

## ECF Election Statement - Home Director

C39.8c(2)

I am standing for a second term as Director for Home Chess and will look to build on my achievements to date in a key role for English Chess.

I am standing on the basis that, if elected, I would work closely with the current Events Director to further develop ECF events at all levels, and with the Membership Director and Director for Women's Chess to help grow the ECF's membership and attract new players.

As Director for Home Chess I would focus on five main areas which I feel are critical for English chess as below.

1. Events – I will look to consolidate and develop the set of ECF run National Championships and Competitions which have been established - including the British, English Championships, Counties Championships and National Clubs Championships and the UK Open Blitz. I will work closely in this area with my colleague and Events Director, Shohreh Bayat.
2. Education and certification – I will work with the Junior Director to develop the ECF's support for coaching and education including: continued maintenance of the ECF registered coaches list, publicising and supporting the ECF's certificate of excellence, and helping to establish the National Curriculum for Chess.
3. Grass Roots and membership growth - This has been a critical area for the ECF over the last three years including promoting the ECF to new players and support for clubs coming out of the pandemic period. Over the next three years I would look to build on HMG's recently announced support package for chess with provision of increased help for grass roots chess including:
  - Practical help from the ECF for organisers wishing to set up new clubs
  - Help with promoting clubs to reach new members during the ongoing boom
  - Support and advice for running club events and establishing events in community/ social venues – eg street chess, parks, and libraries.
  - Support for clubs wishing to run/ provide competitions, coaching and events
4. Online Chess Events and Content – Over the last four years I have developed the ECF's online offering from scratch to provide a set of ECF clubs on chess.com and Lichess with over 10,000 members. ECF online provides club members with the opportunity to play competitive online rated chess at club, national and international level with games in club events reflected in the ECF rating lists. This area has been a major part of the ECF's offering during the pandemic and has contributed hugely to our membership growth.

In a second term I would look to further develop the online clubs platform including offering more educational content – eg online masterclasses, simuls and improvers events, and to develop the ECF online social platforms as an effective way of engaging new members and supporters from all demographics. I would also plan to develop the newly established ECF commentary and streaming channel which now offer commentary on key over the board and online events with regularly updated Youtube playlists.

There are around 4.5 million UK members on Chess.com and large numbers on Lichess. ECF online remains a key area for reaching the huge number of social players across England and the UK.

5. Broadening and strengthening the ECF' general Home Chess offering and our volunteer organisation in areas related to Home Chess – During the last three years I have helped establish and develop the ECF registered Arbiters team and registrations / certifications, the register of coaches, and the awards for National titles. I have also supported and developed our offering for Accessible chess and Chess in Prisons. I would want to continue to develop these areas in a second term working closely with our volunteer team.

Director of Home Chess is a central role within the ECF. I would look to work as a collegiate member of the Board of Directors to support the good working of the Board and the ECF and with our outstanding team of volunteers and office staff, and I ask for your support.

My Chess CV: I played competitive chess at school and university and then returned to playing in 1993. I have been a keen club player since then, taking part in local leagues and numerous congresses. I am also the treasurer of Warwickshire Chess Association, ECF Home Director for the last three years, and ECF Manager of Online Chess. I have also been organiser or co-organiser for various ECF OTB events including several British Championships, English Championships, and the UK Open Blitz.

Nigel Towers

Birmingham,

September 2023