

Election Address: Director of Home Chess – Tim Wall

The reason I'm standing to be Director of Home Chess is simple: I love the game and want to see it enjoyed by as many people as possible.

English chess has a fine historical tradition, and we need to build on this foundation, while recognising that there are exciting new formats we can incorporate as a way of attracting new generations to the game.

Revitalising clubs

The lifeblood of any national chess organisation is its clubs. Encouraging clubs to organise popular activities for their members and local communities, and thus to grow and thrive, would be my top priority.

Clubs come in all shapes and sizes, and reflect their members' interests, from league matches and junior training to blitz and rapidplay events for players of all ages and abilities. We should celebrate this diversity and encourage clubs to reach out to potential new members, particularly women and young people, by holding 'Chess for All' public events, in libraries, town centres and cultural venues.

Developing more social chess through a network of informal clubs, particularly in libraries, cafes and pubs, so that chess is played in public and is accessible to everyone, would be a key objective.

Training organisers and arbiters

I would organise and facilitate training events for local chess organisers, drawing on the expertise of successful club and congress organisers, to help clubs and constituent organisations. Also, I would actively support the excellent work of the Chess Arbiters' Association in recruiting and training new arbiters, and to foster a greater understanding of the FIDE Laws of Chess and best practice among club players.

Developing the British Championships

The flagship event of the Federation is undoubtedly the annual British Championships, and I would work closely with our professional team of organisers and arbiters to ensure that the Championships attract a top-class field and a large

entry in all sections, from the Championship and Major Open, through to the various Veterans, Junior and grading limited events.

I would continue the work we have already begun to organise a family-friendly chess festival alongside the British Championships that attracts newcomers to the game, using the Championships to grow local chess and partnering with local chess organisations, councils and businesses.

Other competitions

I would also work closely with the ECF's various constituent organisations to promote the County Championships, UK Open Blitz Championships and British Rapidplay, recognising the logistical and geographical challenges that face players and teams outside the most populous areas of the country.

Raising sponsorship

To achieve these various goals, I would actively seek sponsorship from companies, local and national government, organisations and individuals, so that chess events can be professionally run and offer decent conditions to professional players, teachers and coaches.

My Chess CV

I have wide experience of playing, teaching and organising at all levels, from international tournaments to my club in Newcastle upon Tyne, Forest Hall, and at local schools and libraries.

Starting in the 1990s and resuming in 2016 on my return to the UK, I have organised various international, weekend, rapidplay and blitz tournaments, most notably the Northumbria Masters in February 2018.

I have coached England and Scotland juniors at various international events, including the World and European Championships, and taught chess in several schools on Tyneside. Currently, I organise the Northumbria MegaFinal for the Delancey UK Chess Challenge, work as a local coordinator for Chess in Schools and Communities and am a tutor for the ECF Academy.

I have recently started two successful library chess clubs, in Newcastle and Gateshead.

From 1997-98 I worked as Editor of British Chess Magazine. During my years working as a news journalist and editor in Russia and Azerbaijan, I wrote a regular chess column for The Moscow News (2009-12) and covered the World Championship match in Sochi (2014).

Qualifications: FIDE Master (1994), FIDE International Organiser (1998), ECF Accredited Coach (2017), ECF Arbiter, Level 1 (2017).