

CLTC Chairman's AGM address, 24th November 2021

What a difference a year makes! That was my opening remark at last year's Zoom AGM and I can't think of a better opening line to begin my address this year either. For the second year running the world has continued to change dramatically and inevitably the knock on has been seen everywhere, our club included. I don't want to dwell too much on the pandemic but I do need to talk about the most significant matters affecting the club.

However first of all I want to thank all of you here tonight for supporting the committee by coming to the AGM. It is really important to the whole of the committee that you have come to the club to demonstrate your interest and support for the club, thank you. Can I also thank the whole committee for the work they do throughout the year? Remember we are a members club and all of the committee are volunteers as well as passionate tennis players.

On the face of it we do appear to be coming out of the darkest of times when we experienced lock downs, club closure, isolation, strict social distancing, masks and testing. We are grateful to members for their tolerance and understanding during those times. I guess we are now in a period of adjustment to the Covid world and learning how to restart our lives in this new paradigm.

So what about the significant events, of the past twelve months? Firstly, I am proud of how members have supported each other and returned to the club in increased numbers and the amount of tennis now being played is wonderful to see. Indeed our membership is at its highest for many years and I want to welcome the 150 new members that have joined the club since the beginning of the pandemic. Thanks for joining and I hope you really enjoy playing tennis at this wonderful club.

There has been very little inter club competitive tennis over the past year, but that has given the opportunity

to provide lots of intra club tennis activities. As he has mentioned, John has worked really hard with introducing the Scala leagues, running the Club Championships, tournaments, in particular the CLTC open in August, and developing other one off events. He also set up new modified weekly Men's and Ladies nights and the Friday Mix-in. These have been attended in record numbers and the demand still high despite the autumnal conditions, finishing last Friday on an incredibly mild evening with one of Marcia's popular not so mild curries!

Rob has already highlighted the fact that we have enjoyed receiving grants from the government of £45,000. What he didn't say is that it was his astute and prompt actions that secured these grants. Once again thank you for all the work you do for and on behalf of the club. As a result of our current financial position we are confident enough to re-instate the floodlight project on courts 5-7 and this will be happening in July 2022.

Looking ahead now and what do I see. Firstly I am pleased the inter club Winter leagues have started and the new Scala singles leagues and I am very hopeful the full range of summer leagues will follow in the Spring. Competitive tennis is so important to the club and I want to see us get back to winning as many matches and divisions as possible.

On the financial front I see a period of rising costs. Utility bills, wages, contracts and inflationary pressures in general will all put pressure on our cost base. As a result we will need to carefully review our entire budget including subscription levels to ensure we can keep the court and clubhouse facilities in prime condition. The committee will be discussing the budget in detail immediately after Christmas.

Finally on the way ahead, I think we all would agree that the future is less predictable than we once thought it was. As a result I can assure you that the committee will be careful, vigilant guardians of the club and continue to put playing tennis at the centre

of all our decisions. I also ask that every single member of the club plays their part in ensuring the club works as effectively as possible. There is so much we can all do, from using the court booking system properly, to turning up at the right time for matches, to sweeping the courts, including the lines and keeping a friendly welcome for everyone in the club.

Finally, finally I want to talk briefly about John. He is now in his twentieth year as a coach here and tenth year as Head Coach and General Manager of the club. He accepted his enhanced role at a time of significant uncertainty within the club. Since then he and Rob in particular have steered a very successful course in taking the club from strength to strength in so many ways. Thank you John.

If we were a Premier league football club and John was the manager he would have a very high buyout fee against his name to stop any poaching.

Unfortunately for John he isn't a football manager, but

we will fight to keep him! Seriously though we do value him and this year we have entered him into the LTA/TW Official of the year awards, which will be announced at the end of January.

Thank you for listening and let's all hope for a calmer tennis centred twelve months ahead.