

WELSH BOWLING ASSOCIATION STATEMENT.

BRITISH ISLES INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

On Wednesday 9th February 2022 delegates from the WBA along with representatives attended a Zoom Meeting organised by Bowls England to discuss proposed BIBC Events for the 2022 season.

This was not a BIBC Meeting as at present this organisation only has one officer and is currently not functioning.

At the commencement of the meeting the WBA delegation asked the representatives of Bowls England and Bowls Scotland would they be prepared to take part in future BIBC Internationals as they are currently organised.

Both countries stated categorically that they would not, a pole of the other countries in attendance was then taken, the WBA and WWBA along with the IBA voted in favour of retaining the BIBC Internationals, the IWBA supported the proposal put forward by Bowls England with the Channels Island representatives not voting but indicating that they wanted to be part of whatever format was agreed.

The result of the vote undermined the WBAs position and left us with no alternative than to continue to work for the interest of Welsh Bowlers from within the group.

Following a discussion surrounding the legality of the meeting agreement was reached on setting a working group that would oversee the winding up of the BIBC in its current form, Barry Fleming will represent the WBA on this group.

Following this decision, the meeting then proposed the following, to put in place a programme of events for 2022 and to appoint a working group to look at events from 2023 onwards.

The following events were agreed for 2022 only.

Bowls England were hosting the Commonwealth Games this year and were also holding an invitational event at Leamington Spa on 9th & 10th June. Countries where welcome to enter teams if they wished to do so.

Scotland was hosting the European Championships.

The WBA & WWBA offered to host the Joint BIBC & BIWBC Championships at Llandrindod Wells from 1st to 3rd July, this was confirmed by the group.

It was also proposed that as Ireland did not have an event taking place in their country, they should host the Men's and Ladies Under 25s Internationals this proposal was accepted, Ireland proposed that these events should be held on the same weekend and at the same venue, to accommodate this and for this year only it was proposed that the event would consist of teams of 12 players.

Moving forward into 2023 and beyond agreement was reached on setting up a working group to look at different structures for our events that work for all countries involved.

The WBA is not against change and will work alongside the other countries to put in place new events, but we firmly believe that these new events should be run in tandem with the existing International Events and should be used as a platform for expanding international opportunities for our players not as a cost saving exercise that restricts players opportunities to represent their countries and concentrates funding on a few elite players.

The grass roots bowlers of our wonderful sport are our bread and butter and the WBA Officer's, Executive Members and Team Manager recognise this and will continue to do everything in their power to provide a career path for our bowlers to follow.