



English Chess Federation

BUSINESS PLAN FOR 2009-2010

ECF Mission Statement

'To promote the game of chess, in all its forms, as an attractive means of cultural and personal advancement. To foster the highest level of achievement in the game. To make the Federation's services and membership available to all, without restriction; and to promote equal opportunities in a positive manner.'

The Objects of the English Chess Federation [“the Company”] are:

- To encourage the study and practice of chess in England and for the purpose of these objects England shall be deemed to include such part of North Wales as is within the jurisdiction of the Cheshire & North Wales Chess Association for so long as it shall so remain.
- To institute and maintain British Chess Championships.
- To promote national and international chess tournaments in England.
- To secure the interests of English players (being those players who are entitled to represent England under the statutes and regulations of Fédération Internationale des Echecs [FIDE] for the time being in force) in foreign chess tournaments and matches.
- To support the Braille Chess Association and other chess organisations which are members of the Company and whose jurisdiction includes England unless and until in each such case separate equivalent English organisations shall be established which are members of the Company.
- To secure the interests of English problemists in foreign tournaments and tourneys and to encourage English problem composers and solvers by instituting tournaments and tourneys and for these purposes support of the British Chess Problem Society shall be within the scope of this object unless and until a separate English Chess Problem Society shall be established which is a member of the Company.
- To arrange such contests, meetings, etc. as may be deemed desirable and provide and present trophies for competitions to suitable organisations in England.
- To provide assistance in relation to chess to British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, which are not for the time being members of FIDE, if requested to do so.
- To maintain and increase a fund, known as the “Permanent Invested Fund”, to be permanently invested in the name of trustees in accordance with an approved trust deed.
- To maintain a system for Grading the results of games of chess players participating in its own competitions and in the competitions of member organisations.
- To make the Company’s services available without discrimination on grounds of colour, creed, disability, impairment, occupation, race, religious or political affiliation, or sexual orientation and to promote equal opportunities in a positive manner.

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SECTION 1: OBSERVATIONS OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE ON BUSINESS PLAN

As is only too well known, the last twelve months have witnessed the start of a world-wide economic downturn, which most expect to continue throughout the period covered by this Business Plan. For the ECF, this presents both challenges and opportunities.

Mounting pressures on businesses and other organisations inevitably make the task of securing sponsorship more difficult than before. At a time of increasing money worries, individuals will weigh carefully the balance between the cost of their pastimes and the pleasure that they derive from them. These factors will put pressure on chess in England, as with any other sport.

At the professional level, the impact of these economic pressures may be significant, and the ECF is committed to working tirelessly in support of English players on the national and international stage.

For the more casual player, chess remains a low-cost pastime, which offers endless opportunities for enjoyment as well as benefits for the mind and spirit. It can be played anywhere and at any time, and in its organised form provides the pleasures of competition at a modest price. The ECF is equally committed to supporting the growth of chess activity among young and old alike, and I am delighted that we are able to include in this plan a continuing commitment to the Chess for Schools project (in conjunction with Holloid Plastics). This project has the potential to ignite a wave of interest in the game in a new generation, which can only be a benefit to the long-term future of chess in England.

Chris Majer
Chief Executive, ECF

SECTION 2: INTRODUCTION

Each year, the ECF publishes:

- a Long-Term Strategic Plan;
- a one-year Business Plan; and
- a report against the one-year Business Plan.

The function of the Business Plan is to capture the key objectives from the Long-Term Strategic Plan, which are targeted for action during a specific year. This Business Plan captures the objectives for the year May 2009 to April 2010. An overview of the ECF business planning process is given in *Section 3*.

The ECF is a federation of independent Constituent Units. The regional activities of the Constituent Units are not addressed within the Business Plan. Individual business plans are presented for each of the following areas of activity¹ in *Section 5*:

- Home Chess (incorporating Congress and Grading activities);
- Junior Chess and Education;
- Chess For Schools²;
- International Chess (incorporating Women's International Chess);
- Women's Chess;
- Finance;
- Marketing;
- Strategic Planning;
- Management Services Function.

Each individual business plan sets out the detailed operational plan for that area of activity formulated in the following terms:

Overview	A summary description of the activity in question;
Aims	The high-level goal, consistent with the vision set out in the Long-Term Strategic Plan;
Objectives	The specific measures targeted in pursuit of the Aims;
Actions	The specific steps to be taken in order to achieve success as defined in the Objectives. Actions are subdivided into <i>Ongoing Activity</i> and <i>New Initiatives</i> in order to highlight activities new to this year's Business Plan.

¹ These areas align with the responsibilities of directors set out in ECF Regulation No. 2: 'The Directors and Officers Responsibilities Regulations', to be found at: <http://www.bcf.org.uk/organisation/general/index.htm>

² This is a new directorate created in October 2008.

SECTION 3: BUSINESS PLANNING

Annual ECF Business Planning Cycle

Due to uncertainties in its revenues and the voluntary, part-time dedication to its affairs by the Directors, the ECF has tended in the past to react opportunistically to events at the expense of the pursuit of longer-term goals. To some extent, this is inevitable and will continue to be so.

However, the ECF recognises the need to achieve greater clarity about its vision for the future of English chess and its own direction as an organisation. To this end an annual business planning cycle has been established, as set out below:

- June/July:* Meeting of Board at which any shortfalls in achievement against the previous year's annual Business Plan are discussed and any necessary amendments to the current Long-Term Strategic Plan are discussed.
- July-August:* Preparation and agreement of Report of achievement against Annual Business Plan for previous year and new Long-Term Strategic Plan.
- September:* Long-Term Strategic Plan is submitted to ECF Council for approval.
Report of achievement against Annual Business Plan for previous year is also submitted to ECF Council for approval.
- October:* The approved Long-Term Strategic Plan is submitted to the Department for Culture, Media and Sports ["DCMS"].
The approved Report of achievement against Annual Business Plan for previous year is also submitted to the DCMS.
- January:* Meeting of the Board devoted to Strategic Planning. This formulates top-down overall aims for the next operating year (May to April) to be captured in the Annual Business Plan. The planning process takes into account the existing Long-Term Strategic Plan.
- February:* Preparation of Annual Business Plan.
- March:* Board agrees Annual Business Plan for that year and the associated financial budget.
- April:* Annual Business Plan for that year and Budget submitted to ECF Council for approval.
- May/June:* The approved Annual Business Plan is submitted to the DCMS.

SECTION 4: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The ECF will monitor its performance using the following Key Performance Indicators [“KPI”] and report on them at the end of the year:

- 1) Number of Direct Members;
- 2) Number of players in Grading list¹;
- 3) Number of female players in Grading list¹;
- 4) Number of games Graded¹;
- 5) Number of titled players;
- 6) Number of FIDE rated players;
- 7) Number of counties in county championship zonals²;
- 8) Number of teams in national club championships²;
- 9) Number of schools in the ECF National Schools Championships²;
- 10) The sustainable income of the ECF³.

Notes

¹ The Grading list is used as providing the best available source of information on the level of chess activity nationally.

² If the size of the team is reduced to encourage more teams, then some analysis will be necessary to see if this has resulted in more people playing chess.

³ One-off windfalls will be excluded from the KPI, because they can mask overall trends.

SECTION 5: BUSINESS PLANS

5.1 HOME CHESS DIRECTORATE

Overview:

- Home Chess incorporates three elements: (A) National Chess Activities; (B) Congress Chess and (C) Grading. These three elements are reported separately.
- Home Chess organises many chess events for English players of all standards through the National Club Championships and County Championships. It provides administrative support for the adjudication service for unfinished games. It also organises the National Counties Correspondence Championship.

NB. The organisation of the British Championship, previously reported under the Home Chess directorate, is now included under **Section 5.4 - International Chess**.

A: National Chess Activities

First Aim: To continue to offer opportunities for players to play at County level.

Objective:

1. To increase the number of counties fielding teams in the normal-play zonal events and in the National Final stages.
2. To provide a prestigious venue for the normal-play finals of the County Championships.

Actions:

New Initiatives

1. Prepare and issue guidance on the practicalities of organising County teams, including advice on the skills needed (July 2009).
2. Reassess the division of Grading sections in the light of the revised grading list (August 2009).
3. Reinstate the County Rapid Play event.

Ongoing Activity

4. Continue to provide administrative support, in order to provide facilities which are conducive to chess.
5. Encourage a high level of skill and sportsmanship by giving team captains telecommunications access to senior arbiters.
6. Encourage some counties to run multiple teams at some levels to increase participation.
7. Try to ensure that every Union has the opportunity to be represented in the finals event.
8. Continue to organise an inter-county postal chess event.

Second Aim: To provide the opportunity for players of all standards to participate in National Club championship events.

Objectives:

1. To provide a tournament structure and conditions that will encourage teams to pit their skills against other teams on a national basis.
2. To increase substantially the number of teams participating.

Actions:*New Initiatives*

1. Gather feedback from counties via Unions and revise events in the light of competitor wishes.

Ongoing Activity

2. Run a one-day National Club Rapid Play Handicap event.
3. Run a number of different sections based on Grading. Reassess the division of Grading sections in the light of the revised grading list (August 2009).
4. Operate the National Club championship on a break-even basis.

Third Aim: To Increase the Amount of Chess Played**Objective:**

1. To explore avenues beyond the conventional chess clubs for increasing the amount of chess played.

Actions:*New Initiatives*

1. Set up over 60s clubs.

Ongoing Activity

2. Ensure that there are sufficient ECF arbiters by running regular training courses.

Fourth Aim: To support chess in prisons.**Objective:**

1. To encourage the use of chess as a vehicle to train inmates to think logically, to play a sport that does not depend on chance or physical attributes, and which, by teaching others to play, will raise their self-esteem.

Actions:*New Initiatives*

1. Appoint a National Co-ordinator to work directly with the Probation and Prison Service.
2. Encourage local chess players of appropriate ability and character to come into establishments to assist with the coaching and to help in the re-integration of inmates into society.
3. Source chess sets and boards at a reasonable cost and chess publications so that inmates can have a useful but cost-effective means of recreation.

Ongoing Activity

4. Follow through on the agreement made with the creators of a system of teaching chess so that inmates might teach each other to play with minimal supervision and cost to the Prison Service.

B: Congress Chess**First Aim: To support the Congress Circuit**

Note: The Grand Prix runs from August to August concluding with the British Championship events. Historically, the Grand Prix has had a top section with a high prize fund, but currently operates in a reduced format without a section for the strongest players.

Objective:

1. To increase the number of players entering congresses.

Actions:*New Initiatives*

1. Continue to develop the Grand Prix (to be renamed the “Amateur Prix”) as an incentive for amateur players of all levels.
2. Consult with organisers and players (e.g. those with highest numbers of graded games) to establish key success factors in the more popular or growing congresses. Prepare and make available best practice guidelines to help organisers improve ‘customer appreciation’.

Ongoing Activity

3. Help congresses to generate maximum publicity and exposure.

Second Aim: To continue support where possible for other national events**Objectives:**

1. To ensure that other national events are well organised.
2. To offer support, either financial or in kind, to maintain their running.

Actions:*New Initiatives*

1. Develop and fill a new role, ECF Organiser, to report to the Director, Home Chess.

Ongoing Activity

2. Maintain liaison with organisers to ensure that further opportunities to increase and advance national congress play is considered.
3. Supervise the Congress Calendar, incorporating dates for County fixtures where feasible.

Third Aim: To provide encouragement and motivation for developing players at all levels**Objective:**

1. To operate a Master Points system.

Actions:*Ongoing Activity*

1. Continue to operate the Master Points system on the basis of grade.

C: Grading & Rating

Note: Grading is the system for national ranking of chess players. Currently, a Grading List is published annually online on the ECF Website and as a printed list. The former is corrected as necessary. The Grading year runs from June to May.

International Rating is the world ranking system organised by FIDE. The ECF is a participant in the International Rating system.

First Aim: To maintain an accurate and timely Grading service**Objectives:**

1. To maintain the central Grading system infrastructure.

2. To ensure that online and printed Grading Lists are produced in accordance with the required timetable.
3. To take all practicable steps to ensure the accuracy of the Grading list.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Ensure that all central Grading software and processes are adequately documented.
2. Introduce improvements to the central Grading software as necessary.
3. Maintain a Grading team.
4. Publish a provisional online Grading List (end-July).
5. Provide Printouts of individual games played for Direct Members (end-July).
6. Provide software as required for local Graders to generate and check their files before they are submitted.
7. Publish a printed Grading List (September).
8. Produce an electronic Grading Master List for local Graders (at regular intervals throughout the season).
9. Publish the Grading List on the ECF Website (Standard Play: August; Rapid Play: July and January).
10. Keep under review the demand for continued publication of the printed Grading List.

Second Aim: To Maintain Customer Confidence in the Grading Service

Objectives:

1. To ensure that the workings of the grading system are understood by all users and that changes are explained clearly.
2. To improve links between the central Grading Team and local Graders.
3. To provide a rapid response to Grading queries from Graders and individual players.
4. To ensure the statistical integrity of the Grading System.

Actions:

New Initiatives:

1. Include an explanatory note with July print-outs for Direct Members, setting out the revision to Gradings following the recalibration in 2008.
2. Issue a briefing note to appropriate Union and County officials to enable them to explain the developments to their respective organisations.

Ongoing Activity

3. Provide an online Grading enquiry service.
4. Continue to respond promptly to local Graders' enquiries on Grading codes, requests for information and general feedback.
5. Carry out an analysis of the accumulated Grading data to monitor the statistical integrity of the system and to implement such changes as are deemed necessary.

Third Aim: To provide improvements in the Grading Service

Objectives:

1. To ensure that the frequency at which Grading lists are produced meets the needs of players and organisers.
2. To maximise the number of events covered by the Grading system.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Keep under review the feasibility and desirability of publishing more frequent Grading lists.

2. Contact events not currently being Graded, understand the issues, and take any necessary remedial steps.

Fourth Aim: To establish reliable data on the amount of chess being played

Objective:

1. To establish a reliable baseline for the number of games played each year.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Analyse the number of games Graded and publish the data in each year's Grading list.
2. Establish a register of the events being played in England and their size.

Fifth Aim: To maintain an International Rating service

Objectives:

1. To ensure that the International Ratings of English players are correct.
2. To ensure that all Internationally Rated players registered for England become members of the ECF.
3. To encourage more events to be FIDE rated.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Ensure the timely and accurate submission to FIDE of rating information on English events and title applications in respect of English players.
2. Provide advice to players on rating and title requirements.
3. Liaise with event organisers on requirements for FIDE registered events.
4. Rate new events for free in their first year.

5.2 JUNIOR CHESS & EDUCATION DIRECTORATE

Overview:

- Junior Chess & Education incorporates two elements: (A) Junior Chess & Education and (B) Coaching. These two elements are reported separately.
- The goal of this directorate is to promote and support the development of chess among younger players in particular, in order to build the best possible foundation for the future of English chess. It also covers the national coordination of chess coaching.

NB. ‘Chess for Schools’ is a separate, newly created directorate specifically to promote the playing of chess in schools. Whilst there is some overlap in principle with the Junior Chess & Education directorate, the two are treated separately. (See **Section 5.3.**)

A: Junior Chess & Education

First Aim: *To enable selected juniors to participate in major European & World individual and team Championships.*

Objectives:

1. To ensure representation (boys and girls) in:
 - World Junior Championships – Under 20s.
 - European Junior Championships – Under 20s.
 - World Youth Championships – Under 10s to Under 18s.
 - European Youth Championships – Under 10s to Under 18s.
2. To enter teams in the Annual Glorney & Faber U18 Team Championships to compete against Wales, Ireland, Scotland, France, Germany, Holland & Czech Republic.
3. To enter a team in the Under 16 Olympiad.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Operate a selection procedure for the World Championship (specific trial selection event) and other tournaments and matches (based on the Grand Prix).
2. Appoint Team Manager(s) for major events.
3. Appoint professional coaches to support and prepare players.
4. Provide grants & bursaries to enable participation in major events.
5. Arrange appropriate travel, accommodation & insurance.

Second Aim: *To support selected juniors in order to maintain and improve results and maximise opportunities for juniors to achieve International Norms & Titles and to gain International Ratings.*

Objectives:

1. To improve junior gradings and ratings.
2. To support juniors participating in events where norms may be achieved.
3. To support juniors participating in events where International Rating may be achieved.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Encourage improvement and competition by means of the ECF selection process.
2. Provide ongoing support as appropriate.

Third Aim: *To ensure the quality of junior chess coaches and teachers and to comply with appropriate protective measures by use of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) 'Disclosure Process'.*

Objectives:

1. To establish and maintain a list of accredited coaches and teachers
2. To ensure that all accredited coaches and teachers are cleared through the CRB Disclosure Process.

Actions:

New Initiatives

1. Formulate and publish ECF policy in respect of the *Every Child Matters* initiative.

Ongoing Activity

2. Process Disclosure applications and obtain appropriate references as part of the process of maintaining the 'Accredited coaches, teachers and managers' list.
3. List the accredited people in the ECF Year Book and on the ECF Website.
4. Continue to be involved with the CRB, monitoring and implementing changes to requirements as necessary.
5. Ensure that the ECF has current documentation on the following:
 - Child Protection Policy;
 - Guidance to coaches & teachers document;
 - Policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders; and
 - Security policy on the handling of Disclosure information.

Fourth Aim: *To organise and support a range of junior chess activity.*

Objectives:

1. To increase junior participation in appropriate adult tournaments and leagues.
2. To increase the number of junior events, especially those with FIDE rating opportunities.
3. To increase numbers participating at junior events.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Continue to encourage the participation of juniors (individuals and teams) in appropriate adult tournaments and leagues.
2. Support and promote new junior events.
3. Organise and promote the ECF Schools Team Championships.
4. Organise and promote the Inter Counties Under 18 Team Championships.
5. Support the British Junior Championships.
6. Through the linkage with the ECF selection process, achieve increased numbers of juniors in Grand Prix events.

Fifth Aim: *To ensure that teachers with authority over organised junior chess events are competent in the Laws of the game.*

Objective:

1. To create a qualification that will allow teachers and others to possess the authority to administer the Laws of Chess.
2. To establish a method of continuing education and feedback to keep such persons up to date with changes and interpretations regarding the Laws of Chess.

Actions:*Ongoing Activity*

1. Encourage each successful candidate to become a member of the Arbiters' Association so as to ensure continuing updates with the Laws of Chess.
2. Continue to administer an examination with a degree of preparation so that an assessment might be made of the ability of candidates to give logical and correct answers to any question which might arise concerning the Laws.
3. Issue updates periodically to Arbiters' Association members detailing changes to the Laws of Chess.

B: Coaching**First Aim: *To maintain a national coaching system of chess coaching.*****Objective:**

1. To ensure that the coaches available to support the chess community are of an appropriate standard.

Actions:*Ongoing Activity*

1. Maintain a system for and a centralized database of accredited chess coaches.
2. Categorize the coaches according to their target age and skills group.
3. Coordinate with other Directors the provision of the best available coaches for players and teams.

Second Aim: *To demonstrate the Educational Benefits of Chess***Objective:**

1. To document the benefits of chess clearly and persuasively, for use in discussions with Government, LEAs and other interested parties.
2. To maintain the Certificate of Excellence scheme.

Actions:*New Initiatives*

1. Prepare briefing materials setting out the educational benefits of chess for approval by the Board.
2. Develop additional support material for the Certificate of Excellence.

Ongoing Activity

3. Support Government initiatives in this direction.
4. Liaise with all LEAs in England to keep them informed of developments in the ECF.
5. Maintain regular contact with schools participating in the Certificate of Excellence Scheme.
6. Support selected schools on the basis of 'greatest need'.

5.3 CHESS FOR SCHOOLS DIRECTORATE

Overview:

This is a new Directorate, established in the wake of the *Chess for Schools* project, which has the potential to deliver free chess sets and boards to schools across the country. Equally importantly, it also provides a platform from which to launch a framework of support for chess development in schools, in the form of academies and teaching materials.

NB. There is some overlap between the aims of this directorate and those set out in **Section 5.2. – Junior Chess & Education**, particularly in relation to coaching. Specific objectives and actions are not duplicated here.

First Aim: To Increase the Amount of Chess Played in Schools.

Objective:

1. To encourage the development of more school chess clubs.

Actions:

New Initiatives

1. Provide free sets for schools and clubs, especially in areas of social deprivation. To be completed in phases within the *Chess for Schools* project (in conjunction with the sponsorship from Holloid Plastics).
2. Support and assist Schools and clubs with applications to various sources of possible funding.
3. Set up junior clubs across the country.

Second Aim: To support and encourage the development of chess in schools and clubs.

Objectives:

1. To introduce a new Certificate of Merit Scheme to as many schools and clubs as possible.
2. To provide teachers and coaches with the materials needed to support junior chess activities in schools and clubs.
3. To encourage the establishment of chess academies.
4. To establish links between schools and chess academies.

Actions:

New Initiatives

1. Develop and market a support package for schools in time for the roll-out of the free chess sets.
2. Provide assistance for setting up chess academies (to be aligned with the distribution of free chess sets).

Ongoing Activity

3. Develop software for online testing of the Certificate of Merit.
4. Continue to explore the possibility of funds being available from the lottery and other sources.

5.4 INTERNATIONAL CHESS DIRECTORATE

Overview:

- The International Chess Directorate aims to support the successful participation of English players in international chess events. This includes internationally rated competitions in the UK, such as the British Championship, which specifically falls within the scope of this directorate.
- The Olympiad and European team championships are among the largest items on the budget each year. Successful international teams improve confidence in the community of top players and generate a general good feeling amongst the chess community.
- The directorate is also responsible for ensuring that the ECF has a voice in the international chess bodies of which it is a member.

A: International Chess Activity

First Aim: To enter the best possible teams in International Competitions.

Objective:

1. To ensure that the ECF's international teams are supported by sponsorship sufficient to encourage the strongest available players to take part.

Action:

Ongoing Activity

1. Use the resources of the Marketing and International Chess directorates to secure and retain sponsorship.

Second Aim: To enable our leading players, both male and female, to continue to achieve high quality results.

Objectives:

1. To support the successful participation of English players in Individual events at World and European levels.
2. To support the successful participation of English players in Team events at World and European levels, so that each team performs better than its average rating.
3. To help more players reach the top 100 men world list (we currently have two) and the top 50 women (we have one).

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Support and encourage players to compete in the:
 - World Amateur Championship (26 April – 4 May 2009)
 - European Amateur Championship 15 – 26 July 2009)
 - European Senior Championship (22 – 31 July 2009)
 - Staunton Memorial (8 – 17 August 2009)
 - Jessie Gilbert Celebration International (22 – 31 August 2009)
 - European Club Cup (3 – 11 October 2009)
 - European Team Championship (21 – 31 October 2009)
 - World Senior Championship (27 October – 8 November 2009)
 - Hastings Congress (December 2009 – January 2010)
 - Gibtelecom Chess Festival (January – February 2010)

2. Work with the John Robinson Trust, providing our younger players with more international opportunities and introducing an elite training program.

Third Aim: To support international tournaments within England and the United Kingdom and in the Commonwealth.

Objective:

1. To ensure that as many international Rated events, at which it is possible to obtain title norms, shall be held in England, the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, thus providing opportunities for our players, both male and female.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Review the calendar of events on a regular basis and if there is a shortfall in the number of events planned, to try and create new ones. (Target: to support two new events over the next 12 months.)
2. For the ECF itself to hold some events, including the British Championships.
3. Make grants available to facilitate the creation of new events.
4. Encourage more domestic events to move towards being FIDE rated.
5. Encourage established events, particularly the Four Nations Chess League (4NCL), which allows opportunities for international title norms at all levels and also allows players to gain international ratings.

Fourth Aim: To maximise the number of English male and female players with International titles and ratings.

Objectives:

1. To ensure at least one Grandmaster and two International Master titles be achieved by English players over any given three-year period.
2. To ensure that there be an increase of at least 2% per annum in the number of players internationally rated.
3. To encourage players to play internationally, especially the young.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Seek opportunities for English players to play in overseas events.
2. Encourage the creation of a group of younger players to work together at international events.
3. Make grants to English players likely to achieve international title norms.

Fifth Aim: To ensure that the interests of the ECF and of English players and tournaments are safeguarded.

Objectives:

1. To be actively involved in the World Chess Federation (FIDE), the European Chess Union (ECU) and the British Isles Coordination Committee (BICC).
2. To maintain and improve relationships with other Federations.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Through the office of the FIDE delegate (an officer elected by the ECF Council) attend meetings of FIDE and ECU.
2. Make representations to FIDE and ECU on major changes in the organisation of International Chess by FIDE and ECU including the format of and qualification for

- the World and European Championships, time controls, Chess as a Sport, anti-doping issues, the Laws of Chess and title, rating, arbiter and tournament regulations.
3. Report the decisions of FIDE, ECU and the BICC to members of the ECF.
 4. Maintain an up-to-date section on the ECF website in relation to decisions on title and rating issues, along with an international calendar and reports on relevant international events.
 5. Provide opportunities for ECF arbiters to be invited to international events, especially the Olympiad.
 6. Increase ECF representation on FIDE and ECU committees.

Notes:

- *Gerry Walsh, the President of the ECF, is the Deputy President of the ECU and Chairman of the FIDE Committee on Chess of the Disabled.*
- *Stewart Reuben is Chairman of the FIDE Organizers Committee and a member of the Titles and Ratings Committee and of the Rules Committee and the Qualification Commission.*
- *Stewart Reuben's book, "The Chess Organiser's Handbook" is the major reference work in this field.*
- *Dr Jana Bellin is Chairman of the FIDE Anti-Doping Committee.*
- *Stewart Reuben and David Sedgwick are two of the 20 people recognised to conduct Arbiter Courses.*

B: British Championships

First Aim: To organise a successful British Championship on an annual basis.

Objectives:

1. To secure sponsorship at a level to attract the strongest possible field of players.
2. To ensure that the event is organised on a financially sound basis, based on a conservative estimate of entries.
3. To ensure maximum opportunities for all players who are competing.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Provide full publicity for the event including "live" Internet coverage.
2. Ensure that budgetary control on the event is maintained.
3. Provide high standards of arbiter and organisation at the event.
4. Maintain liaison with the British Isles Coordination Committee, including a review of eligibility requirements for 2010 and beyond.
5. Provide FIDE rating of the Championship, Major Open and Senior events, thus giving players the opportunity for title and rating performances.
6. Ensure that all players whatever their sex or age or strength or nationality have the right to compete in the congress.
7. Visit venues to arrange for future Championships.
8. Provide events where eligible players can qualify for the Championship in future.

5.5 WOMEN'S CHESS

Overview:

In common with the rest of the world, the large majority of chess players in England are male. This is undoubtedly due to historical and cultural factors, and the ECF is committed to encouraging the development of chess for all, regardless of gender. Because of the disproportionately small number of women and girls currently playing chess, a specific business area (reporting to the Chief Executive Officer) exists in order to strive towards redressing the balance.

First Aim: To maintain and extend the range of competitive opportunities for women and girls in England.

Objectives:

1. To maintain an overview of events in England available for women and girls, including all-female events.
2. To increase the numbers of women and girls playing chess in England by 5% per annum.
3. To increase the number of appropriate and attractive tournaments available for women and girls.
4. To strengthen links with outside bodies providing chess events for women and girls.
5. To build on the success of the Pride and Prejudice team (Four Nations Chess League) to promote women in chess.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Continue to maintain a chess Website for women and girls, to provide a centralised information system, to include forthcoming tournament information and results.
2. Maintain and improve the national girls' database.
3. Continue to build on the success of the national competition, the "All England Girls' Chess Championships", running at least four regional championships and a qualifiers-only National Final.
4. Continue to build on the success of the national girls' team championship, attracting sponsorship and press attention.
5. Build on the success of the coaching and tournament days and to hold such competitions around the country.
6. Set up various other new tournaments, with an emphasis on mixed events to raise standards.
7. Continue to meet with other chess organisers and others actively involved in chess for women and girls.
8. Publicise the achievements of women and girls who play chess, including writing articles for the chess and national press.
9. Represent the ECF at relevant chess events in England.
10. Seek to encourage increased female participation in County competition and other events.

Second Aim: To improve understanding and enjoyment of chess through the provision of coaching for women and girls.

Objectives:

1. To improve the current levels of support for coaching.
2. To continue the new national coaching and tournament initiative.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Continue providing grants to tournaments for coaching support.
2. Make use of the national girls' database, an information resource that allows women and girls to be linked with coaches in their area.
3. Continue to organise events which combine coaching with tournaments.
4. Continue to provide grants for individual and group coaching.
5. Explore other possible avenues for the provision of coaching.

5.6 FINANCE DIRECTORATE

Overview:

The Finance Directorate is responsible for the annual statement of Accounts to the ECF Council. It provides guidance for the accounting staff in the ECF Office and also oversees the Game Fee scheme and membership schemes and provides forecasts. It evaluates the various risks to which the ECF is exposed and proposes appropriate action.

First Aim: To maximise income

Objectives:

1. To support the President (or whoever is the lead officer with DCMS) in ensuring continuing receipt of the Government Grant.
2. To keep under review the Game Fee and membership schemes with a view to maximising the net revenue to the ECF.
3. To establish and obtain the tax advantages of charitable status.
4. To encourage donations.

Actions:

New Initiatives

1. Obtain the tax advantages of charitable status with regard to Corporation Tax and Rates.

Ongoing Activity

2. Maintain and expand initiatives to encourage the long-term expansion of the Legacies Fund.
3. Submit grant claims to the DCMS on a timely basis.
4. Maintain a dialogue with the Trustees of the Permanent Invested Fund, the Trustees of the John Robinson Trust and the directors of Chess Centre.

Second Aim: To maintain appropriate reserves.

Objectives:

1. To assess the level of reserves which it is prudent for the ECF to maintain in the context of the risks to which its operations are exposed.
2. To control the ECF's finances in order to achieve and maintain such a level.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Evaluate the risks to which the ECF is exposed and the likelihood of their crystallisation.
2. Develop appropriate contingency plans.
3. Develop and obtain ECF Council agreement to a coherent reserves policy in the context of the risks.
4. Monitor variances and take early corrective action.

Third Aim: To control expenditure

Objectives:

1. To ensure that any unbudgeted expenditure is appropriately authorised.
2. To ensure that the ECF receives value for money on expenditure incurred.

Actions:*Ongoing Activity*

1. Keep under review and publicise a comprehensive set of Financial Bye Laws.
2. Monitor compliance with authorisation procedures.
3. Enforce the provisions of the Financial Bye Laws on unbudgeted expenditure.
4. Update and enforce the regulations concerning bids for services to the ECF.

Fourth Aim: To improve the financial information provided to the Board & ECF Council**Objectives:**

1. To ensure that financial information is sufficiently comprehensive and transparent.
2. To enhance the timeliness with which information is provided.
3. To ensure coordination exists between various bodies funding English chess.

Actions:*Ongoing Activity*

1. Challenge the existing annual accounts format in the light of developments in accounting standards and best practice affecting companies and charities.
2. Discuss with users of information their needs and the relevance of the existing formats.

5.7 MARKETING DIRECTORATE

Overview:

The role of the Marketing Directorate is to identify and secure commercial income and sponsorship opportunities, thereby helping to provide the financial platform for a number of the ECF's core activities.

It is also responsible for the promotion of English chess and the ECF to the outside world, ensuring that this is done to a consistently professional standard. In practice, budgetary constraints and the current low profile of chess in the English media mean that scope for substantive marketing effort is extremely limited.

First Aim: *To maintain and increase the ECF's commercial income and sponsorship monies in support of its activities.*

Objectives:

1. To further and maximise commercial opportunities for the ECF, communicating with sponsors (existing, lapsed, potential and new).

Actions:

New Initiatives

1. Appoint an ECF Publicity Officer.

Ongoing Activity

2. Maintain a positive relationship with existing sponsors.
3. Add value to ECF membership by establishing exclusive discounts and offers with complementary companies and promotions.
4. Identify and establish any synergy with other enterprises and potential for affinity promotions and schemes.
5. Ensure maximisation of merchandising and advertising opportunities to generate income.
6. Maintain a register of sponsorship approaches.

Second Aim: *To coordinate and ensure cohesive presentation of the Federation*

Objective:

1. To ensure that all of the ECF's published output – membership and public facing, marketing and publicity related – conforms to an appropriate uniform standard, consistent with the desired professional image of the organisation.

Actions:

New Initiatives

1. Implement visual and typographical recommendations for membership and public facing materials.

Ongoing Activity

2. Enforce and maintain a consistent and cohesive output of all ECF marketing and publicity related materials.

Third Aim: To improve the publicising of chess activity in England

Objectives:

1. To ensure that all ECF-supported events are publicised in an effective manner, maximising the value for sponsors and showcasing English chess as an attractive area for potential future sponsors.
2. To raise the profile of chess in England through increased and improved coverage in the press, broadcast media and online.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Monitor the programme of ECF events and publicity requirements and establish timing plan and media contacts for implementation of publicity programme.
2. Promote *ECF Book of the Year* and *ECF Player of the Year* awards as appropriate.
3. Capitalise on and promote any other ECF-supported activities to maximise positive publicity.
4. Ensure media coverage of chess news and events as far as possible and continue to foster relationships with multi media channels.
5. Continue to lobby for the reinstatement of chess on television.
6. Improve the online communications of the ECF. (See also **Section 5.9 – Management Services Function.**)

5.8 STRATEGIC PLANNING

Overview:

The strategic planning function is now subsumed within the responsibilities of the Chief Executive, to whom the Strategic Planning Officer reports.

Its purpose is to assist the ECF in:

- Defining its long-term vision for English chess and the Federation;
- Identifying the most appropriate strategy to enable the achievement of this vision;
- Identifying the actions required to implement the strategy and the means by which success will be measured;
- Documenting the vision, strategy, measures and action plans to a satisfactory professional standard.

First Aim: To define the ECF's long-term vision.

Objectives:

1. To ensure that an agreed statement of the desired future of the Federation and English chess is completed.
2. To communicate the long-term vision clearly.

Actions:

New Initiatives

1. Undertake a broad consultation with key parties within the ECF and its Constituent Units and more widely within the chess community, seeking views on the desired future for the ECF and English chess. To be completed by end-June 2009.
2. Present draft vision to Management Board for discussion and agreement in July 2009.

Ongoing Activity

3. Vision to be incorporated within *Long-Term Strategic Plan* for agreement by the Management Board in August 2009 and submission to ECF Council for approval in October 2009.

Second Aim: To select the most appropriate strategy for achievement of the agreed vision.

Objective:

1. To ensure that a robust strategic analysis is completed in time for discussion and agreement by the Management Board in July 2009.
2. To select the most appropriate strategic option from those presented (July 2009).
3. To document the Long-Term Strategy to a professional standard for agreement by the Management Board in August 2009 and submission to ECF Council for approval in October 2009.

Actions:

New Initiatives

1. Complete situation analysis for each ECF activity by end-June 2009.
2. Set out analysis of strategic options for discussion by Management Board in July 2009.

Ongoing Activity

3. Output from actions 1 and 2 to be incorporated within the *Long-Term Strategic Plan* for agreement by the Management Board in August 2009 and submission to ECF Council for approval in October 2009.

4. Through consultation with the responsible officers and directors, develop an appropriate *Annual Business Plan* for 2010/11 for agreement by the Management Board in March 2010 and submission to ECF Council for approval in April 2010.
5. Provide regular status reports on progress against the *Annual Business Plan* at Management Board meetings and, formally, in the *Report on Achievement against Annual Business Plan* (to Management Board in August and to ECF Council in October).

Third Aim: *To act as an interface with the DCMS.*

Objective:

1. To ensure continuing receipt of the Government Grant.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Provide the DCMS with reports in a timely fashion, i.e. approved *Annual Business Plan* for 2009/10 in June and approved *Long-Term Strategic Plan* and *Report on Achievement against Annual Business Plan* in November.
2. Ensure compliance with the Memorandum of Agreement with the DCMS.
3. Maintain dialogue with the DCMS to ensure that the ECF is meeting requirements and that any necessary action is taken.

5.9 MANAGEMENT SERVICES FUNCTION

Overview:

The Management Services Function provides essential administrative support for the ECF's activities. It underpins and supports the various Directorates as required and is an initial point of contact for external and member enquiries.

First Aim: *To continue to improve the effectiveness of the ECF Office.*

Objectives:

1. To continue to improve the use of information technology at the ECF office.
2. To continue to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of ECF staff.
3. To continue to improve the efficiency of ECF office activities.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Review and analyse office computer and related systems.
2. Continue staff assessment and provide training as required.
3. Continue to review the organisation and structure of office activities.

Second Aim: *To support the development of the membership scheme.*

Objectives:

1. To provide appropriate administrative support.
2. To support related services and publications.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Continue to improve systems to deal with more transactions.
2. Continue to provide appropriate literature on the membership scheme.
3. Continue to organise appropriate advertising to support and explain the scheme.

Third Aim: *To improve media perception and presence of the ECF in conjunction with the Marketing Director.*

Objectives:

1. To continue to develop and improve the ECF Website.
2. To continue to improve the distribution and presentation of press releases.
3. To improve management of public relations.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Continue to review, rationalise and improve the ECF Website, in line with best practice.
2. Provide adequate and attractive advertising of ECF Internet service and related events.
3. Continue to improve distribution and presentation of press releases with the Marketing Director.
4. Review public relations activity (in conjunction with the Marketing Director).
5. Continue to communicate directly with chess players.

Fourth Aim: To improve the collection of Game Fee income.

Objectives:

1. To continue to improve the organisation and administrative support for the collection of Game Fee.
2. To recommend an improved system for the collection of Game Fee to the Board by mid-2009.

Actions:

New Initiatives

1. Review and analyse the organisation and administrative support for Game Fee with a view to identifying improvements.
2. Appoint additional voluntary staff at regional/local levels to support the efficient and effective collection of Game Fee where necessary.
3. Review and analyse the computer and related systems to facilitate possible improvements (including the monitoring process) that can assist in the collection of Game Fee.

Fifth Aim: Creation of the Information and Communications Technology (“ICT”) Team

Objective:

1. The work involved in supporting and developing ICT for the ECF is extensive. The work required can only be contemplated by building up and maintaining a team that will undertake separate but coordinated projects.

Actions:

Ongoing Activity

1. Fill new posts as additional requirements are identified.

Sixth Aim: To continue to replace IT equipment at the Office during 2009

Objectives:

1. To continue to provide up-to-date equipment and software for the desktop computer environment of the ECF Office.
2. To review all office IT processes and propose costed improvements.

Actions:

New Initiatives

1. Purchase any necessary hardware and software (including updated versions of MS Office).
2. Review the network security of the LAN and specifically of the file server.
3. Carry out a project to consolidate the separate databases currently operating for the office systems, and make any design changes necessary to take advantage of new software.

Seventh Aim: To ensure that day-to-day IT support is available to the ECF Office

Objective:

1. To identify local sources of immediate assistance for the office when hardware becomes faulty (once out of warranty) or software faults occur.

Action:

Ongoing Activity

1. Maintain relationships with local suppliers of services and support.

Eighth Aim: To develop and enhance the ECF's online presence in order to increase the value of the website to users and members as well as to the ECF.

Note: The ECF currently runs three websites (the main site, Women's chess, British Championships) each with its own Webmaster and sets of challenges. A further website, the Online Grading Database, is outsourced to a third party.

Objectives:

1. To consolidate the ECF's web presence and develop the online brand (i.e. consistent look and feel).
2. To demonstrate added value for ECF members through creation of 'members only' web content.
3. To provide background support for matters relating to Design and Coding for each of the ECF websites.
4. To make possible secure payments on the Website (by mid-2009), enabling users to purchase ECF membership online.
5. To increase revenue through the website by 200%.
6. To increase 'hits' on the website by 100%.
7. To win a 'best website' award by end-2009.

Actions:

New Initiatives

1. Provide a "mentor" for each Webmaster.
2. Provide each Webmaster with an appropriate degree of technical support and expert design advice.
3. Subject to satisfactory resolution of any non-IT related issues, develop the facilities for handling payment transactions through a secure site.
4. Implement several online user levels, including ECF Member, Team Manager, Standard User, Administrator, Monitor and Contributing Author.
5. Implement Google statistics and provide key people with tracking data on traffic and revenue.
6. Develop an online community of English chess players, led by regular (blog) contributions from prominent English writers on a similar model to ChessCafé.
7. Review existing website sponsorship deals.