**2022 REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF HOME CHESS**

2021 was another difficult year with the Covid pandemic continuing to disrupt all activities – not just chess.

Working within Welsh Government regulations at all times clubs were able to reopen in the Autumn following the completion of a risk assessment specific for each club, and, I believe, league chess has now restarted in some areas.

I sincerely thank officers of all clubs and Zones for their diligence writing and ensuring the risk assessments have been followed by members. I know this hasn’t been easy, and made even more difficult for some clubs by the different rules in place in England and Wales. Nevertheless, the effort of these officers meant we were able to begin meeting, once again, in our clubs. I would like to especially thank Martin Ricketts for his help and support in this area which has been invaluable.

Risk assessments have, obviously, not been confined to clubs and have, and at the time of writing still, needed to be completed for all events. I sincerely thank all those who have attended events following the rules in these assessments and thus Welsh Government Regulations/guidance. I also sincerely thank the staff at venues who continue to be so supportive of Welsh Chess Union events.

Online chess continued through 2021 with Online leagues and an online Welsh Championship. I thank the arbiters and other people who supported the organisation of these events and congratulate the winners of prizes.

Fair play regulations are obviously part of chess, and this has been so for many years, even prior to the pandemic. Early in the pandemic the Welsh Chess Union was delighted to be able to have the assistance of Professor Ken Regan and his scanning software. In 2021 this responsibility passed to Andy Howie. Andy, while Chief Executive of Chess Scotland, has also been involved with many events, some very high profile, within FIDE circles. The WCU were delighted when Andy agreed to become the WCU’s Fair Play Officer and we look forward to working with him, and thus be able to receive his advice, at events in the future, both OTB and online.

As I write this in March 2022 I am sure we are all looking forward to OTB Events returning and, in a few weeks, the Welsh Champs will take place. These will be followed by Welsh Junior Champs in late April / early May and then the South Wales International in the Summer, followed by, hopefully, a full season in 2022-23.

Kevin Staveley

March 2022