

Chairman's Report 2011.

Ian Jankinson



Welcome to the final Sports Forum meeting of 2011 and thank you for attending. We are now 5 years on from the Borough's promise of a Sports Forum and going from strength to strength. We are all on a countdown to the Olympics happening in our own back yard and most of us are preparing for the massive increase in sport and physical activity that it will engender.

The Steering Group have worked hard this year to keep Sport near the top of people's agendas despite the sluggishness in the recovery from what is proving to be a hard-hitting recession. We have worked closer with the voluntary sector to help clubs with their 'non-sport' necessities. Swindon Borough Council has actively involved us in the Sports and the Facilities Strategies. The Active Swindon Partnership has recognised the part that Sport must play in our health and well-being. WASP and the Sports Forum have a fantastic partnership helping clubs and coaches to develop, through support, advice and training. The Swindon Strategic Partnership realised the strengths of the Forum and we were selected to demonstrate our partnership working and how well it heralded the 'One Swindon' strategy that has evolved this year.

With a generous grant from Swindon Borough Council, we have been able to employ Doug Imrie, over the past year, to help us carry out the key objectives that we set last year, and I would personally like to thank him for the hard work he has given us over the year. His efforts are reflected in the following results; currently there are 179 clubs listed on the S.F. database as members, 43 clubs are S.F. Accredited, 50 Swindon based clubs have now achieved Clubmark, and we had 19 nominations and 9 prize-winners at the recent Swindon & Wiltshire Sports Awards. Working with Cathy Caulfield, he has helped with the development of an Activity Database, currently being populated with information supplied by SF members. He has arranged different courses, run in partnership with WASP and SBC that have been well attended. He has produced the Sports Club Briefings which pass on valuable information about sport locally and nationally, and he has solved many 'problems' or signposted you to someone who can.

Despite their loss of funding, the School Sports Partnership has continued to support school sport and we are working with them to put together the Youth Games for Swindon and Wiltshire. We will continue to support their work throughout the year.

In terms of Governance, we realise the pressures that are brought to bear on the people that run our clubs. We have done our best to give you support, training and guidance. With the announcement that HMRC are now scrutinising the way coaches are paid, we will help you again this evening with some advice and the chance to attend a subsidised, follow-up course with more detail on how you can protect your clubs and coaches.

We have continued to fund those projects that keep you progressing, with our grants scheme, so generously awarded to us through the Community Initiatives Fund. We have invested close to £70k over the last four years in our clubs and it shows in the quality of the results you are producing and we will continue to invest over the next years. We were awarded a Grass Roots grant of £1000 by the Borough to run a sporting showcase event, which, thanks to the Friends of Dorcan coalition of clubs, was an outstanding success. It attracted more players to the clubs involved and proved that the Sports Forum is excellent at getting more people more active more often.

As I retire from the Chairman's role I am proud of what we have achieved over the last four years. What I remember in the early days of the Forum was a group of frustrated but truly committed sports professionals challenging the Borough Council about issues and aggravations. Sport was clearly secondary in the Borough strategy. Over these four years we have together beaten out a good partnership moving from adversaries to collaborators in developing sport to a high quality and something to be proud of in the Borough. I thank the steering group members for their support and help over that time and the Sports Development team in the Borough for their tireless contributions. Helena Robinson and Steve Woodman and their leaders in Leisure Services have realised the positive benefits of the Sports Forum and I thank them for their trust, support and investment. I look forward to seeing the same support for whoever takes over this role. Thank you.