

CHELMSFORD SPORTS CLUB

Report for Chelmsford Hockey Club AGM, 30th June 2021

Another very disjointed year for the Sports Club given the ongoing situation with Covid-19, but a lot has been happening in the background.

On a personnel note there have been several, quite significant, changes to the Sports Club Committee at the recent AGM, with long serving members Gill Hickman (Chairman) and Brian Poole (Treasurer) stepping down after many (many) years of service – something like 40 years between them. Their input and contribution has been invaluable and the Sports Club, and the two members clubs, are very much in their debt. Currently the committee is without a Chairman, with hockey club reps filling the other three positions – Jack Meer (Treasurer), Adrian Tuff (Secretary) and Nick Long (Facilities Manager). However, we are still keen on adding an extra person to our hockey club reps alongside Rob Nourse.

After a halting start due to the pandemic, cricket did eventually get underway in mid July 2020, and a half-season was completed by Autumn. Colts' cricket was limited but it was impossible to run the usual Friday training sessions due to restrictions, but age group teams managed to play some cricket. Once it became possible, the Committee worked hard to enable matches to be played at short notice and the cricket club were able to run the bar on Saturdays which led to a great social atmosphere in the Clubhouse despite the restrictions.

The hockey season did start on time in September, however on 5th December 2020 everything ground to a halt. Following several false starts in March, England Hockey and its affiliate leagues declared the season null and void. Unfortunately throughout this period the hockey club have been unable to utilise the clubhouse and the bar, so for all intents and purpose the bar has been closed from September 2020 to May 2021, including the cancelling of the annual beer festival as well as the annual dinners and regular social evenings.

This includes the further delay to the Zevenbergen junior tour, leading to a likely two-year gap and to be started up again in 2022 with Chelmsford as hosts.

David Gore has continued as hockey club bar manager and has done a fantastic job over the hockey season in maintaining the facilities, including regular bar and pipe cleaning. Unfortunately however the cricket club have been unable to identify a designated bar manager and are allocating the various roles to different people, albeit with limited success for all roles, they are also not using the kegs and pumps in favour of bottles beers and lagers.

Since April cricket has started up again (weather permitting) and with reduced restrictions there is now some use being made of the bar and the clubhouse, and we are looking forward to the rules relaxing further to allow both clubs to utilise the bar more regularly and fully.

During the pandemic the Sports Club, with many thanks to cricket club member Andrew Shepherd for organising, were successful in gaining a number of Covid-19 grants from the council. The main use of these has been to refurbish the gents and ladies' toilets in the clubhouse. These were finished in late May and look very smart indeed with the cost being split between the three clubs. At the same time the cricket club were keen to undertake the refurbishment of the clubhouse, which they

were happy to fund, which included plastering, painting as well as new curtains. Apart from hanging a couple of remaining curtains all this work has also been completed.

Following recent work to fix the roof, refurbish the toilets and clubhouse area, we are also looking to install a new fire alarm system (at the council's insistence), organise an external community defibrillator and to provide new cooking facilities within the tea rooms kitchen (as the current gas cooker is out of use). Aside from these developments we are also engaging with the council around extending and expanding the lease, that will potentially allow us to offer external clubhouse bookings – which we are not allowed to do now. Watch this space.

Thanks go, as usual, to Martin and Shane for keeping the grounds in excellent condition. Thanks also to the many club members who gave their time and expertise.

As we have somewhat of a new look committee we are looking at ways to make the Sports Club more interactive and accessible to all members, so be aware that we may be issuing surveys in due course about the facilities, the bar and anything else we can think of. We want to increase the awareness of what the Sports Club do, and to make the decisions and future thinking of the committee more transparent – and open to challenge and discussion.

On a final note I can't finish without mentioning the sad passing of a true Cricket Club gentleman, Bob Shortman. Bob passed away peacefully on 4th May and will be missed by everyone not only in both clubs, but across the local cricketing community where he had such influence and respect. With the pandemic still affecting what we can all do, both clubs are in discussions within families around the appropriate ways to mark and remember both Bob's life, as well as something for Spencer.

Adrian Tuff
Chelmsford Sports Club - Secretary