



**WEST  
HOCKEY**

**AGM 2026**

**Nominations for  
Directors & Lead Committee Chairs  
Candidate Profiles**



# Chair of the Board

Present Incumbent	Dave Chard
Nomination	Dave Chard
Proposed By	Exeter HC
Seconded by	Old Bristolians HC



I would take this opportunity to thank the numerous volunteers at West Hockey and also the clubs and our officials. The changes have been very disruptive and presented many challenges, however, the majority of these have been overcome due to the sheer determination of many people.

I am standing for a sixth term as Chair, recognising the work of the Board is far from finished, with many ongoing projects all aimed at providing the best and most cost-effective solutions for our members. We have managed to reduce surpluses from the previously embarrassing levels and will continue to feedback funds where we can, to keep hockey costs to a minimum for all involved.

Many of you will know me by now, but from a personal point of view, I have been involved in our sport for literally as long as I can remember, holding various positions over 40 years, including Club Chair, club team captain, club match secretary, club social and fundraising officer, club discipline officer and county chair, active umpire, to name but a few! I hope with this breadth of experience at grass roots level, I can understand the difficulties and magnitude of running a club successfully and the work this entails.



## Vice Chair

Present Incumbent	Liz Powell
Nomination	Liz Powell
Proposed By	Marlborough HC
Seconded by	Old Bristolians HC

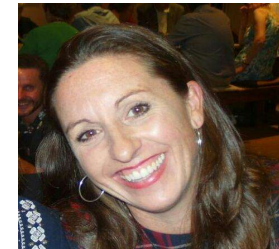


I have been involved in West administration for over 45 years: initially in officiating, then competitions and latterly as a member of the board. I was Chair of Yate LHC for many years and Chair and Secretary of the West Women's Umpiring Committee until the amalgamation in 2000. Afterwards I was Secretary to the new committee and latterly Chair. I was a member of the West Umpiring selection group for many years. I was also West Competitions Coordinator for nearly 20 years alongside my work in officiating. More recently I have enjoyed my role with the West Board and am looking forward to being able to continue for a further year.



# Finance Director

Present Incumbent	Bridgette Jones
Nomination	Bridgette Jones
Proposed By	Exeter HC
Seconded by	Isca HC



I am standing for re-election as Director of Finance for West Hockey, a voluntary role I have been proud to serve in, combining my passion for hockey with my professional experience in financial leadership.

I am a Chartered Management Accountant (FCMA) with more than 25 years' experience in finance, strategy, and organisational leadership. I currently serve as Finance Director for a Housing Association in Somerset and have previously supported both the Army and RAF Hockey Associations.

Over the past year, the West Hockey Board has continued to develop a clearer strategic direction for the region, and I have supported this through improved financial planning, reporting, and transparency. We are now operating on Xero, reducing reliance on spreadsheets and improving visibility and consistency in our financial reporting.

Alongside this, I have taken on much of the finance administration directly, helping deliver annual savings of approximately £3,600 while also integrating technology and improving processes to create greater efficiency across the organisation.



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# Finance Director continued Bridgette Jones

The role has also given me the opportunity to build closer links with junior hockey, umpires, league operations, and the wider volunteer network, giving me a broader understanding of how the game operates across the region and the practical impact Board decisions can have across the hockey community.

The Board continues to focus on supporting participation growth, junior development, officiating pathways, and Masters hockey, whilst keeping fees as affordable as possible. I am keen to continue improving how we use financial information and impact reporting to support good decision-making and long-term sustainability.

I remain actively involved in hockey as a member of ISCA Hockey Club and as a Masters West Hockey player, which helps keep my perspective connected to the experience of players, clubs, officials, and volunteers.

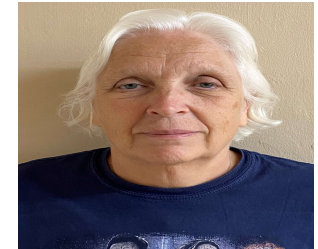
If re-elected, I will continue to bring professionalism, energy, and practical financial leadership to the role, helping ensure West Hockey remains sustainable, efficient, and able to support the game across the region.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to West Hockey. I would be honoured to continue serving in this role.



# Finance Director

Present Incumbent	Bridgette Jones
Nomination	Val Shipsey
Proposed By	Bristol Firebrands HC
Seconded by	Avonmouth HC



I have worked within hockey in both Avon and West for a number of years and am well known and well respected due to my organizational skills, being approachable, honest and hard-working. I understand the competencies and skills needed for the Finance Director as I have over 9 years experience of West Accounts and I am a qualified accountant (ACCA). If my nomination is successful I would:

- Introduce KPI's to ensure all claims paid within 14 days.
- Payment runs done weekly and more frequently if required.
- Respond to all queries, verbal or written in a timely manner.
- Collaborate with all West Hockey Chairs to; discuss and agree annual budgets with have quarterly budget review meetings, agree reports needed and issue when required and ensure all their transactions can be properly recorded to provide sufficient detail on the reports they require.

As a Director I will attend Board meetings and update Directors as to the current financial position. I will also attend the National Financial Directors meetings where all the Area FD's come together to share knowledge, experiences and information. Updates will be provided to the Board with recommendations for any changes to ensure West can produce transparent, detailed and accurate financial information to satisfy all stakeholders.

I firmly believe it is important for all those who pay fees to West, for whatever aspect of hockey, are able to clearly and easily see how their monies are spent.



# Operations Director

Present Incumbent	Keith Dingle
Nomination	Jan Bowen
Proposed By	Old Bristolians HC
Seconded by	Exeter HC



I have led the Adult Competitions for West since the transition in 2019. In that time the number of teams in the West have grown by just over 10% and there has been full integration across Women's and Open/Men's competitions. The Leagues are managed through a single committee, working for consistency across all geographies and competitions.

For the past two years I have been co-opted onto the West Board to support the development of the West Hockey Strategy. I see the Ops Director role as a natural extension that will help provide a little more focus on delivering against that Strategy.

Professionally I have led significant change programmes and helped shape and grow businesses. I am a chartered Engineer and I have worked within an operational environment for my whole career.



# Governance Director

Present Incumbent	Caroline Baynes
Nomination	Caroline Baynes
Proposed By	Marlborough HC
Seconded by	West Wilts HC



I have been involved in hockey for many years, playing and more latterly umpiring. I am currently my club President and County Chair for Wiltshire and I want to support and grow hockey in the West to the best of my ability.

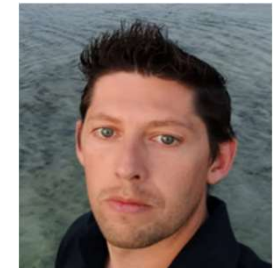
Professionally, I have a background in governance and compliance, and I also worked as a Relationship Manager for England Hockey, before moving to the Fit4Future project, focusing on the governance changes for grassroots hockey.

I joined the West Board in 2022 as Governance Director and I believe I have the relevant skills and experience to continue in this position.



# Adult Leagues & Competitions Chair

Present Incumbent	Jan Bowen
Nomination	Stuart Richardson
Proposed By	Duchy HC
Seconded by	Old Bristolians HC



I am pleased to submit my application for the role of Chairperson of the West Hockey League Adult League & Competition Committee. With over 20 years' experience as an engineering consultant, alongside extensive involvement in hockey governance and competition delivery, I bring a combination of strategic leadership, operational expertise and a deep understanding of the game at all levels.

Professionally, I have spent two decades working with diverse stakeholder groups, ranging from local communities to government bodies and industry leaders. This has required strong facilitation, negotiation and communication skills, often balancing competing priorities to achieve practical and sustainable outcomes. These experiences have equipped me to lead effectively, present balanced and evidence-based viewpoints, and make clear, informed decisions in complex environments—skills directly transferable to chairing a multi-stakeholder committee.

Within hockey, I offer 15 years of experience on West Hockey League committees, initially as a Divisional Secretary and later as an Area League Manager. This has given me a thorough understanding of league structures, regulations and the practical challenges faced by clubs and volunteers. I have developed a detailed knowledge of competition delivery, as well as the importance of consistency, transparency and responsiveness in maintaining a high-quality league programme.



# Adult League Chair continued

## Stuart Richardson

In addition, I have been responsible for competition organisation for the Cornwall Hockey Association since 2010, further strengthening my experience in planning, coordinating and delivering successful competitions. As the Founder and Club Secretary of Duchy Hockey Club since 2009, I have first-hand experience of club administration, governance and the realities faced by grassroots organisations. This perspective ensures that I remain grounded in the needs of members and committed to delivering a league structure that supports participation and enjoyment. My involvement as both an umpire and umpire assessor also provides me with a well-rounded understanding of the game, including the importance of standards, development and respect across all aspects of competition.

As Chairperson, I would bring a collaborative and structured approach to leading meetings, ensuring agendas, discussions and outcomes are clear, inclusive and focused. I would support committee members in delivering their roles effectively, encouraging accountability while fostering a positive team environment. I am particularly keen to enhance the use of digital systems to streamline administration and improve communication across the league.

I am committed to seeking and acting on feedback from clubs and participants, ensuring that the league continues to evolve in line with member needs while maintaining alignment with England Hockey guidance and relevant legislation. Clear and timely reporting to the West Board of Directors, alongside effective representation at regional and national forums, would be a key priority.

Above all, I am passionate about sustaining and developing competitive, enjoyable and well-run leagues. I believe my professional background, combined with my long-standing contribution to hockey, places me in a strong position to provide the vision, leadership and strategic direction required for this role. I would be proud to support the continued success and future development of adult hockey across the West.



# Junior Leagues & Competitions Chair

Present Incumbent	Anne Baker
Nomination	Anne Baker
Proposed By	Plymouth Lions HC
Seconded by	Isca HC



I would like a third year to try and continue to develop the junior playing experience in the West. We have made great progress over the years and now run;

- A successful West Junior county league for u14,u15, u17 age groups for boys and girls
- The committee run successful Tier 1 Club competitions
- Opportunities are offered to play at Tier 2 level , successful in the north of the Region and we have ideas for a different offer in the South of the Region
- The committee with volunteers run 12 West Schools finals
- The committee run Club u10 and u12 In2Hockey West Finals
- We ran a very successful West State school finals , with counties running tournaments to find finalists . The west had twice the amount of players playing State School hockey than the nearest Area.

I have over 45 years experience in running hockey clubs, schools events , coaching, mentoring coaches and all aspects of hockey . I know the Region well and continue to build relationships with schools and counties. I understand the National organisation of England Hockey and am prepared to challenge employed staff to get the best deal and service from the NGB for the West Area.



# Masters Chair

Present Incumbent	Debs Gemmell
Nomination	Debs Gemmell
Proposed By	Yeovil & Sherborne HC
Seconded by	Taunton Vale HC



Over the past three years as Chair of West Masters, I have been proud to help steer our section through a period of growth, clarity and renewed energy. Last season's tournaments were our most successful yet, and the positive response from players across the region has reinforced just how strong the appetite is for Masters hockey in all its forms.

This year we have strengthened our foundations even further. Our player database has expanded significantly, enabling better communication, smoother organisation and more inclusive opportunities. We delivered well-structured, transparent trials that were widely praised for their fairness and clarity. Importantly, we also resolved long-standing border and eligibility questions, ensuring that players who have always identified with the West can continue to represent the area they are committed to. That clarity has restored confidence and stability for both players and managers.

My focus has always been twofold: to support our representative teams with professionalism and integrity, and to champion the wider development of Masters hockey across clubs, counties and informal playing opportunities. I remain committed to ensuring that both women's and men's Masters hockey thrive equally, and that we continue to explore mixed formats and new ways of bringing players together.



# Masters Chair continued

## Debs Gemmell

Having led the transition work, built new structures, and supported the growth of a more open and player-centred culture, I feel there is real value in providing continuity for a further year. We now have momentum, stronger engagement, and a clearer identity as a Masters community. I would welcome the opportunity to continue this work, support our managers and age-group leads, and represent Masters effectively on the West Management Board.

I am passionate about the future of Masters hockey in the West, and I would be pleased to serve as Chair for another year to help consolidate the progress we have made and keep driving the programme forward.



# Officiating Chair

Present Incumbent	
Nomination	Steve Hamey
Proposed By	EHO West Branch
Seconded by	



Current EHO West Branch Chair, proposed for Chair of West Officiating, to be ratified by West Board.

I am a retired Chartered Land Surveyor and have been a Level 2 umpire, taking neutral appointments across the West for over 20 years.

I was a committee member of Avon and Somerset Hockey Umpires Association for several years in the late 1990s and early 2000s, and more recently was Deputy Chair and then Chair during the last 5 years of the Association.

I have also been active in the Scout Movement, in Gordano District and was one of two District Commissioners, standing down after 10 years, in September 2024.

I have always been keen to support officiating at all levels and have provided support to umpires wishing to take neutral appointments and those wishing to get Level 1 assessed status. I have recently completed an umpire coaching course to further help with developing others.



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# Disciplinary Administrator

Present Incumbent	Lesley Love
Nomination	Lesley Love
Proposed By	West Board Appointment
Seconded by	



Current West Disciplinary Administrator.