

# Annual Review 2022-23

Welcome to our second annual review and report to members since the incorporation of North West Hockey Ltd in June 2021. At the end of our second full season, our five core functions - [adult leagues](#), [junior competitions](#), [masters](#), [officiating](#) and [discipline](#) the Board and Management Committee, and other Committees are now all feeling much more established and delivering a full range of activities for the NW Hockey community. The team is looking forward to developing how we can make hockey in the North West even better and encourage even greater participation supporting the game.

As Chair I'm proud of what our team of volunteers has achieved especially as they are all still activity involved playing, umpiring, coaching, managing and contributing to running their Club's and Counties as well. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers involved in delivering North Hockey's core activities and to all the volunteers in Clubs who we work with on and off the pitch.

This review highlights progress, challenges and future plans for our core activities and provides a snapshot of what has been delivered in the past 12 months. We have continued to prioritise in year 2 making sure we remain focused on delivering at a grass roots level to support playing, officiating and the supporting governance. We have also been able to re-boot our communication and engagement through a refresh of our social media presence and engagement has improved in the first half of 2023. We have started work to update the website <https://northwest.englishockey.co.uk/>. and we have been out and meeting clubs at our popular Club's Forums or on-line forums.

New activities delivered in 2022-23 include:

- Creating brand new format of Masters Mixed Hockey to provide more playing opportunities in the Summer
- Setting up a new NW Talent Development Forum to bring together all those involved in delivering the EH player pathway in the North West to improve understanding and sharing best practice. The forum will reach out to engage with clubs in 2023-24
- Running our first Junior Indoor competitions

There are of course challenges both for how we operate as NW Hockey and also what we see across the game where we need to work together with clubs to address areas including:

- Retaining, developing and attracting Officials (umpires and match officials) to take Club and NW Area appointments.
- Working together to ensure hockey is a safe, enjoyable and welcoming sport to play, officiate, coach and watch. Conduct and the EH Respect Code, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Safeguarding
- Challenges of attracting and retaining volunteers at Club, County and Area






As we start year 3 of the new Area structure, we believe that as things are now bedding in operationally that we will be able to start to focus more on development initiatives to support the growth and development of the game. Thank you again for your support.

*Chris Reece, Chair, North West Hockey Ltd*

## Our members

- 91 Clubs (89 in 2022-23)
- 3 Counties – Cheshire, Cumbria and Lancashire Hockey Associations
- Legacy (Former Life) Members from dissolved Associations
- 10 non-member clubs who play their league hockey in the NW league (in 2021-22)

## 2022-23 Board

Chair	Vice Chair	Finance Director	Governance Director	Operations Director
Chris Reece	Shelagh Everett	Niall Riley	Leighan Bleasdale	Wendy McDowall
				

Chris Reece, Shelagh Everett and Niall Riley were elected at our 1<sup>st</sup> AGM in 2021.

Wendy McDowall elected at the 2<sup>nd</sup> AGM.

Sam Ransley resigned in December 2022.

Leighan Bleasdale was co-opted to the Board in March 2023 and is standing for election.

## Our Governance Structure



## 2022 – 23 Chairs

Lead Committees Chairs				
Adult Leagues & Competitions	Junior Leagues & Competitions	Umpiring & Officiating	Masters Hockey	Discipline
Leighan Bleasdale	Rebecca Stamper	Annette Badger	Tony Taig	Peter McInulty
				

Junior Chair is a vacancy following Rebecca Stamper not standing for re-election. Bex provided support in an acting role to cover the vacancy in 2022-23.

Discipline is an appointed role.

Taff Ahmed appointed Social Media Leas Taff Ahmed appointed.

Officiating Chair elected by the NW Branch of the EH Officiating (Club) Leighan Bleasdale has stood down as Adult League and Competitions Chair in March 2023

All other roles Chairs elected by Members and all other roles appointed.

## 2022-23 Summary and Highlights

### Adult Leagues and Competition Highlights

- Committee of 18 volunteers run our North West Men's and Women's Leagues
  - 16 Divisional Secretaries covering 38 Divisions
  - 409 Adult Teams
  - 15 Team withdrawals during season (28 in 2021-2022)
  - 5,600+ players across the NW Men's divisions
  - 5,800+ players across the NW Women's divisions
  - ~8,500 NW matches per season (fewer forfeited than 2021-2022)
  - First season of introducing Development Teams (8 Men's and 15 Women's)
  - Attempted to created Divisions of 12 where possible.
- 2022-23 Adult League meeting and presentations will be held at 7.30pm on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at Golborne Sports Club.

- 91 Clubs (89 in 21-22)
- 17 Men's Divisions (18 in 21-22)
- 19 Women's Divisions (20 in 21-22)
- 196 Men's Teams (197 in 21-22)
- 213 Women's Teams (209 in 21-22)

### 2022 – 23 Committee

Chair: Leighan Bleasdale  
Lge Managers: Peter McInulty/Louise Broome.

## Looking forward to 2023-2024

- EH Centralised Calendar (Draft 2) available on EH Website
- NW league structure review complete
- Development Team guidance updated
- NW fixture generation underway: Publication expected June 2023
- Adult Leagues and Competitions Presentation Evening: July 2023 at Golborne Sports & Social Club
- 8 Area review of League Regulations underway: Publication expected July 2023
- Recruit and appoint 2023-2024 Adult Leagues and Competitions Committee: Publication expected July 2023
- EH completing improvements to GMS and Area websites
- Season start date: 23rd September 2023

See details of Divisional Secretaries on page 11.



**NORTH WEST  
HOCKEY**

## Building a profile of hockey in the North West

As part of the work to develop our NW strategy we are starting the process of building a more detailed picture of hockey in the North West through data provided by England Hockey from both affiliation information provided by clubs and activity from GMS. This will be an area we will focus on in 2023-24.

### In 2022-23 headlines data:

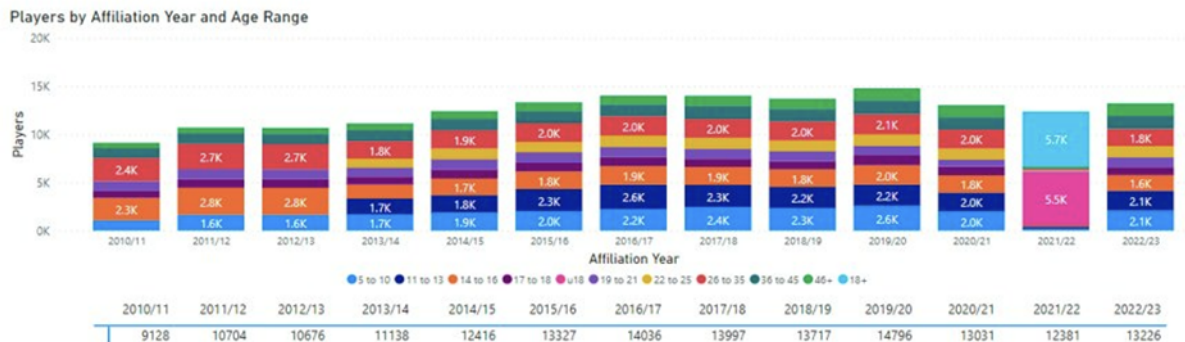
- 13,226 players registered with EH by clubs through the affiliation process.
- Whilst not fully returned to pre Covid levels the accuracy of reporting is likely to have improved as affiliation data is now linked to insurance if clubs opt in for it via EH
- 24% player numbers growth (2550) in 10 years since London 2012
- 44% (5800) of players are Under 16's
- 6964 (52.6%) female players: 6262 (47.4%) male players
- At Under 16 the gender split is 3100 female and 2700 male players

We are at the start of the process of accessing and understanding the data and will be building a broader picture, working with the team at EH source the data, including:

- Clubs' analysis including size, numbers etc
- Officiating data
- Junior competitions and league activity
- Discipline data and trends
- Pitch utilisation
- League match start times

Understanding where we are 'now' is an important part of developing and prioritising activity and investment to support the wider development of hockey across the North West. It will also enable to monitor and measure progress of future activity and help prioritise how

## we invest funds in the development of our sport.



Source: EH Affiliation Data provided by Clubs

## Junior Leagues and Competitions Highlights

- 2<sup>nd</sup> year of our new Junior competitions programme delivered through our committee of volunteers
- New Area structures now bedding increasing the hockey opportunities for young players in addition to county run activity, club fixtures and EH Championships
- NW Junior Leagues (U14 and U16) 48 teams competing (3 withdrew). 6 teams were combined teams with clubs joining together to enter teams.
  - U16's Boys (13) / Girls (15)
  - U14's Boys (9) / Girls (11)
- Festivals style events and tournament run for U8 / U10 / U12's / U14's through counties to encourage participation and more playing opportunities.
- Ran our first Junior Indoor competitions for U16 and U18 boys and girls with Bowdon, Brooklands and Alderley Edge progressing to the national indoor finals
- School competitions for boys and girls were run with the support of schools and thanks to all those involved in organising.
- Forum held with clubs to support understanding of the new structure and tiers and how we can continue to offer a range of hockey opportunities to support participation

### Looking forward to 2022-23

- Planning for 2023-24 calendar, fixtures, and use of GMS – club entries deadline 30<sup>th</sup> June and Fixtures shared in August
- Continuing to refine and improve structures including potential T3 NW League for larger clubs who can field more than one team
- Working with 8 Area Group on developing schools' competition format
- Re-establish full Committee including Chair and support roles to work with new Junior Co-ordinator role.

### 2022-23 Committee

(acting) Chair: Bex Stamper

Julia Harries, Annie Rogan, Wendy McDowell, Charles Jackman, Suzanne Colclough

## Masters highlights

- Committee of volunteers to run our growing Masters programme and deliver:
  - NW 500 Summer Mixed Master series of matches

- NW masters gathering / training / games
- Organise NW representative teams
- Small number of age groups still joint (YNE)
- Over 370 players registered and paid £10 registration fee supporting the self-funding of the programme
- Launched NW500 Mixed Master summer hockey in 2022 and just started year two of this popular social format
- 12 Men's and Women's NW Representative Teams selected to take part in 2022 Area Tournaments from Over 35's to Men's Over 65's / Women's Over 60's
- Joint teams Yorks and NE for Men's O70 and O75
- Building a good reputation as 8 Area Tournament hosts
- 2023 Women's O35 – Champions for 2<sup>nd</sup> year running
- Introduced new NW Master kit for player to purchase reflecting the Area branding.

#### Looking forward

- Hosting two Masters Area Tournaments at Timperley
  - Men's O60's (10/11 June) and Women's O60 (17/18 June)
- Implementing Pitchero Platform to support team management administration, fees collection, player profiles and match management. This will free up Committee time from administration and allow more time to organise hockey
- Expanding opportunities for Indoor Masters hockey
- Early appointment of age group managers to ensure regular opportunities to play and fair opportunities to trial for NW representative teams for trials (all ages / genders) for those that wish to
- Profiling Masters NW population using EH / GMS data.



WO35 – 2023 8 Area Champions 2023



#### 2022-23 Committee

**Chair:** Tony Taig  
**Vice Chair:** Colin Taylor  
**Vice Chair:** Angela Duff

**Gareth Jones, Mark Jones, Karen Kaney, Rucky Mahmood, Mandy Pickersgill, Alison Baron, Andrew Sidebotham, Helen Hough, Gareth Pask, Lynne Pyman**

## NW Officiating Highlights

Another challenging season has gone by but not without many significant highlights.

- Neutrally appointed umpires Panels have continued to grow including an increase in the number of occasional umpires showing that those who wish to can both play or umpire club games and take some NWHL appointments.
- Even so we are still only able to appoint to the NW Premier Divisions and given that the most complaints raised against umpires are from Division 1 games, we would like to extend neutral appointments further.
- We have focussed on the development of umpire support and ran an Umpire Coach Development Weekend, led by Jackie Gibbs (NPUA and International Umpire Coach) at Fylde's preseason's Women's Tournament and at the Cheshire Cup Finals at Timperley.



- A number of umpires have embarked on their L2 Developer Award and already two have been successful. However, we are still woefully short of Club Umpire Developers and L1 Umpire Coaches.
- A most successful and well attended Club Umpire Development evening was held early in the season on, 'Game Management' and several Tournaments, in addition to the very successful Armitage Tournament, have provided opportunities to support and assess L1 umpires, including the new venture of A Women Umpires Development Day at the Lancashire Women's Cup Finals.
- Once again, the Young Umpire Challenge at the In2Hockey Finals in April proved a great success. Six umpire coaches supported fourteen Young Umpires, many of whom were relatively new to umpiring and showed great promise.
- Three Young Umpires went up to the National Finals. There are more opportunities for Young Umpires but the shortage of volunteers to organise and coach at these events is very limiting.
- There has been much more success in the recruitment of Match Officials this season but at Club level there are still too many who are uncertain of their role. It is so important for Clubs to ensure that their Match Officials are given the guidance provided.

Finally, for all Clubs the recruitment and retention of umpires and the improvement in standards of umpiring are all vital to the game. However, resources are limited and the behaviour of some players and coaches deters people from umpiring. The only way forward is for Clubs to recognise their responsibilities and work with the support of NWHO.

## NW Officiating Committee 2022-23

Chair: Annette Badger

*Chris Reece, Graham Morrison, David Alcock, Rhydian Burston, Lou Robinson, Jane Evans, Tony Shutt, Chris Regan*

## Discipline Highlights

- All Disciplinary matters are managed through the Area, and we continue to work closely with the other 8 Area ADAs and EH
- NW Red Card incidents 40 (38 mainland / 2 IOM) - 32 (male) 8 (female)
- Conduct towards officiating continues to be of concern.
- Largest change is increase in Red Cards for females as previously a rarity
- Wider issue of conduct and RESPECT remains a priority to address across all involved for 2023-24.
- Important that Club and Captains build in discussions on **RESPECT** code and conduct into pre-season preparation to build support and greater awareness around on behaviour
- Working with 8 Areas on the discipline process review

## Area Discipline Team

Area Discipline Administrator:

Peter McNulty

David Ellcock, Robert Cobourne, Jon Whiting, Darren Illidge and Taff Ahmed.  
Appeals Panel Chair, Colin Leeman.  
40 Red Cards in NW (235 nationally)

- 18 - Cat. A (abuse etc ave. Of 27 days)
- 15 - Cat B (some violence/ physicality ave. of 37 days)
- 0 - Cat C
- 6 - Cat D (Match Day suspension - 1 day only)
- 1 - MMO (37 days)

## Key work of the Board

- North West Hockey Ltd incorporated at Companies House on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2021
- Responsible for the overall governance, strategy, finance and Area wide operation and communications
- Board meetings have been held monthly and the Board and Committee Chairs form the Management Committee that also meets monthly.
- Priority for 2022-23 to support and embed the work of the committees in their second full season. Continued work to implement effective of the new ways of working.
- On Communications, slower progress than anticipated in first part of 2022-23 season. New Communications Officer appointed working with Operations Director to improve social media content and platform and continued development of the to build awareness and engagement with NW Hockey
- Two successful Club's Forums held in Golborne and Lancaster with positive feedback for both the opportunity to feed in ideas for improvements and the opportunity to meet with and learn from other clubs
- Online forums held for junior activity.
- Launched new NW Talent Development Forum
- The Directors continue to actively engage with the 8 Area networks set up for the key area of responsibility that provide the opportunity to share best practice, learn from other Areas and input to a range of processes, guidance, and policies.
- Priority for 2023-24 will be to complete work on the NW Strategic framework once the EH Strategy is published. W will be sharing progress with Members at future Club Forums and how we can support the development of hockey over the next 5 years.
- This will be shared with members and the aim is to guide our work, prioritise allocation and use of resource and guide our annual operational plans.
- We are also reviewing the new EH [Equality Diversity and Inclusion Framework](#) (2022-2024) and the actions we need to put in place in the North West and our ED & I actions and how we embed this in our operations and strategy

### Developing our Strategic Framework

This is our working framework and them themes. This will be reviewed against the updated EH Strategy for the Sport to be published soon.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Three high level strategic themes have been identified:

How we **promote** hockey in the North West

How we **develop** hockey in the North West

How we support the **growth** of hockey in the North West

We have worked with club's at Forums to gather ideas and inputs to be included in the development of a NW Strategic Framework

### Our Finances 2022-23

- Report to the Directors and Unaudited Finance Statement for the period 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023 has been approved by the Board and will be shared at the AGM. This forms part of our statutory reporting to Companies House.

- Operating income for 2022-23 was generated through: Area Membership Fees, League and Competition Entry Fees and fees to clubs for Umpires.
- After two years we are now have an excellent understanding of the costs of operating NWH, this is reflected in the proposed reduction in overall fees to Clubs in 2023-24.
- The plan remains to identify opportunities and then prioritise initiatives as part of developing our strategy. We will start to invest some of our legacy 'ringfenced' funds to invest in the growth and development of our sport.

## Headline financials

- Total Income £66,892
- Total Costs £57,743
- Net Surplus £9,149

*See financial statements for full details*

## Working with the wider hockey family

The NW team continue to be engaged and active members of a number of 8 Area Groups – the networks for those involved in running our sport in each of the Areas developed and set up as part of the EH governance review set out in ['A structure fit for the future'](#)

*The focus remains on shared learning and best practice opportunities, agreeing core guidance, policies, and principles to support the new structure, and the benefits of a support network across the country of volunteers doing the same role in other Areas.*

In addition to their North West roles:

- Chris Reece is also a member elected Vice President of England Hockey
- Shelagh Everett is a Member Elected Non-Executive Director of England Hockey
- Annette Badger is on the EHO Officiating Strategy Group



## Congratulations to our junior league and competition winners!

Boys		Girls	
<b>Under 16 Tier 2</b>	<b>Preston</b>	<b>Under 16 Tier 2</b>	<b>Chester</b>
<b>Under 14 Tier 2</b>	<b>Bowdon</b>	<b>Under 14 Tier 2</b>	<b>Timperley</b>
<b>U12 NW In2Hockey</b>	<b>Neston</b>	<b>U12 EH In2Hockey</b>	<b>Fylde</b>
<b>U10 NW In2Hockey</b>	<b>Neston</b>	<b>U10 NW In2Hockey</b>	<b>Alderley Edge</b>
<b>U16 Indoor</b>	<b>Brooklands</b>	<b>U16 Indoor</b>	<b>Alderley Edge</b>
<b>U18 Indoor</b>	<b>Bowdon</b>	<b>U18 Indoor</b>	<b>Brooklands</b>

**Tier 1 Under 14 and 16 teams went on to play in the EH junior Supra competition (Brooklands, Bowdon and Alderley Edge)**

**Congratulations to those State Schools who took part in the EH state schools festival days to promote hockey to a wider group of schools.**

## Congratulations to our adult league and competition winners!

**Congratulations to Oxton M1 and Bowdon W2 who are promoted to Conference North of the EHL, and Bowdon W1 promoted to EHL Premier Division.**

**League presentations will be made on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 19:30 at Golborne Sports Club when trophies will be presented**

Men's Division Champions 2022-2023	Winner
North West Men's Premier Division	Oxton 1
North West Men's Division 1	Windermere 1
North West Men's Division 2	Bebington 1
North West Men's Division 3 North	Preston 3
North West Men's Division 3 South	Macclesfield 1
North West Men's Division 4 East	Timperley 3
North West Men's Division 4 North	Leyland & Chorley 1
North West Men's Division 4 West	West Derby 2
North West Men's Division 5 East	City of Manchester 2
North West Men's Division 5 South (Central)	Crewe Vagrants 2
North West Men's Division 5 West (North)	St Helens 1
North West Men's Division 5 West (South)	Bangor University 1
North West Men's Division 6 East	Didsbury Northern 6
North West Men's Division 6 South (Central)	Deeside Ramblers 5
North West Men's Division 6 West (South)	Northop Hall 2
North West Men's Division 7 East	South Manchester 2
North West Men's Division 7 South (Central)	Triton 3

Women's Division Champions 2022-2023	Winner
North West Women's Premier Division	Bowdon 2
North West Women's Division 1	Timperley 2

North West Women's Division 2 North	Preston 1
North West Women's Division 2 South	Prescot 1
North West Women's Division 3 East	Stockport Bramhall 1
North West Women's Division 3 North	Carlisle 2
North West Women's Division 3 North (Central)	Southport 1
North West Women's Division 3 West	Winnington Park 1
North West Women's Division 4 East	Stockport Bramhall 2
North West Women's Division 4 North (Central)	Garstang 3
North West Women's Division 4 South (Central)	Whitchurch 1
North West Women's Division 4 West	Neston 3
North West Women's Division 5 East	Bowdon 5
North West Women's Division 5 North (Central)	Garstang 4
North West Women's Division 5 South (Central)	Sandbach 1
North West Women's Division 5 West (North)	City of Liverpool 1
North West Women's Division 5 West (South)	Clwb Hoci Eirias 2
North West Women's Division 6 East	Oldham 3
North West Women's Division 6 South (Central)	Deeside Ramblers 4

### Adult Leagues and Competitions Committee 2022-2023

Committee Position	Grade	Name
Adult Leagues & Competitions Chair	N/A	Leighan Bleasdale
Area League & GMS Manager	N/A	Peter McNulty
Divisional Secretary	Grade	Name
North West Men's Premier	2	Robert Cobourne
North West Men's Division 1	2	Robert Cobourne
North West Men's Division 2	3	Sam Sheikh
North West Men's Division 3 North	3	Clare Thompson
North West Men's Division 3 South	3	Sam Sheikh
North West Men's Division 4 North	5	Simon Farrell
North West Men's Division 4 West	4	Simon Worsley
North West Men's Division 4 East	4	Martin McNulty
North West Men's Division 5 West (North)	5	Simon Farrell
North West Men's Division 5 West (South)	4	Simon Worsley
North West Men's Division 5 South (Central)	4	Max Bartholomew
North West Men's Division 5 East	4	Martin McNulty
North West Men's Division 6 West (South)	5	Derek Tebbutt
North West Men's Division 6 South (Central)	4	Max Bartholomew
North West Men's Division 6 East	4	Simon Worsley
North West Men's Division 7 South (Central)	5	Derek Tebbutt
North West Men's Division 7 East	5	Derek Tebbutt
North West Women's Premier	2	Laura Blunt
North West Women's Division 1	2	Laura Blunt
North West Women's Division 2 North	3	Clare Thompson
North West Women's Division 2 South	3	Clare Thompson
North West Women's Division 3 North	5	Marion Roberts
North West Women's Division 3 North (Central)	4	Victoria Bennion

North West Women's Division 3 West	4	Artie Senior
North West Women's Division 3 East	4	Artie Senior
North West Women's Division 4 North (Central)	4	Victoria Bennion
North West Women's Division 4 West	4	Lisa Williams
North West Women's Division 4 South (Central)	4	Lisa Williams
North West Women's Division 4 East	4	Artie Senior
North West Women's Division 5 North (Central)	5	Marion Roberts
North West Women's Division 5 West (North)	5	Louise Broome
North West Women's Division 5 West (South)	5	Jo Nicholson
North West Women's Division 5 South (Central)	4	Amy Robinson
North West Women's Division 5 East	4	Amy Robinson
North West Women's Division 6 South (Central)	5	Jo Nicholson
North West Women's Division 6 East	5	Louise Broome

**Thank you from North West Hockey and the whole of our hockey family to all North West Hockey Volunteers and those working in Clubs, Counties and across our sport.**

**Join us online for the 3<sup>rd</sup> AGM of North West Hockey Ltd on Thursday 3<sup>h</sup> July 2022 at 19:30.**

**We welcome questions in advance please send to [chair@northwesthockey.co.uk](mailto:chair@northwesthockey.co.uk) or subject to time there will be the opportunity to ask questions at the AGM on the Review of 2022-23 and the work of North West Hockey Ltd.**