

# BETWEEN THE LINES

NOVEMBER 2024

SOCIAL@HESWALLTENNIS.CO.UK

## INTRODUCTION

THAT'S ALL FOLKS!

Another wild and wonderful 'tennis year' draws to and end, but the fun at Heswall Lawn Tennis club is far from over!

In this months edition of our newsletter we will run through our usual updates and look forward to an exciting festive period at the club.

We will also give you a financial update and keep you posted on our plea to extend our floodlight hours.

We all have an incredible shoutout to one of our star juniors capping off an amazing year in style.

Finally as the year draws to and end we thank our volunteers for their dedicated services and ask you our members to be part of our team and show how you can help!



## FINANCE UPDATE

As the temporary treasurer, I am often asked about how the finances are going. We've just ended our financial year and we're halfway through the membership year so, rather than waiting for the AGM, we thought we'd provide an interim update.

The club's financial management and control has clearly been excellent over the years, and we are in a strong financial position. We came into the last financial year holding funds of a little over £104,000 in the bank after a profitable year. This was helped by the 5% increases in membership fees also a small cash windfall of £4,500 in respect of income earned in previous years.

We remain profitable but with no fee increase nor windfall, this year won't be quite so good. We have also incurred significantly increased energy bills and other inflationary increases to our costs, including salaries. Nevertheless, our cash funds are more than £120,000 with little in the way of liabilities, enabling us to invest with confidence.

Revenue looks set to be around the same as 2023 helped by a stable membership and the bar and room hire income. The gross profit of the bar is good, but the impact of energy and staff costs means that the bar roughly breaks even. Hopefully, you all agree this is acceptable for the service it brings to members although we are looking at cellar costs.

This strong position has allowed me to focus how we can reduce the effort required from the volunteers (including the Treasurer!) and provide better visibility of our costs. The move to electronic payments has been the single biggest contributor to both these areas and has considerably reduced the effort for the membership, social and finance teams. People have asked me about the cost of this move. For larger payments (over £20) it costs more to take payments by credit card than bank transfer. For smaller payments and all cash payments, however, credit card is cheaper. The net impact of this change over the year has been around £400 – good value for the reduction in effort.

Finally, when I took over, I noticed that we were holding the club funds in a bank instant access account. Historically, low interest rates meant that this wasn't costing us money but with higher rates, we were losing out. We have switched our funds into higher interest notice accounts, and this will bring us additional gross income of over £4,000 in 2024. Rates are coming down now so, if any of you have any good ideas on how to maximise our return from funds at low risk, please let me know. We can safely tie up a good proportion of our funds for over 12 months.

Oh, and if anyone is a budding accountant or financial controller – maybe studying at school or college – and wants to help me out, please let me know!

Mark Peter



## Regal Regan On Court!

Heswall Tennis Club is immensely proud to say that one of our junior members Regan Obrien stormed his way to victory at the Cheshire Championships in August this year, winning both the singles and the doubles in style.

In 2024 Regan has gone from strength to strength, winning multiple Grade 3 and Grade 4 tournaments in both singles and doubles, representing the Wirral in an intense battle against Liverpool and finishing the summer league season as HLTC's 2nd highest performing Division 1 player.

No doubt you all witnessed the extent of his powers at our club championships finals day where Regan won 3 events on the day.

It was the Cheshire County Championships this year, however, that proved to be the happy hunting ground for our young phenom - winning the U18 Boys Singles, the U16 Boys Singles, and the U16 Boys doubles with his partner Charlie Woods - all in straight sets!

Congratulations Regan and we all look forward to seeing the next steps in what we hope will be a successful tennis career





## FLOODLIGHTS Part 2

This month we would like to tell you about how we are looking at our environmental impact and how we are trying to simplify usage.

Our current Metal Hydride lamps are inefficient and expensive. This type of lamp will eventually be phased out and they are already becoming difficult to source. LED lamps would halve our power usage and would have a much longer life. A move to LED, however, would take us 30 years to recover the £20,000 we have been quoted. Having only renewed the lamps two years ago, there is no strong financial case for us to proceed. Rather we will build it into the investment plan and reassess when we know the decision due in November on our planning request to extend floodlights to 10pm.

We currently use a token system for paying for the floodlights with a paper-based booking system. This is time-consuming to manage and inconvenient for many members. We've been looking at other options, including electronic payment and an online booking system

We'll present pros of cons of the options (including doing nothing) in November but we're very keen to hear your views. Please contact Sue at [grounds@heswalltennis.co.uk](mailto:grounds@heswalltennis.co.uk) or any of the other committee members if you have feedback.

## KIDNEY TOURNAMENT

On Friday 6th September the courts were filled by a wonderful group of ladies who entered a tournament, raising funds for KRNW (Kidney Research North West). Amazingly the day also coincided with our English summer, which was in danger of invoking the heat rule!

After a number of rounds, during which some entertaining games were played, all moved indoors for an excellent lunch, an open bar, a fun raffle and a very moving short talk by Paul Dixon, a hospital volunteer, and altruistic kidney donor. A huge thank you to all those who helped us raise £1,450 towards kidney research.



## SAVE THE DATES!

**6th December** - Christmas Wreath Workshop

**7th December** - Christmas Party

**Bar opening hours** for October will be:

Wednesday 6.30-9.30pm

Thursday 7-9.30pm

Friday 4.00- 8.00pm



## MEET THE TEAM

**Name:** Kate Todd

**When did you start playing tennis?**

I played a fair bit when I was younger but I started playing again after the Pandemic.

**Are you a Lefty or a Righty?**

Righty

**Favourite drink from the bar?**

Wine... any colour

**What role do you volunteer as in the club?**

Ladies's Winter League Captain for the C Team

**When did you become a member of HLTC?**

4 years ago

Please get in touch if you are interested in joining the Ladies winter League Teams  
[clubcaptain@heswalltennis.co.uk](mailto:clubcaptain@heswalltennis.co.uk)

## CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

After our resounding success in the Summer League in 2024, Heswall were invited to a regional Champions League finals day at Bidston Tennis Centre competing against the League Winners across the region.

Congratulations to (from left to right) Regan O'Brien, Owen Kirkham, Trevor Merrick and Tom Clark for finishing 5th beating Hoylake in a close play off!





## JUNIOR UPDATES

As we wrapped up our final Junior Friday Fun Night until spring, we reflected on an incredible year for our juniors, celebrated successes, and recognised the hard work behind the scenes. Medals were presented to U12, U14, and U16 winners and runners-up (see last issue for full finals day details), along with awards for the ball girls and boys who helped on Finals Day. We also enjoyed the festive fun, with the serious business of prizes for the best Halloween costume and best pumpkin!

Last Friday was a chance to recognise the hard work of our volunteers, especially Sue Orell, who ensures the evening runs smoothly. Sue is supported by many parents who help with the tuck shop, sign people in, and assist with pizza cooking. Their contributions make these evenings possible, and both I and the juniors are incredibly grateful.

Finally, none of it would be possible without the dedication, passion and enthusiasm from coaches Sue Davies, Owen Kirkham and Ella Hassall who are bringing the next generation through.

For the latter half of the season, our Club Captain, Neil Elsby, has encouraged adult members to play competitive doubles with juniors to help them transition into adult-level match play. This jump is significant, so a big thank you to those who have stepped up to share their experience and guidance. Our junior teams will continue competing over the winter season, so if you see them on the courts, please cheer them on!

Paul Cooper, Junior Secretary





## IT'S THAT TIME...

Mariah Carey and Michael Bublé emerging from hibernation?

A frost in the air?

that can only mean one thing...



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Instagram: @heswalllawntennisclub

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