

## **Tennis Secretary Statement**

I'm delighted to report on another successful year for the tennis section. Our success in attracting and retaining members (with tennis membership over 1,000 with a waiting list to join) has allowed us to continue to invest in the club's facilities and keep membership fees unchanged despite inflationary pressures.

I outline below some of the improvements we have made or seen over the last year and, in response to a number of enquiries, my recommendations to you as tennis members as to who I think will best serve your interests on next year's GMC and take the club forwards, not backwards.

### **Facilities**

The seven new court surfaces installed last year have brought all the benefits we hoped – allowing us to play on a choice of best-quality, newly-laid surfaces. Courts 5 and 12-14 have been improved beyond recognition as evidenced by a near 60% increase in member bookings of court 5 and 40% for courts 12-14, compared to the same period the previous year.

We thank you for your feedback throughout the year and try to implement suggestions that we think will bring benefits to many without reducing availability to others. For example, we look forward to the imminent installation of the new Wingfield smart court system on court 6 which we feel sure will be popular with many members. The introduction of Pickleball on the current mini-court will hopefully be a fun way to try a new sport, play with squash members and make better use of the court. Lastly, the new look Wednesday club period has been well received – it's early days but hope you'll continue to support it.

In addition to ongoing small-scale improvements such as these, this year we will focus on:

1. Replacing the older floodlights with more efficient LEDs
2. Investigating possibility of adding floodlights to court 5
3. Improving clubhouse facilities
4. Fully investigating the possibility of adding a permanent cover to courts 12-14. No investment will be made without the explicit support of members and we will put together the facts, costs benefits and issues around such an investment to allow members to make an informed decision
5. Investigating further investment in reducing the club's carbon footprint (e.g. adding solar panels)

### **Team tennis**

Almost 200 members represented the club's adult teams over the last year and I would like to applaud the following teams in particular:

The women's first team played brilliantly in the summer Premier League and won the women's first division (East) this winter.

The men's first team won East division 1 last summer to win promotion back to the East Intermediate division.

In addition to the women's first team, this winter, the Mixed I, Women's III, Men's III and Mixed III teams all won their divisions. Finally, special mention to the Vets I winter team who won the first division, beating the likes of Cumberland and Hurlingham in the process. Well played all.

### **GMC Elections**

Your vote is of course your own but given some of the frustrations of the last GMC and the need for us to continue to improve, I thought it was appropriate for me to share some of my thoughts on the people most likely to help us continue to improve the club for the benefit of all members and not just a small minority or in pursuit of their own desires.

### **Treasurer**

I do not wish to go into detail over the failings (in my opinion) of the GMC last year. Suffice to say that we did not move the club forward in the way the tennis members on the committee would have liked.

Planning for current future investments has been severely hindered by opacity over the club's finances afforded by the club's accountant and systems. In addition, it became apparent during the year that the club has some serious shortcomings in its financial controls that put unnecessary risk over the club and your money.

In my view, it would be a dangerous and hugely retrograde step for the accountant to resume the joint role as treasurer, effectively overseeing his own work.

My strong recommendation is that you support **Barry Knight** who is attempting to modernise our finances in a way befitting a club with a ~£1 million turnover and which will allow the club to keep members' money safe and to pursue future significant investments.

### **Tennis Members**

This year, we welcome some interest from members outside of the current tennis committee in joining the GMC.

However, I must add my own strong endorsement for the current tennis members who are standing again for election. We, as a team, have worked together to make Coolhurst the best tennis club in North London and hope to continue that work.

Losing either Martin or Tzvetelina would be a huge loss for the club. If you are happy with what this committee has done for tennis members and would like us to continue to improve the club for the benefit of all our 1,000+ members, I encourage you to give them your support.

### **Martin Zinkin**

Martin has been on the GMC for six years and throughout that time has been a (occasionally lone) voice for improving the club for all members rather than the pursuit of personal vanity projects. His understanding of the actual day to day operations of the club is unsurpassed on the GMC. The

improvements in the way the tennis section attracts and retains members that Martin spearheaded have led directly to our current success and our ability to invest heavily in our tennis facilities.

**Tzvetelina Dimitrova**

Tzvetelina too has done a huge amount for tennis at the club and has been on the tennis committee for three years. She has done an amazing job running the club tournament for the past few years and, as women's captain, represents team tennis and women's tennis in general.

**Bar secretary**

**Adam de Winter** has been a vital member of the GMC over the past two years. His experience in managing large construction projects has been invaluable and, as we look to replacing the older floodlights, improving the clubhouse, invest in making the club greener and potentially adding a cover to courts 12-14, his skills will be more important than ever.