

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

CLUB AGM - Tuesday 5 December 2023

As the incoming Chairman, I'd firstly like to thank Stephen Ellis-Jones, who having served on various Club Committees for more than 25 years stepped down as Club Chairman earlier this year.

Steve originally joined the Tennis Committee in 1997 before becoming Club Secretary in 2004. He became Club Chairman in 2006 and held the position for 17 years. Steve additionally chairs the Bar and Entertainments Committee and remains on the Club Committee in that role.

Over this period the Club has made substantial investments in excellent playing surfaces for both tennis and squash members but has remained financially prudent. This has allowed funds to be set aside for a number of planned capital projects, and it is therefore fitting that Steve is leading the project to redevelop the clubhouse facilities.

I'd also like to welcome Chris Greenwood onto the Club Committee as the new Squash Chairman. It's clearly important to have new volunteers on all of the Club's Committees to help bring in some fresh ideas. At the same time Peter Dickinson's knowledge and experience will be sadly missed having served on the Club Committee for many years as both Facilities Manager and latterly as Squash Chairman.

At last year's AGM, the results of the Club Survey were presented, and it was clear from the feedback received that there were a number of areas where members felt improvements could be made, and this gave all of the Club's Committees some clear objectives for the year.

I am therefore delighted to report the progress that has been made during the year to achieve these objectives, and am particularly grateful to Wayne Stretch and the Tennis Committee for the hours of work that they've put into various initiatives, with the help of Club members, as reported at the recent Tennis AGM.

In summary this includes:

- Improved communication – implementing the monthly Newsletter to improve the flow of information to members.
- Setting up a community/ social fund - committing £12k over 3 years connecting with the Tim Henman Foundation to engage with local schools where more than 22% of its pupils are on free school meals.
- Providing more court space – making a successful application to fit floodlights on additional courts to provide more court availability at peak times throughout the year.
- Reduce overheads – planning for the replacement of the existing Halogen lights with LED fittings saving £6k plus per annum.
- Improving the playing surface on courts 7-10 by consulting with the manufacturer to change the surface granules to give an improved performance.

One of the main areas that both squash and tennis members felt strongly about was the need for an improvement to the facilities on offer to members in the clubhouse, and that an upgrade was urgently required to create a nicer social environment to encourage better use of the bar. With the kind assistance of Jerzy Stera and his wife Agnieszka, we have some proposed drawings and photographs that will be on display at the clubhouse and also available to view on the Club website.

Whilst the clubhouse refurbishment will inevitably require a substantial investment, Peter Jordan as Club Treasurer has continued to maintain a 10-year plan to ensure that the Club has sufficient funds for all of the potential capital projects under discussion. It also helps the Club Committee to ensure that a 'buffer' is maintained to cope with any other unexpected expenditure that may arise such as the roof repairs required this year.

Finally, I'd like to thank all of the volunteers at the Club who work on Committees, captain teams, help out at events, or have assisted with any projects this year, because without those volunteers, the Club would be unable to function as a members' club. On that note, all of the Committees would appreciate volunteers so please don't be backwards in coming forward to offer assistance!

Geoff Williams, Club Chairman