



Ightham Tennis Club Newsletter, April 2021



Dear members,

Once again, we find ourselves emerging, blinking, from long months of Covid lockdown, and heading back to the tennis courts with relief and renewed enthusiasm...



This is your first newsletter of 2021 – because quite simply, until now there has been no news to report. Certainly nothing likely to cheer us up!

But as you all know, as of 29 March we are back in action. Your committee has been busy too, trying to **plan for the summer season**, albeit with the caveat that the Covid rules may well change from month to month and we don't have a crystal ball. That makes it difficult, and certainly at the moment we can't organise any events that entail groups of us milling around outside or inside the clubhouse. For example, it rules out our traditionally sociable one-day events like the McConnell Trophy Tournament, usually held on one of the bank holidays in May.

Please don't forget that we are still required to **observe the Covid rules** that applied prior to the winter lockdown – the "rule of six", social distancing, hand sanitising, signing in, not using the clubhouse, and all the rest of it...

Our **annual club championships** WILL be going ahead, however – they were a great success last year, and this year Jenny will be in charge of organising them. More details in a separate email being sent out at the same time as this. Do read it and get your entries in!



Now that we are playing again, the usual **weekly club sessions** on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday are also resuming. **Please note time change:** Jenny's lunchtime Wednesday session will now be from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Sam is holding 4 days of **coaching for the youngsters** next week, and the area around the court perimeter is now looking tidier – those pesky **killer brambles** that push their way through the fence every year have been cleared...

Wimbledon 2021 will, according to the LTA, be a reduced-capacity event this year. There won't be a Public Ballot. Nor will there be the usual LTA ballot through which we receive an allocation of tickets for the club based on the number of our members who are signed up as "British Tennis" members (BTMs). Understandably they are not committing to any arrangements which they may then have to unpick later. They say they "will be providing an online platform for ticket sales in June." So we shall have to wait and see exactly how that works...



One exciting development is that we have recently acquired a **tennis ball machine**, thanks to the generosity of Jean Stirk's son Andrew, who is moving house and has no further need for it. This is an impressive piece of kit and will be a useful asset to the club. It's a Spinshot Plus model.



It is not yet quite ready for you to use, because we first need to check a number of things: insurance, not least, and health and safety considerations – because it is not a toy! – so please bear with us. We also need to set up a system for booking it, which will be done in the same way as court bookings, through the ClubSpark website. We don't intend to charge you for using it – unless we later find that it is costing the club a fortune in electricity... Full details of the machine and how to operate it will be given out a little later, and a user manual can also be downloaded online. The go-to people on this are Mike (Lehan) and Maria (Gostynska), newly co-opted as members of the committee.

REQUEST: Mike and Maria are hoping there might be someone out there who has a (working) vacuum cleaner, with attachment(s), that is surplus to requirement? This would be helpful for sucking accumulated fluff and dirt out of the machine periodically and would save M&M having to cart their own vacuum over to the clubhouse each time. If you do have one, please contact them: Mike on m_lehan@hotmail.com or Maria on marysiagostynska@gmail.com.

And lastly, the **committee needs new members!** We recently emailed round to ask if there are any of you out there who might be interested in joining us in the autumn, when four of us – Colin, Alison, Sue and Gary – will all be standing down. We have so far only had one definite volunteer, though a number of other names have also been suggested. But if anyone else is interested, do please get in touch with me or another committee member.

Meanwhile, fingers crossed for a summer of good weather and uninterrupted tennis!

Alison,
for ITC committee