

AGM Meeting Sunday 27th November 2016

Co-Chairs Report (Maidstone LTC)

Produced by Georgina Noakes & Richard Dawson

Well time has flown by so fast over the last year and your two co-chairs and committee have continued to work tirelessly in driving forward your suggestions for improvement and taking forward those key actions since last year.

The Co-chairs would like to firstly say a special thanks to all the committee members for their hard work and contributions over the last year, alongside the additional support and help provided from members.

As a club and committee we have again altogether made further strides and have built upon our success over previous years to make this another successful year most notably working on implementing the community ethos following on from our lease agreement signed only last year providing more certainty to the club in its continuation for a further 27 years from now till it expires in 2043. We are so pleased that whether you are an existing or new member to the club that more of you are enjoying the clubs facilities, getting involved and playing more tennis. Some of our key achievements are set out below:

- **The new lease has achieved so much for the club enabling us to** have certainty until 2043, pay a rental fee of approximately £100 per year, build upon and deliver our indicative community use/ access programme working with partners, we have the option to build two further courts on the land directly behind the existing courts throughout anytime in the lease term (subject to demonstrable demand), opportunity to develop clubhouse and securing our times to offer play from 8.00a.m. to 22.00p.m. every day (Mon-Sun) on all courts.
- **A staggering adult club membership that is stable again with 110 members** an increase of over third more over the last 5 years. (Georgina will tell you more).
- **Our junior membership has grown significantly in the last year up to 48 with 33 of these from ages 2-12 wanting to join the club with the offer of free membership.** This has enabled many parents to come up and simply play with their children and see some excellent new talent emerging with support from our coaching team too.
- **To support this activity further the club prepared a funding application which was successfully approved to the Police Property Fund for £500.00.** As a direct result, we have purchased in the summer a series of tennis play equipment for juniors from ages 3-12 which includes tennis nets, racquets, the right balls and funny tennis game equipment to engage children more to enjoy playing. The equipment is available for FREE for any members and the public to come and make use of and are stored in the clubs shed – with keys within the clubhouse – so please do make use of them.
- **The SETennis coaching team have jointly been working with Maidstone LTC** to ensure a programme of activity throughout the year. Highlights included the superbly organised 'Maidstone's Got Talent - Tennis Open Day' held end of March drawing in over 70+ children and their families from across Maidstone and surrounding areas. This was the same number as previous years some of whom have gone on to join the club and taken up coaching. Again we had the local KM press in attendance and were in the KM paper (see club noticeboard).
- **MLTC supported the Schools Festival** event with a number of local schools in the Maidstone and District surrounding area taking part on 17th may at our club to be the schools champion for the Maidstone area. The winning school Egerton School then represented Maidstone in the regional area competition. The event was co-ordinated by Julian our coach, working closely with Maidstone BC Tony Baptiste (Schools Co-ordinator) and we also worked on an agreed local risk assessment. Again we had the local KM press in attendance and were in the KM paper (see club noticeboard).
- **Our local Palace Wood School were engaged with again this year and we were able to arrange for the pupils** to come to the courts throughout the summer period over a number of weekdays with the Head teacher. These sessions were part of their PE curriculum and were brilliantly organised by Julian. This has

been a joint effort between MLTC, SETennis and Palace Wood School along with what we think was a growing pupil pressure as many local children have recently joined the club as junior members. We hope that this stronger link and emphasis from the school on sport and play will continue to be developed over the coming year and beyond. We hope that other local schools that we are engaging with (including West Borough and Jubilee to name a few) will again be able to visit us as before in 2017 to try their hand at tennis.

- **Of course coaching to improve members play** continues with club/social/beginner players, special needs group, youth and a schools and community programme, alongside further attendance at promotions and events. A new team coaching session has recently started in Nov on Monday nights @ Penenden Heath our sister courts from 7p.m to 8.30p.m. to enable team players to learn exercises and drills in playing doubles team, matches better. There are many other coaching sessions available throughout the week at the club so please see noticeboard or website for details.
- **Listening to your views and taking action.** The committee have continued to be available, open in its communication and respond quickly and efficiently to enquiries from members, the public and organisational groups and we equally want to thank our members for their offers of contribution. Again if there are any comments from members throughout the year just raise these with club committee members and we will discuss at our regular bi-monthly meetings so we know what we are doing right, but also what needs doing (hopefully with your help too). We would like to cite here that we continue to offer an initiation process for all new members which involves being supported by one of three colleagues to the club (Georgina Noakes, Antonia Charalambous and Cantor Mocke); more social and community activities have been organised for members and the public (including American Tournaments); club etiquette policy has been updated, attracting more juniors and lady members being achieved; continue to enable public to play and facilitate the collection of fees; addressing maintenance matters; feeding in of quality balls for general club play and support to the local singles box leagues competition in Maidstone with SETennis.
- **A 7th successful Club tournament and FINALS DAY were delivered** with over half our adult club members playing in the tournament, alongside very promising juniors. A well deserved thank you to Steve Turner for leading and co-ordinating the tournament with great support on the day from Roger Bowman for his BBQ skills! And of course congratulations to all the winners and to all for taking part and enjoying the tournament again.
- **From the outside, the club has been further recognised** with the achievements of our players with successes in local tournament competitions with Herve Zillioz winning the new Maidstone wide Singles Ladder competition organised by SETennis and supported by MLTC. Andy Heath and his mum in law won the mixed doubles Benenden Tournament and Herve Zillioz and Katharine Weaver reached the semi-finals. Andy Palin and Steve Turner reached the semi-finals of the Over's....regional competition.
- **The club has seen more teams entered in the Kent and Maidstone Leagues with further successful achievements** with teams doing very well again in both leagues and winning several division titles in the winter and summer leagues, alongside the AEGEON leagues (and James will tell you more) - well done again to all involved and keep up the enjoyment and achievement next year.
- **The new Social tennis format has now been bedded in for over two years now** and it seems to all be working well with many having more fun and enjoyment. Over the last year we have received many positive responses saying it is far more fun with everyone mixing in and playing with all. It works well with larger numbers and leads to less wastage of time between games. For a small number of player's it really only needs to be used for the first/second swap. Thanks again for your co-operation. only needs to be used for the first/second swap. Thanks again for your co-operation. Speaking to members of other clubs we seem to have many more people involved in social sessions than they do!!

- **We have also delivered several American Tournament events – thanks to Antonia for organising these**, which have been immense fun and if you haven't played in these do come along and try it out. It's a really good mix of all standards of players and you will have a great time enjoying playing tennis and chatting with friends.

- **We have continued to undertake vital maintenance improvements to the courts and clubhouse.** We have had the hedgerow cut along all four courts to smarten this up and allow more light to get to the courts. The MBC Parks and Leisure Dept, kindly arranged the pruning of the overhanging trees beside courts to lessen the damage caused to the court surfaces by the debris. All courts have also had moss treatment undertaken in Nov 2015 and this provided increased grip to the courts. This year we have purchased a new container shed which looks great and has helped to store away maintenance / garden tools, chairs, alongside the new tennis equipment to free up space in the clubhouse – we think this is a great addition and we hope you do too. Thanks also to Tui who provided two x quality benches to the club which have been positioned on court 1 – her kind donation and thanks to the club committee and all members has been recognised on the plaques – there are now more members wanting to take a break and sit on the benches than play! Moreover, this year we have had to repair three floodlights – including replacing a fuses and a starter motor. We cannot thank especially Mike and also Peter enough for all they do at the courts clearing and tidying being available to help with contractors throughout the year for which you are able to be safe and enjoy your tennis. This may go unnoticed by others but certainly not by the club committee – so again thank you for all you do for us. The back fence of court 1 has had new green netting placed up to shield the reflection of the sun coming off the back of the white panels on the pre-school, which has done the trick and the communication noticeboard on the back of court 1 has been repaired and improved – however it does seem to be getting damaged frequently so please do report to us and we will look to consider further alternatives.

- **The clubhouse has been kept tidier by members** and thanks must go to all of you who help with this by tidying up, emptying the bins and taking rubbish away to dispose of it. Please can all members help out here - just taking your food and drinks waste away with you when you leave makes a difference - as they say 'every little helps'. There is the bin by the field as you walk back to the car park that can take all your food peelings. Thanks to Dick for donating the Dyson Hoover.

- **Club website continues to be updated with current news, an honours board, a fundraising page** - this site is wonderful and a massive thanks must be extended to David Vale who has been updating the website regularly with communications and match results. Just a reminder to members we have also added a fundraising page onto the website and have with just 23 members registered raised since the beginning of January 2015 - £455.00 – just think of what more we could do if more of our members joined. Let us know if you would like to know more details on how to sign up to easyfundraising site (all is on our website too). We know the website is not only of value to club members but important for the general public - essentially encouraging new members to join (as they tell us this) - so we cannot say enough about how great this is - thank you.

- **We have also re-registered the club under the CASC (Community Amateur Sports Club)** our reference number is CH6636 and this provides tax relief benefits mainly on Gift Aid and of course any major donations we may receive TODAY or in the future – so don't be shy we will be happy to take a cheque from you....

- **Finally, on our social club activities** – The committee will be organising a 4th Quiz night on Saturday Saturday 25th February 2017 and we hope this will be as much success as previous year and raise further funds for the club with over 100+ people. Further information will come out but please start pulling together your teams asap and come and have a great time and support your club. The club are looking to organise a Xmas and/or New Years Blues get together drink and we will let you know nearer the time if you would like to join us.

All the club committee and members would especially like to pay thanks to Joe Milner and Steve Turner. Joe has made valid contributions over the recent years on the committee, especially supporting the juniors in the club and working with SETennis on establishing the singles ladder. On Steve, he has made great

contributions to the committee with his ideas and enthusiasm and more recently help in running the clubs annual tournament this year.

We would also like to pay recognition to our South East Tennis (SET) coaching team of Julian, Alex, Joe and now Sam who have been such a delight to work with as they have been so friendly and approachable to meeting our needs and improving our tennis coaching offer at the club, alongside co-ordinating several events. We thank you so much for your dedication and commitment in all weathers delivering the coaching, and of course reaching out into the schools to deliver taster sessions and running school clubs in conjunction with the clubs community tennis offer.

For those of you that haven't yet been to the coaching we would want more of you to come along and see for yourselves and get the benefit from the coaches skills at very reasonable rates. Those that have, have really found their play has improved with new strokes, along with a few new aches and pains in places where we didn't think you could get them!

As far our club teams go a real big thank you - must go out to all those that have taken part and to the captains (and sometimes sub-captains) for their organisation and the hospitality shown to our visitors. I can't tell you how much our club is appreciated and seen to be welcoming as I hear these responses from the clubs we visit. Thanks also to James for organising or should we say re-organising the fixtures!

We would also like to encourage more members to turn up to the sessions reserved for members to play socially at 10am on Mon. Wed. Fri. and Sunday mornings. Thursday evening from 7pm onwards is also reserved for members in the same way – come on – come down and enjoy a hit in the evening especially in the winter when there is less matches and more time to play.

We now have a Whatsapp group if you are interested in organising your own friendly singles or doubles matches- text Chris Brickwood on 07516112282 if you would like to join.

So looking onto the future over the next year the committee's key principles and tasks include the following:

- (i) To implement and deliver on the requirements of our new 28 year lease and commence initial investigations into the future options and outline costs available to enable the club to sustain and grow;
- (ii) To ensure we welcome & increase the number of members to the club (juniors and adults) and maintain our effective communications in all forms with all our members;
- (iii) To ensure we make suitable repairs to the clubs facilities and address members items on improvements to the club;
- (iv) To support the development and promotion of the coaching programme for members, schools and community activities working jointly with SETennis increasing the promotional tools and communication of the clubs activities;
- (v) To continue to be a part of the local community and improve our links within it by delivering on our 'community use' programme jointly with Maidstone Borough Council, SETennis and other local partners;
- (vi) To complete the new LTA registration for Tennis Clubmark status enabling access to info, funding etc;
- (vii) To develop our social tennis programme and events and fundraising capacity to support our above priorities to continue to grow the club and its offering.