

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2016

Dear Members

This has been a very eventful year for me, returning to the Club after 25 years and being asked to take over the Chairmanship when the Manager and Chairman relinquished their posts. I would like to thank Will and Jen for all their efforts and hard work. So this is my first tennis AGM in charge and hopefully with a little help from my friends it will all be fine and we will get through it. I confess that I have found it increasingly difficult in recent months to combine my duties at the club and with trying to establish a new career at the same time. Hopefully neither has suffered too much.

At this point I would particularly like to take the opportunity of thanking Steve and Alan for helping me with their wealth of knowledge and experience and for undertaking a great deal of the administrative load from me. Also, I would like to thank Mark and Sarah who stepped in as Treasurer and Membership Secretary and Verity for adapting to the changing systems that were introduced last year. My thanks also to Nicola, Annie and Julie Hulett (who has returned to take the Minutes) and to newcomers Andy Copestick and Di Kellett. They have all done a great job on a daily basis.

Hopefully you will have studied the Annual Accounts and I am afraid they are not something to be happy about, particularly when one refers back two years ago (2013) when the turnover was £160K. I will let Mark comment in detail on the figures in his Report but patently the challenge for us is to regain and improve the court usage figures that were lost last year and that were reflected in the court fees.

You will recall that I sent out a Newsletter recently to keep you up to date with events, so a great deal of this Report reflects much that has been said before. I made the point stressing the difficulty of running a club of this size and using volunteers with their busy lives. It is one thing having a Committee structure in a small traditional club like many of those in Plymouth and the South Hams, but quite another for a Club like us with expensive facilities and large overheads and staffing issues etc which puts us in the same bracket as a typical Leisure Centre. Given this we would be very pleased to have potential new committee members volunteering.

Furthermore, I referred to the future Management and Strategy of the Club which we will discuss in more detail under item 9 of the Agenda. There is no question that we are at a critical milestone in the Club's history, where very difficult decisions must be made and it just happens to coincide with our landmark 50th Anniversary next year.

Due to the immediate day to day difficulties we are experiencing the Committee has made a decision in conjunction with the LTA to appoint TennisMad to oversee much of the administrative duties and staffing and we have convinced the LTA to fund this new management initiative.

We never like to see Members leave, especially Alan Strowger who is our longest serving founder member. He is our Company Secretary and Honorary Vice President and he has decided to move away from Modbury to live in London. Having returned to Devon from London myself, I find it difficult to understand! We could have done a house swap Alan. This is a sad occasion for the Club as Alan has been enormously influential throughout his time at the club giving valuable legal advice for nearly 50 years, his contribution to the Club is immeasurable. Thank you Alan for everything you have done and we wish you and Linda all the very best for the future.

I would also like to repeat my thanks to Paul and Ben for all their hard work in decorating the Clubhouse and for basically going the extra mile on a daily basis. They have had sterling support and assistance from juniors and their parents and also thanks to Ben Semmence for continuing his grass cutting duties.

On a sad note two of our Country Members died during the past year. Alec Willson who bravely suffered cancer for many years and John Crownshaw died suddenly from cancer at a comparatively young age. Both were extrovert characters who lifted the spirit of the Club during the Club Sessions they attended.

Finally, my thanks to our Team Captains, Sarah Owen, Duncan Matthews and Mike O'Shaughnessy, who have all steered their teams to a very bright start to the season. Let's hope we finish on a high note. That is the end of my report. Have a great season and you know where my door is!!

Dominic Hall - Chairman