



Chair's Report for AGM, 5th March 2025

Dear members

I'm pleased to present my first annual report as chair. The year has flown by, and it has been a successful year on many fronts. I hope you have all enjoyed your tennis as much as I have!

Membership and visitors

The club continues to steadily grow. Adult membership currently stands at 110, a 10% increase on last year, whilst junior membership has grown to 51, in large part due to the success of the coaching programme (more on that below).

We continue to welcome occasional visitors and were delighted to host a group of Italian students in July. Those who saw them on court were extremely impressed by the standard of play and we understand they enjoyed a week of tennis and Peak District adventure.

We have made improvements to our communication to members with the introduction of the WhatsApp Community and sub-groups. The Community does seem to be successful with 74 members currently. Whilst we continue to send out all important information by e-mail, we would encourage members to be part of the Community if they are able. We have also introduced the newsletter, which we hope members have enjoyed.

Big thanks to our membership secretary Sue Turnbull for keeping on top of the membership lists and welcoming new members and visitors.

Club sessions and tournaments

Club sessions have run on Saturday mornings and Monday evenings and have been well attended all year, with keen people turning out in the dodgiest of weather conditions! Saturdays are pretty much self-running but massive thanks to Liz and Richard Blyth for once again running the Monday night sessions. The success of these has been down to people knowing that there will always be someone down there to play. Liz and Richard have volunteered to continue running the sessions this season but will be asking for occasional cover on weeks when they are away – so please volunteer if you can.

We also ran a couple of enjoyable social tournaments in the summer. It was great to see a range of members who might not usually get to play together pair up and have some fun but competitive games. Sadly, the Buxton weather forced the cancellation of the Autumn tournament twice - but undeterred we will try again next year!

Coaching

It has been wonderful to have consistent, high-quality coaching for both juniors and adults from Pete Ledbetter of Matchpoint. Pete is enthusiastic about developing the club and a number of members have taken advantage of the coaching and cardio sessions on offer. We will be continuing with Pete this season and hope to develop the coaching offer further. Do please let us know if you have ideas about the type of coaching you would most benefit from.

Teams

We are delighted to have a growing pool of members keen to play matches and the club have been represented in a number of leagues this season.

In the summer leagues the Men's team played their first season in Division 1, finishing a very credible 6th out of 10 teams, ensuring they will stay up for the coming season. Many thanks are due to Andy Storer, who has captained and built up the men's team for many years, bringing in new members to ensure we have been able to field such a quality team. Andy is now passing the captain's baton onto Jordan Grocott who will lead the team this season. The standard of play in Division 1 is very high and the matches well worth watching so do pop down and spectate/support the team for home matches.

The Ladies team played some very competitive matches in Division 3 finishing 8th out of 10 teams, again ensuring they will keep their place in the division for this season. Captain, Sally Gould has indicated that she will be happy to continue this year.

In order to accommodate the growing number of members keen to play matches at the right level for them, we trialled a new approach to the Late Summer Leagues, entering teams in the men's and ladies' leagues, alongside the usual Saturday Mixed team. The new teams began in the bottom divisions as per the rules. The ladies' team, captained by Sally Gould with help from Liz Blyth, showed their promise, finishing second and earning promotion for this season. The men's team, captained by Chris Grubb and Matt Barlow, also made a strong showing, finishing 6th out of 12 teams.

Unfortunately, we did then struggle to put out three pairs at the level required for the Saturday Mixed and had to concede a number of matches, meaning we will be relegated this season.

In light of this, we will need to think carefully this season about what combination of Late Summer league teams will allow as many players as possible to compete at the level they wish, whilst being sustainable in terms of putting out teams.

Finally, the Winter League - we are currently sitting top of division 6 with one match remaining (to be played on 9th March). We hope to finish top of the division however, we are assured of promotion to division 5. Player availability has been very good this year with plenty of ladies and some additional men. Liz is happy to captain again next year if needed.

Many thanks to all who have captained, played and supported this year.

Club Maintenance and Development

We began the year by giving the court surrounds a bit of a spring clean, with benches painted and fixed, flower tubs planted and holes in the fencing temporarily repaired. Over the season, the courts have been moss-killed, weeds have been weeded and leaves brushed away. Many thanks to all those who turned out to show their club some love. We have a Working Parties group in the WhatsApp community which has helped with mustering people when needed – please do think about joining the group if you could spare some time to help.

Our courts are now 24 years old and in need of resurfacing – something the club has been saving for. Our fencing is also deteriorating. In November we applied for a SUEZ grant to help with the cost of resurfacing, re-fencing and improving drainage from the car parking area. Unfortunately, we were not successful on this occasion, but as we do have sufficient reserves set aside for resurfacing and drainage only, the committee will be making recommendations for moving forward with this at this AGM.

A small pavilion by the courts remains an aspiration for the club. In the meantime, the Cricket Club are moving forwards with their plans for extending the shared Pavilion and have begun fundraising.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to the committee for their support throughout the year, to everyone who has volunteered in any way and to all the members for making the club what it is. Here's to the 2025/26 season!

Carol Taylor

Chair