

## **RAMSBURY TENNIS CLUB**

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2023/24**

I am pleased to present my fourth report to the AGM as chairman of Ramsbury Tennis Club.

At last year's AGM I was able to report the award to Ramsbury Tennis Club of Wiltshire Club of the Year by Wiltshire Tennis, which was a great start to our 50th anniversary year! What a year it has been. Alongside the usual league and singles ladder competitions and coaching programme, we held successful summer and winter social events, a well attended tournament finals day, and a formal celebration of our golden jubilee in July. I am grateful to all the committee members, coaches and members whose hard work contributed to making all these activities a success. Due to the bad weather, a routine British summer hazard, the club's 50th anniversary event was held in the Memorial Hall, where memorabilia from the club's first 50 years were displayed and celebratory drinks and afternoon tea were served. We were delighted to welcome many former members and officials as well as friends from the tennis community to a most enjoyable and memorable afternoon.

Any sports club is dependent on its facilities, and our Treasurer, Ian Smith, continues to lead on this as well as finance. This year has seen the welcome installation of new LED lighting on courts 3 and 4, where the old equipment was beginning to show its age, particularly alongside the LED lighting on courts 1 and 2. It is hoped that court 5 will follow this year. We have also continued the landscaping by the new courts 6 and 7. Thank you to Ian and other committee volunteers who have repeatedly cleared leaf debris and pine needles from courts 6 and 7 to help keep them playable through the winter.

Lewis and Catherine Fletcher have continued to run a popular coaching programme for juniors and adults. Neil Little, alongside his coaching duties, took on the running of the club tournament for the first time, and finals day included a popular junior competition in the morning with a cup named in honour of our President, Ethel Hutchings, who helped found the club in 1973.

As always, I would like to thank fellow committee members for their hard work throughout the year. Four committee members are stepping down at this AGM, after varying periods of service: Charles Gardner, Fiona Bailey, Greg Phillips and Roger Henry, and we are grateful for all their contributions. I am delighted that Charles intends to continue running the Singles Ladder, which has proved to be a highly attractive part of the club offer to existing and prospective members. Following the last AGM Austin Lillywhite took over as Membership Secretary and has done a great job of dealing with the tricky renewal process and fielding enquiries from possible new members. Although she stepped down from the committee last year, Elizabeth Snelling has continued to work with Austin behind the scenes on technical queries such as difficulties with court bookings and LTA logins as well as the website, which has proved very helpful indeed. As a result, it was decided that she should return to the committee.

Members will remember that I put out a call last October for expressions of interest in joining the committee, and I am delighted to report there was a good response, even beyond the number of vacancies available. This level of enthusiasm is very gratifying and the new committee members proposed to the AGM will I am sure bring new skills and ideas to the committee's work. If you are interested in joining in the future, please do get in touch as we will always be looking for new talent.

Finally, I must pay tribute to Roger Henry, who has been on the committee for most of the club's existence, including a long stint as chairman, alongside coaching duties and most recently acting as junior co-ordinator, working closely with the coaches. His name features in the list of tournament winners on more than one occasion, and his continuing enthusiasm for tennis and for encouraging youngsters in particular is inspiring, the more so as it is now some years since he stopped playing himself. We wish him and Isobel well in his well earned retirement from the committee!

**Chris Wilson, Chairman**

**February 2024**