in a fourth player when they step up.

Fees

Agreed with Steve's recommendation

Set date for committee / fixtures meetings

- 14th Aug – Mixed Intermediate League
- 4th / 11th Sept - Men's Open
- 9th Oct – Entry Level
- Ladies – TBC (see below)

Any other business

- Suffolk Ladies Cup
 - Andrew to ask Anita to help get the cup to Bury
 - Consult Anita – Do Ipswich VC want to compete? If not, Bury could hold an inter-club event to qualify to have their name on the cup for the second year in a row
- Amy enquired about ownership of posts @ St Alban's. Rectangular posts are owned by Suffolk VA. Round posts owned by Ipswich Ravens. All sourced via Universal Services
- [VE Player Survey](#) – really good quality survey – encourage anyone to take part
- VolleyZone – note as well as their individual account club secretaries will have a separate club account. For updates or problems see:
 - <https://www.volleyballengland.org/article/599/volleyzone-migration-update-tuesday-4th-july> (or later news articles)
 - <https://www.volleyballengland.org/support/frequently-asked-questions>