



Officiating Report AGM 2026

This was my second year as London AOC (Area Officiating Committee) Chair with some structural changes at performance level (Grade 2) and increased demand at grassroots (Grade 3 -5) due to league regulation changes and the free level 1 courses. As an AOC we tried to get the balance right between performance and grassroots as a focus. Like many organisation we could always benefit with more volunteers and support.

Grassroots (Grade 3 – 5 hockey)

Georga Reed once again headed up the LHO (London Hockey Officiating) Club / Grassroots aspect with a small team supporting her. This is an area we would love more volunteers to help with and please do get in touch with her. As per her words the Grassroots reports for the LHO AGM the reports is as follows;

The Club Umpiring Strategy continues to ensure that our resource can be targeted to support clubs that need it most. The Umpire Development Forms continue to provide insight into club level umpiring on a regular basis, and the Annual Umpiring Healthcheck allows clubs to reflect on the season and self identify areas for improvement. Overall there has been a visible increase in the number of our clubs that are actively taking ownership of umpiring and it's an incredibly positive change

As anticipated the L1 online course now being available free of charge, alongside Grade 3 regulations requiring L1 Assessed umpires the demand for assessments became significant. This was challenging from both an area and club perspective as neither has capacity to fulfil this - thank you to those who did support over the season!

Lisa Parr has joined the team and provided much needed support in managing the influx of area request forms. To support clubs, a virtual workshop was held to allow clubs to understand their challenges further and collaboratively identify ways to support, and was attended by 10 clubs.

I can not thank Georga enough for her work in making an impactful change to club officiating in London this season but also the previous seasons.

Performance (Grade 2)

This was the first year of the new performance sub committee being in place to focus on Grade 2 officiating and other performance hockey. I'm grateful for the work of Dawn Bonner, Phil O'Hagan, Graeme Hope, Paul Sexby, Nikki Butcher, Dan Carter to support this endeavour. The aim in setting up this sub committee was to ensure there was broader group of people who can ensure that we provide the best officiating at the top end of London Hockey. We are the only area who currently do this and hopefully it will improve the officiating at Grade 2 and performance.

During the season the performance team delivered;

- 894 outdoor umpiring appointments (24/25: 988) across all Competitions (League/ EH KO/ JAC).
- 732 x Umpire Appointments (24/25: 792) to London Premier & Division 1 fixtures out of a possible 1044 appointments (70% COVERAGE).
- 54 x EH KO Umpiring Appointments.
- 3 x National League Regional Reserve Appointments.
- 43 assessments during the season including 9 members who have successfully attained their L2 award & 6 umpires progressing their level within the London Panel structure
- We appointed 15 umpires appointed across a range of indoor tournaments.
- Currently the team is supporting 7 Masters tournaments from April through to July. The Performance Committee have used this as an opportunity to develop London members as well as some club umpires who we want to assess their level as well as assess them for L2 if the level of the game dictates it.

We also had 2 umpires have also been successful in moving to NPUA and 3 umpires moving up in the panel structure who call London their primary area.

Awards 2025/26 Season

- Umpire Support of the Year – Steve Cronin
- Young Umpire of the Year – Chris Young
- Award for Progress –Thomas Johnston
- Performance Umpire of the Year – Nikki Butcher
- Club Umpiring Award - HAC
- Fitzgerald Burton Award for Services to the Area – Graeme Hope

Future

A new officiating pathway designed to align with the adult league gradings is planned for 27/28. No actions are required by clubs in the current year but we as an

officiating committee must ensure we have the right infrastructure in place to support the clubs when this arrives in 2027/28 season.

There is also a new officiating manager for England Hockey in Will Davey which will hopefully lead to an improved engagement between the AOC and national officiating which will hopefully lead to an improved officiating experience nationally.

An improved focus on comms in the forthcoming year from ourselves to ensure we remain in touch and contactable before this change. We also need to focus on recognising those umpires who are regularly appointed and ensure we have a visible brand.

I will be stepping down at the end of next season and aim to hopefully leave the area and officiating in a stronger position after my three year tenure as chair.