

Chairman's Report

The club is in a healthy place, with friendly members, good courts and some exciting activities coming in different quarters. More on that shortly.

Firstly, on behalf of the club, I would like to offer my sincerest condolences to our former chairman Caroline Evans at the passing of her husband Simon. Simon was a good tennis player and a dear friend to many. His cheeky humour and great sense of fun will be missed on the court.

Last year we received the first tranche of the Cadmus money, which prompted a discussion about installing floodlights. We listened to the views of our members and this led to the creation of a sub-committee to help lead the future of the club. One of the first steps to a bright new future is the recent survey sent out to all members. We received a good response and look forward to seeing what it is the members feel is important at the club.

We have received a few comments about the state of the courts and again as a result of these comments, we organised a working party to help lay sand and generally tidy up the playing areas. We had a great turnout and I am grateful to those members who gave their time to help.

Listening to members is important and I am keen to encourage any and all feedback.

I believe the courts are playing well and despite access and building work disruptions, tennis is being enjoyed by a great many members as always.

Club sessions:

Sunday Club sessions are well attended, with the use of the WhatsApp group a good way to ensure numbers. Heather Bennett-Earle is still coaching members and in the summer hopes to offer more opportunities for juniors to get on court.

Membership:

Membership fees remain unchanged this year, and the number of members continues to hold well. We are keen to introduce more members to the club, and we are hoping an open weekend in May will encourage people to come and play.

Winter Suppers:

We had to sadly cancel our Christmas dinner last year due to a lack of numbers. It was felt the choice of date clashed with too many other events and we will look to remedy this for the coming December. We have enjoyed some wonderful winter suppers, most noticeably at the refurbished King's Arms, where we had a record turn out. My thanks to the organisers for their efforts, these are a wonderful social occasion.

Website:

I wish to extend my gratitude to Doug for keeping the website up to date and loaded with helpful information for members. We are working on a new and improved system for booking courts and will keep you posted as this develops.

Neighbours:

As I mentioned earlier, we have had a number of issues with access to the club. The path from Onslow Road has been closed, as well as the practice court. We have had geotechnical surveys conducted on the slope and wall with Westgrath/ Vantage Point. The advice from the surveys was that there was a potential risk to life and we had no choice but to limit access to these areas. I am grateful to David Newman who is working on this issue and we will keep you updated of any changes. For now, we would like to thank members for their understanding and would ask you to accept our apologies for the inconvenience.

Wimbledon Ballot:

The ballot will be taking place shortly, and as before we use the LTA's automated system. I would ask all members to opt in, even if you are not interested in going. The more members in the ballot, the more tickets we are allocated and the more chance those who are keen to go will go.

Thank you's:

I wish to thank...

The Tennis Club Committee for their continued support and all their hard work.

To John Sprague, for his continued work as membership secretary and despite not playing for much of last year, still keeping an eye on the club and grounds.

Doug O'Malley, our man of many titles, Treasurer, Secretary and Website manager.

The organisers of the weekly games, Linda Gunn, Graham Nurser, Jennie Sprague, Lucy Valentine, Sara Lovick, Peter Freedman and John Sprague.

And Finally...:

It has been a busy year, for the club and for me personally. I haven't played nearly enough tennis, but I value the friendships I have made through the club and enjoy off court. There are exciting times ahead and I am excited to see where it leads us.