

Chairman's Report 43rd AGM Burnham Tennis Association Nov 2020

This as we all know has been both a difficult and somewhat shortened year, and sadly it recently got worse again. As a club, as far as I am aware, we have had few instances of members contracting Covid-19 except right at the beginning when one of our most popular social player, Roger Rosenberg contracted and subsequently died of Covid. He was a well-liked man who is sadly missed.

Everybody involved in tennis was glad when we were one of the first activities allowed back after the lockdown and was able to continue playing even when tier 2 and 3 restrictions were brought into an area. In this respect the LTA did a very good job in establishing guidance which has been accepted by government. Sadly, they were not able to persuade them that tennis could continue in this second lockdown.

They were also fast off the blocks in offering support to clubs in financial difficulty. I will leave it to our Treasurer Keith to report on the main points but suffice to say the LTA quickly returned the annual payments we make for registration. Our income has taken a hit of about 25%, but because of careful management and a cautious approach to ongoing commitments we have sound reserves, and we are not in the difficult situation some clubs may find themselves.

We have however had to spend a significant sum on the club house this year – it needed completely new roofing fabric and new guttering to ensure it remained waterproof. I am pleased to say that the recent heavy rain has shown no signs of penetrating the roof, so a good job was done. We also ensured that we kept both courts in good condition with power washing for all three and painting of court 3.

We have also invested in sharing the cost of tree maintenance around the edge of the courts with the Parish Council, which hopefully will save money in terms of future court maintenance costs. In addition, we have had to replace bulbs on a few of the floodlights. This is normal maintenance, but we also needed to replace some of the protective covers due to vandals firing catapults at them and breaking them – this added £400 to our costs. Additionally, before we are able to return to use of the clubhouse, I hope that we will have had the two changing rooms redecorated.

Vandalism is a constant problem around the club house, notably in good weather and we were in regular contact with the police. They increased the number of visits they made but as far as we can see not at the time when a problem existed.

Due to the Covid restrictions we lost all our summer club matches, but I was pleased to say competition was underway again, sadly without any social interaction over post-match refreshments. These have of course been suspended once again.

We were successful in getting our club championships played, for which I must thank Keith Johnston for his organisation. The juniors have also managed to get many of their championships played, albeit not on a single final's day. It is important we keep these things going because they offer to motivation to keep many people playing.

Coaching was largely restarted in September and has been as busy as ever. In addition to our junior programme we have one-one on Wednesday mornings and a very lively Tuesday afternoon session being run by former junior Lewis Brown. Participants are highly complementary about these sessions.

Normally the LTA would have run two half-yearly County forums to update clubs, but these of course have been stopped. Instead there have been a few useful online information sessions run by our regional team.

Last year I commented on a desire for greater use of the courts at some of our quiet times. I am pleased to say as soon as we were able to use our courts, they have generally received good use. We introduced, as a requirement of reopening, a booking system. This has worked well, and it has also enabled us to have a good idea of our court usage – a real benefit.

On a final note can I thank all the existing members of the committee who have worked hard on your behalf this year:

Our Team Captains, Jean Shenton and Andrew Ratcliff,

Sue Gray Membership Secretary and Junior Organiser,

Sue Topchik, who in spite her demanding responsibilities at Maidenhead TC continues as our match secretary,

Cathy Kibble, Asst Treasurer

Keith Johnston, Championship Organiser

Helen Trill Welfare Officer, without whom our status as a registered club would be in doubt,

Hari Balakrishnan, secretary

Keith Paskins Treasurer,

I am pleased to say all have offered to continue in their posts next year.

Peter Downes

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