

ADMINISTRATION: NEW CHAIR TO BE APPOINTED

Club chair for the past two years Mark Sherwood has announced that he would like to step down after an invaluable period of service during difficult times. An interim chair may be appointed by the club committee to stand until the next AGM, but any club members who feel they have the time, energy and mix of skills to take this key role for a longer period are asked to put their name forward to a committee member, or to email as above.

VOLUNTEERS

We are very proud that our club is run by volunteers and grateful to everybody who helps make our club the successful venue it is. As you would expect we are always on the look-out for new volunteers and can be flexible in our roles to make the best use of everybody's skills. So if you do have a few spare hours and would like to help out, please get in touch by emailing info@amhersttlc.co.uk - it's a great way to get involved, meet other members and contribute to maintaining the success of the club.

HOW THE CLUB FUNCTIONS

A 10-page resume of everything you need to know about how the club functions, including playing and coaching schedules, ball provision and floodlighting procedures, first aid and wifi, dress code and court etiquette is set out in a newly prepared document *What you need to know about Amherst*. A hard copy is available to view on the noticeboard in the clubhouse but can also be accessed online on the club's website.

CLUB SURVEY

Head coach Peter Farthing has released the results of a detailed survey of club members that he undertook last year to get feedback both on the club's coaching programme and its administration generally. Inducement to respond to the survey was offered in the form of a free coaching session to one participant chosen by lottery - the winner was Andy Chapman, whose competitive talents have previously evaded any coaching input for several decades (only kidding, Andy!).

A total of 76 members wrote responses, which is impressive in itself. Of these, 54 gave a 9 or 10 (out of 10) mark to the key question - "How likely is it that you would recommend the Amherst Coaching Programme to a friend or colleague?", with only ten giving a mark of 6 or less. Most were highly complimentary. There was also much praise for socialising aspects of the club. Adverse comments will be taken seriously and addressed where practicable.

WELCOME TO SEASON 2022/23

After two years of stop-start access to the courts and limited use of the clubhouse as a result of Covid-19 regulations and precautions, we are hoping for an uninterrupted and health-restored year of tennis.

The club welcomed more than 90 new members in all categories last year despite the adverse circumstances. We look forward to many more joining in 2022. Renewal subscription forms have been sent out to 251 existing members. You are asked to pay by direct bank transfer, if practicable.



RESURFACING OF COURTS 1, 2 AND 3

We are pleased to report that the replacement of the court surface for Courts 1, 2 and 3 is planned to start on 28 March. Depending on the weather and the amount of foundation work required, which will become apparent after the existing carpet is removed, we expect the work to take two to three weeks, after which the new surface will be ready for us all to use.

Access onto these courts will not be permitted whilst the works are taking place for health and safety reasons. This will inevitably cause temporary pinch points on the availability of other courts, but the period has been chosen in order to minimise disruption because

- a. The clocks will have changed, meaning lighter evenings so longer hours availability of Courts 6 & 7;
- b. It's between the winter and summer seasons of the Sussex league programme, so fewer matches are being played; and
- c. During the Easter holidays when there is less junior coaching, hence evening play can start earlier.

We ask for everyone's patience and co-operation during this time. To help this along, we plan to open the bar during all adult mix-in sessions so that those sitting out can take advantage of socialising in the clubhouse while waiting for their next game. We also remind everyone of our club rule that during independent play sessions, if there is someone waiting to play, you should come off court after one set and then wait until another court becomes available to resume your game.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have been involved so far with helping to run this project for the club.



The club entered six teams in the Tennis Sussex Wilson Sandford Winter League - three men's doubles, three women's doubles; it also has three teams in the Wealden League mixed doubles leagues featuring teams across Kent and East Sussex.

Bad weather at recent weekends has led to some inevitable fixture postponements, but all matches in each of these leagues are required to be completed by the end of March, so that fresh summer leagues can commence in April.

Top ladies team, led by Nikki Crowhurst and Jane Garrett, play in the highly competitive Division 2 of the Winter League. They are currently fifth out of seven teams but with two home matches to come against teams lying sixth and seventh, there's everything to play for.

Second ladies team, in which Jennifer Naylor and Barbara Fentiman have excelled, have finished their schedule, mid-table in Division 5. Third team, with Clare Hooton, Pat Holmes and Lindsay Taylor all notching multiple victories, have also finished mid-table in Division 9.

The men's first team have played all their matches and anxiously await outstanding results of matches between rival teams that could overhaul them in Division 4. Quentin Soucek and Mark Cunnington have performed with most success.

Second men's team, featuring consistent performances from Louis Adkin, need to defeat a Southdown team in

their final home match to retain status in Division 8 East. Third team, featuring the service power of David Held, still have two matches to play, both away: they will probably have to win both if they are to be promoted from Division 10 East.

The Wealden League, which has three divisions (21 local teams), is managed by Amherst member Sarah Chapman. The league runs over 12 months from April to March.

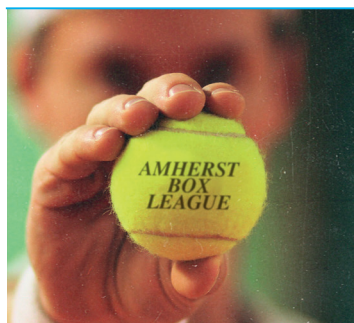
CURRENT STANDINGS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Amherst 1, captained by Sarah Chapman, are top of Division 1 with 50 points, having played 11 matches with one game left against Mountfield. St Leonards rivals The Green are in close contention, having 46 points but three games in hand, so all to play for.

Amherst 2, captained by Lisa Phillimore, are currently second from the bottom of Division 1 but they have 5 games in hand so will expect to avoid relegation if they manage to get all their matches played by the end of March.

Amherst 3, captained by Sandra Goodsell, are sitting in 6th place in Division 2 with only two fixtures left. They may need to win both to avoid relegation.

This year's fixtures meeting will be held on 6 April in Iden Green where division winners are awarded trophies and fixtures will be set for the 2022/23 season



SINGLES BOX LEAGUE

Team matches are confined in winter to doubles play only, but there is scope for regular singles competition within the club. The singles ladder which operated with somewhat sporadic engagement of participants over the past two years has been suspended, leaving Jeff Gedge proudly unbeaten at the top, and replaced by a series of box leagues. Peter Farthing has sorted a very encouraging entry of 50 players into six groups from top club to beginner/improver level. The current round ends on April 30th.

CLAY COURT SWEEPING

The clay courts (6 and 7) were serviced at the beginning of this month. It has been recommended to us that after-play sweeping should be carried out in an elliptical pattern, traversing the whole of the court area, not just the playing surface. This will help to keep the courts in good condition with an even distribution of sand.

For best practice, see this video demonstration: <https://youtu.be/MW6oLFaqN2U>