**Shires League rules**

League:

* Each team will be designated 6 teams to play in each age group.
* The overall league standing will be formed by the following criteria, the order of importance:
1. Overall matches won.
2. Rubbers won vs lost.
3. Games won vs lost.
4. Points won vs lost.
* If one team does not attend an arranged match or forfeits – the other team will win 20-0.

Finals and playoffs:

* The finals will be held at the end of the season and will be finished in 1 day, with 8 (normally) teams competing.
* The finals teams will be:
1. The top four teams in the league, following 6 games played.
2. The teams who win in the playoff fixture.
* The playoffs are contested (normally) between the teams positioned 5-12.
* 4 teams (unless a very small entry) will proceed to the finals, which is determined by a fixture against one of the other teams in the playoffs.
* Team 5 will play team 12, team 6 will play team 11, team 7 will play team 10, team 8 will play team 9.
* The higher ranked team will be the home team for the fixture.
* On the finals day fixtures will be decided via a random draw, where teams 1-4 will play a team 5-8.
* Following the first round of matches – the winners will go into 1 pot to play for 1-4 and the losers in another to play for 5-8. Following the second round, each team will play for a final position.

Fixtures:

* Fixtures secretaries are to arrange fixtures with all the teams set for them by the organisers.
* The teams must decide and arrange who the home team will be or whether it will be a neutral venue, the venue, time, and date of the fixture.
* Although not a rule, it is recommended that if you play a team regularly you should switch who plays home each year.
* Some fixtures are designated as either home or away by the organisers, this is due to one team having another team as a preference whilst the other does not. If this is the case the away team is obliged to travel unless the home team is willing to play at a neutral venue
* The home team pays for the venue.
* All matches need to be scheduled as soon as possible and preferably by 1st September.

Matches:

* The home team is to provide shuttles for the fixture.
* Each match is made up of 20 rubbers which consists of:
1. 4 mixed
2. 4 mens and womens singles
3. 4 mens and womens doubles.
* Teams need to consist of at least 4 men and 4 women.
* The mixed and singles will be in order of strength, this is determined primarily by grading and then ranking, however if you believe that someone/pair should be above or below where their grading indicates you may do so, however the opposing team may challenge this in which instance the team accused will need to explain their reason for the order to the league secretary. If the league secretary believes the reason is not adequate the match and matches between lower ranked players/pairs in the event will be given as a 21-0 21-0 to the opposing team. The league secretary will normally proceed on the basis that all teams should act in the best interests of the young people playing badminton and the order chosen was what the team manager believes to be the fairest. Some examples of reasons could be:
1. A lower graded player winning county restricted.
2. A lower graded player who recently started playing tournaments (hence lower grading), but performing at a much higher standard than higher graded players in team.
* There will be 2 pairs in mens doubles and 2 pairs for womens doubles, in which each pair will play against both opposing pairs – in which (normally) pair 1 will play pair 2 followed by pair 1 vs pair 1 and pair 2 vs pair 2.
* There is no restrictions in how many players are in your team – however in the doubles the pairs that play the first match must be the same pair throughout the match.
* Rubbers will be 3 games to 21 during regular fixtures and playoffs with no setting, however in shires league finals matches will be 1 game to 21 (due to time constraints).
* Coaching is only allowed at 21 – no coaching is allowed during the game or at 11.
* Matches must be submitted onto be tournament software following the match and verified by the other team.
* If a team does not have enough players to complete all matches, the match which is forfeited will be the lowest ranked one.
* Forfeited matches will go down as 21-0 21-0.