

Tennis in Warborough and Shillingford

SWATA Annual Report for Parish Council Meeting 3 April 2024 (and for Village Website)

Overview

At our AGM last month we reviewed our situation over 2023 and I was pleased to report that following the end of pandemic restrictions, Village tennis is thriving.

However, there is definitely scope for greater usage of our excellent facilities. At the AGM we agreed several actions to get more people out on to the courts.

Membership

Membership has increased to over 40 families and over 15 single members, with several members new to the Village, and we are hugely grateful to our Membership Secretary Fiona Reay, supported by Jax Ings-Chambers. The Membership Year now runs from June to June and in 2023 Subscriptions remained at £50 p.a per Family and £25 for Singles with a much-reduced rate of £10 for Juniors. Payment can now be made online and via the Club Spark system which is much easier. At the AGM we agreed to make a small increase for 2024 to reflect increased running costs and give a better balance between Single and Family members. So, for June 2024 renewals subscriptions will be £55 for Family membership and £30 for Single - still excellent value. Juniors remain at £10.

Finances

These remain sound, thanks to our Treasurer, Lesley Munro-Faure who retired in January and Paul Jackson has kindly agreed to take over the role. Our thanks go to Lesley for her massive contribution over many years, indeed since the beginning of SWATA and to Paul for stepping into her shoes.

In outline, membership income was around £2,000 and although day to day expenses are low we do need to provide a sinking fund for eventual court renewal and major works such as court cleaning and painting. These amounted to some £4,000 in 2023 and our sinking fund now stands at some £25,000 which is adequate but not excessive given the rising cost of court replacement.

Website and Booking system

We have set up a new website and booking system, with many thanks to Jax Ings-Chambers, through Club Spark <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/SWATA>. This is a valuable addition to our communication of SWATA to everyone in the Village who might be interested in playing tennis.

Courts and surrounds

Our courts remain in excellent condition thanks to considerable efforts by Charles Humphries and the repainting has been a great success.

We are grateful to the Council for the increased maintenance of the surrounding area and also to Tom de Winton for tackling the bramble patch between the hedge and the west end of the courts. We are assured that the Council intends to take on regular maintenance of this area which is a great relief.

We are always keen to see more people playing and enjoying this great facility and with the cricket nets nearby there is a real buzz around the area. The new picnic table and table tennis are very welcome.

We agreed at the AGM that we could make some further improvements by the addition of sight screens to improve the playing experience and also a new notice board to give further information to existing and potential new players. When we have all the information we shall of course consult with the Council on detailed implementation.

Coaching

Thanks to Fiona Reay, Emily Bain and Emma Keene we established in 2023 an excellent coaching programme with Chais Sports, run by two local coaches. The programme included adult courses on Fridays and Saturdays and two children's courses on Saturday. Although well attended initially we felt that this may not be the best formula for the longer term and thanks to the efforts of Emily Bain we have now agreed a new arrangement with the two coaches under which they will be available to SWATA members to organise individual or small group sessions which fit better with members requirements. Importantly we have arranged a Family Open Day afternoon with the coaches on Sunday afternoon 12 May. A copy of the flyer for this is attached to this report and we look forward to seeing lots of families and having a great afternoon. The flyer has been advertised within the Village, on the Village email and with thanks to the School, a copy placed in all school bags.

Safeguarding and Diversity and Inclusion

As previously reported, in accordance with best practice and LTA requirements SWATA has adopted policies covering Safeguarding and Diversity and Inclusion. Elaine Drury is our Welfare Officer and the first point of contact for any issues arising. We have been audited by the LTA Safeguarding team and we were pleased that not only did we 'pass' but the team noted that *'SWATA has worked hard to ensure that safeguarding is promoted with members and the local community'*. The policies may be viewed on the website and are publicised on a Notice on the Courts.

Social and Fundraising

Another successful Oktoberfest was enjoyed last year by a full house in the Greet Hall and raised around £3000, to be shared with WSCC. With many thanks in particular to Fiona Reay. We are discussing possible events for the coming year and welcome any suggestions and offers of help.

SWATA Secretary

Sadly, Susie Mee, who has been our brilliant Secretary since the beginning of SWATA, has decided now is the time for someone else to take up the pen. We are hugely grateful to Susie.

If anyone feels that they could take on this role, please let me know.

Tim Martin, Chair SWATA