

Dear Members,

We live in challenging times but it's great to see so many clubs now getting back playing face to face. It's understandable that numbers are lower than pre-pandemic, but there's strong evidence that numbers are continuing to grow. We are committed to supporting clubs to the best of our ability and believe that having a network of thriving clubs across Scotland remains critical for the future of our game. Since I last wrote to you there's been a lot happening.

Meeting with club representatives

We held four online meetings with club representatives to share ideas and to help us resolve any issues together. The feedback from clubs about Affiliation Agreements, SBU run online competitions, and the role of the districts was particularly helpful, together with a sharing of experiences relating to the sustainability of individual clubs. I hope the club representatives found the sessions as useful as did the trustees.

General Manager

Janet Unsworth has given up her role as General Manager. She undertook the role on a voluntary basis because she had always intended to travel extensively over the summer months. Her current plans are to do more travelling over the next year or so. We are grateful for all the hard work done by Janet. We are now looking for a new General Manager, which will be a remunerated flexible part time post. I'm extremely grateful to Joan Forsyth who has agreed to act in the role on a short-term interim basis.

Please get in touch with me or Joan for a chat if you may be interested.

Treasurer Vacancy

We welcome Karen Birt our new bookkeeper. We are still looking for a volunteer to fulfil the role of treasurer. I'm sure we've got lots of retired accountants within our membership who can easily fulfil this important role, expected to take no more than 3-4 hours per week.

Please contact Sarah Gunn (sarah.gunn@live.co.uk) if you may be interested.

Safeguarding Policy

We're delighted that Alex Hunter has agreed to become our new Child Protection Officer, taking over from Lorraine Findlay who did an excellent job in that role for many years. She has lots of relevant experience and, with help from Joan Forsyth, has produced a revised policy that can be viewed on our website. Familiarisation with this document is essential because Safeguarding and protecting children is a fundamental responsibility of us all.

Affiliation Agreements

We have had a lot of feedback regarding the difficulty some clubs are having in meeting the stated requirements. There have also been questions relating to the clause on affiliation fees. Please be assured the Agreements have been introduced as a means of good governance, and we would wish there to be no obstacles to clubs continuing to be affiliated. Any specific concerns should be discussed with Bill Whyte (wlwhyte133@outlook.com).

Best wishes to all our members for a great season ahead.

P.S. Please note the SBU Saturday Swiss Pairs on BBO will pause this coming Saturday 17 September, but we look forward to welcoming players back at 7 pm on Saturday 24 September.

Alan Goodman (chair@sbu.org.uk)

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