

Chairman's Report for 2017 AGM Ryde Lawn Croquet & Tennis Club

The most momentous event of 2016 was the award of a grant to enlarge and refurbish the clubhouse. After an unsuccessful bid to Sport England in 2015, the Management Committee agreed to resubmit the bid which was to extend and modernise the clubhouse and construct a chalet behind court three. We received confirmation in May 2016 that our resubmission had been successful and the full amount for estimated costs had been awarded.

I would like to thank again all the people who put so much work into the preparation required before this project could get underway. Drawing up plans, canvassing members' opinions, collecting data, taking photos and completing the forms. All your time and effort is very much appreciated.

However, once we had been given the grant, it soon became obvious that the hard work was only just beginning! The proposal was to extend and modernise the existing clubhouse by a further 22 square metres, provide a fully glazed new frontage and a patio area. Full accessibility to the building and its facilities and viewing of lawns and courts would be significantly enhanced.

The planned prefabricated chalet was to provide a viewing area for visiting tennis teams, coaches' storage facilities and a dedicated tournament office.

After many weeks of consultation and planning, eventually we were ready to obtain tenders from local builders, and we were delighted when one of our own members, Rick Spink, was awarded the contract.

Rick and his team started on site on December 5th 2016 and have worked hard to reach the stage we are at now, with completion anticipated by the beginning of May.

Inevitably some changes and compromises have been necessary. Let me assure you that no decisions have been made, or plans altered, without a lot of discussion along the way. Some unexpected difficulties arose, amongst which, the roof was found to have significant tile slippage with many tiles having become brittle through age. It was obviously sensible to replace this section of the roof whilst access was relatively easy before the extension was completed, but poor weather caused delays which had a knock-on effect in other areas.

The "Clockhouse" chalet was constructed by members over the autumn and early winter and I think you will agree that the result is outstanding. So many people have put in time and effort on both the Clockhouse and the Clubhouse that it would be impossible to mention them all by name, but I feel that Richard Hutchins must be acknowledged as the driving force behind both our original application and the ongoing administration and organisation required over the past six months. The club owes him a huge vote of thanks.

We are sad to have lost a number of long standing club members this year, in particular Richard Harris and Malcolm Keith, both of whom had served on the Management Committee and put in many hours of work on behalf of the club. We offer our condolences to their families.

You will have seen from the AGM papers that there is a proposed change in the Management Committee structure with Maintenance now being split into two sections, so that what amounts to quite a heavy load can be more easily shared. The Development Committee will no longer exist as such, but when a project for improving the club is identified as desirable by the Management Committee, a small subcommittee will be formed of members with the necessary expertise to enable that particular project to be planned and carried through.

I will just mention a couple of new ways that members can help to raise funds for the club, with no extra cost to themselves. If you are planning to purchase an item or book a holiday on line, go first to the Easyfundraising website and check if the retailer or travel agent you have chosen or a similar one takes part in the scheme. If you then follow the appropriate link, having identified Ryde Lawn as your chosen recipient, any purchase you then make will produce a small donation to the club from the retailer, via Easyfundraising.

We now also have an online shop with an Island firm - the Big Wight T Shirt Company. A range of clothing in different colours with the club logo and a variety of other extra options is now available and if purchases are made using our link, the club will receive credit for each item bought.

Finally, I would like to thank all of those who have managed to come tonight. It is important that members are given the opportunity to have a say in the management and running of the club and the AGM is one of the best opportunities for them to do this.

Pamela Sim

26th March 2017