

Great Ayton Tennis Club

Trustees Report to Charity Commission for 2021

The objects of the CIO Great Ayton Tennis Club are the promotion of community participation in healthy recreation in particular by the provision of facilities for the playing of tennis.

In our 2020 report we set out our goals for 2021, subject to Covid-19 on going restrictions, all of which have been achieved, as follows, with more details appended.

- (1) That all members of the Club (Juniors and Adults) should receive regular coaching particularly new members: New coaching team for the youngest "Tots Tennis" (5 and under) to the oldest "Walking Tennis" plus more keep fit tennis classes ("Cardio" tennis). We expanded our coaching team to provide coaching options all week (previously 1 evening and Sunday morning) and put in place Coaching Contracts for 3 coaches.
- (2) The Trustees planned to keep subscriptions affordable and achieve both good membership retention and membership growth in 2021: Membership reached an all-time record of approx. 300 (including honourees), up from 200 (33% Juniors in both cases).
- (3) The Club would provide more internal competitions and social tournaments: e.g. successful floodlit internal Winter mixed competition introduced, ensuring full use of new floodlighting on courts 4,5.
- (4) The Club aimed to field at least 9 teams in the Cleveland League (achieved) and to successfully conclude our participation in the National Winter League for men (our NWL team was ranked in the top 38 clubs in country before they had to withdraw). 3 teams in the Cleveland League won promotion to higher divisions (Ladies C, Mens B & C teams). Several juniors are now playing in the senior's teams.
- (5) That the Club should continue to plan for more all year-round tennis and inclusive tennis. Planning consent obtained for floodlighting our remaining 3 unlit courts. First wheelchair users in our history coached by recruiting disability qualified level 4 coach, Jen Barron.
- (6) The Trustees undertook regular LTA Healthchecks as a guide to self-improvement and as most clubs continually seeks volunteers to become Trustees and take on the key roles such as Club Secretary.

The above was partly enabled by the Club successfully applying for £5000 grant funding from the Hambleton District Council Communities "Making a Difference" Fund: the objective to increase the amount and standard of tennis playing with enhanced promotion and including the provision of free coaching lessons by Jen Barron. This aimed to both help her to get established and earn a living and provide activities the club has not previously been able to offer. This included providing an LTA Youth Start programme, Camps open to all Junior Members and non-member friends of our Juniors over the half term holidays, disability coaching and 4 weeks of free coaching lessons for all members who wanted them.

As a result of our new coach being trained in disability coaching the Club has offered wheelchair tennis for the first time in our history. The Club now has the challenge of improving access to our facilities planned for late '22 / early '23. She has also introduced walking tennis for those elderly members who thought their tennis days were over and Tots tennis for those previously considered too young / small. One of our Junior members with a walking disability was helped by Club members contributions to a Crowdfunding fund set up by her family for a life changing operation which we hope will result in her coming back to tennis.

The Club was able to provide coaching and playing opportunities to Joel Gibson (former U16 NE England Juniors singles champion) when the indoor courts at the Sunderland Puma Tennis Centre were unavailable due to Covid restrictions. His level 5 coach came from Sunderland to coach him and was available to the Mens 1st team - high-quality spectator tennis was enjoyed by the members. He is on a path to professional tennis playing at the SotoTennis Academy in Spain.

In general, we believe the Club membership numbers increased in 2021 due to a variety of factors (a) the Club keeping fees low, (b) increased promotion, (c) providing incentives and new tennis playing activities, (d) tennis being automatically socially distanced and the public looking for healthy activities to keep fit whilst other activities (going to cinema, pub etc) were restricted, due to Covid-19.

In Oct 2020 a new initiative was identified to cater for the oldest generation and for people on shifts needing daytime play. A tennis and coffee morning drop-in on Thursdays was introduced in 2021 and quickly reached 12 regular members and has been growing since. Particularly attractive to newly retired members, some are long serving, including former high achievers and committee members in their day, who have formed groups of similar ability wanting company, a friendly game and a chat afterwards. These members are just as important to the Club as the young high ability members.

The financial status of the Club is reasonably healthy with reserves of £15,440. There are several non-recurring income and expenditure items not typical of a "normal" year as can be seen in the supplied Audited Accounts for 2021. The main source of income is membership subscription fees (£15,440). The use of the new floodlights (£982 income excludes electricity cost) is by pre-purchased tokens at £6 / hour (£4 / hour for coaching) that is a new income source. Coaching contracts have also been introduced. This includes the coaches providing, quarterly, a proportion of their income as a contribution (£1755) to maintaining the facilities. Government help during Covid-19 and the "Making a Difference Grant" (£18,483) has been much appreciated. Fundraising events such as quizzes, tombolas, wine & cheese party, cake stall etc are a traditional income source which has been restricted to external events during Covid-19. Pay as you Go for non-members was not allowed by the Club in 2021. This is expected to be reintroduced in a limited way in 2022.

Future investment policy follows the recommendations of the Lawn Tennis Association and best practice for sustaining the Objects. Regular court cleaning is a significant annual cost with less frequent full repainting. Floodlight installation on courts 1,2,3 is likely to be delayed until 2023/24 depending on the supply situation of the main cost item LED panels. In 2022/23 the club aims to refurbish the clubhouse and install a disability toilet suitable for external wheelchair access and improve wheelchair court access and pathway quality from the carpark. There are clearly a number of uncertainties to be considered regarding future investment options and the need to rebuild a sinking fund. The success of Padel tennis at other Clubs and the desirability of at least one covered court are coveted by members and under regular review.

Dr Tim Ryan
Chair & Trustee
Great Ayton Tennis Club

Appendix
"Making a Difference" Grant Deliverables

APPENDIX

“Making a Difference” Grant Deliverables

(1) Measurable Outcome or Deliverable 1 – working hours / week

- Jen Barron’s working hours / week have increased from 6 -10 from 2020 to April 2021 and during the project from 10 to on average 16 hours / week. The goal of 20 hours looks achievable.
 - Monday 2pm-8pm, Tuesday 4-8pm, Thursday 4-7pm, Friday 4-6pm, Saturday 9am-12pm
- This improvement has come about partly through the LTA Youth Start scheme that is accessed, booked and paid online to the Club’s Stripe account by parents via the LTA Clubspark system. Many of the Juniors then joined the club and Jen’s junior programme enlarged by adding more orange and green ball sessions. Other children were recruited from half term “camps” and Facebook advertising from her own personal Facebook account and the Clubs and linked by our page on the Visit Great Ayton website (see later). The camps are responsible for a significant amount of the growth in the Clubs Junior membership. Her Tots programme is expected to lead to future Juniors. Similarly, the LTA Schools initiative.
- The Club has offered free coaching using the grant that has attracted adults and led to membership and further lessons once they have got a taste for tennis playing. As requested by Hambleton DC we have offered discounts to low income applicants.
- Jen has benefitted from being able to use our new LED floodlights. We discount their use by coaches from £6 to £4/ hr / court to encourage coaching which the coaches recover from their coachees. In the case of free coaching under floodlights that cost is included in the claim.
- For the next months which will largely be January to April Jen’s intent is to run more Team Challenge events from the LTA and more fun junior competitions on a weekend. There is also an opportunity to start more disability work through the help of Ian (our first ever wheelchair tennis player and his contacts).
- The increased promotion has also benefitted our other professional coach who indicated he didn’t have additional capacity for more coaching in 2021 but has managed to find some.
- More detail about the activities supplied by Jen is given later

(2) Measurable Outcome or Deliverable 2 – The Club and the coach have a mutual interest in growing and retaining members

- A target of 300 -400 members was set and we are delighted (and surprised) that at 294 we are only a few short of 300; or 50 above our all-time record of 250 set in 2005 when juniors and families were also at a high level. There is always some loss each year. The goal is to gain at least as many members as are lost each year.
- Our aim in 2022 is to keep our membership fees competitive (identified by sampling as a key factor for some) and thereby achieve retention and further growth by enhancing our facilities and activities and by trying other membership categories learnt from other Clubs like a membership category that includes membership and 10 coaching lessons at a price less than if bought them separately.

- In 2021 the Club has obtained planning permission to floodlight the rest of our courts. That will further increase the attractiveness of the Club and ability to provide all year-round tennis including for our neighbours at the north end of Hambleton who have no floodlights.

The Trustees are preparing (with LTA encouragement) to apply for a 10-year LTA loan to fund this investment which as a condition requires us offering “pay as you go” court hire to non-members. It has been agreed with the LTA that this could be limited to the currently floodlit courts. The LTA believe pay as you go will help attract new members and finance the loan repayments. The Trustees have agreed that the affordability decision will be based on membership retention going into 2022. Account has to be taken of the need to rebuild a sinking fund for the future.

(3) LTA Healthcheck

The measures at the start of the project were:

- Financial Stability self-assessed as 4: 5 is our target in the time frame of the project; no change some risk if take LTA loan - approach cautious
- Governance 3: already improved in 2021 to 4, target 5; risk recruiting and keeping skills of Elected Trustees
- Membership Growth 2/3: target 4/5, growth surprised us reassessed as 4
- Member retention 2/3: target 4/5, uncertain going into 2022 assessed already seen improvement to 3
- Court & programme utilisation 3: target 4/5. Increased activities range introduced by Jen Barron reassessed as 4.

(4) GATC has a track record in helping with disability (Community Asset) that has been significantly widened by Jen who specialises in disability tennis

We now have two wheelchair users (Jen qualified to coach them) who have become Members since Jen arrived, they came to us by word of mouth through a new member this year. She is certainly making the Club fully inclusive and has developed a good relationship with the players.

Next year Jen will be creating a group solely for wheelchair users due to the success of the coaching sessions. Jen currently coaches SEN students at Middlesbrough College and sometimes plays with the Visually Impaired in Middlesbrough.

There are many opportunities for more to be offered at Great Ayton and Jen is in talks with the LTA about creating more classes suitable for disability players next year. Jen has a very positive relationship with the LTA and promotes many of their initiatives which are designed to encourage more people to play tennis within their community.

She has also approached Yatton House, our local school for special needs children and adults, meeting with the manager and introducing herself to the learners. A relationship has been established and coaching will commence next year 2022.

(5) Encouraging tennis playing and increasing Junior members

The Club successfully implemented the new LTA initiatives Youth Start (YS) and Youth Schools. Jen ran Camps through the school holidays, engaging as many as 12 in any one group. She ran these Camps on Tuesday, Wednesdays Thursdays and Fridays. Under 8's was 10am until 12 noon and 8- to 12-year-olds from 1pm until 3pm. This was in addition to Junior coaching provided by our other coaches on Wednesday evenings and Sundays and individual lessons.

The kids and many parents who stayed to watch loved it and commented on how lively the club had become since Jen's arrival. Other members of the club who were downplaying tennis remarked how lovely it was to see so many new kids enjoying themselves

(6) Boosting membership and coaching at Great Ayton Tennis Club

- Currently 294 members, nearly 100 more than last year.
- Growth across all age groups
- 78 members make up 19 families
- Breaks the record in 2005 of 205 members when family numbers were also high.
- If (big if) most of these members can be retained in 2022 and the same growth formula works again we will achieve our aim of 300-400 members.
- The grant has enabled more professional promotion of all our new activities on both our website and the Visit Great Ayton website with links to regularly updated Facebook and Instagram sites (see later). An LTA Clubspark website to be added by 2022.

(7) Integration of beginners into social evenings

The Club has introduced a 'New Beginner' class on a Tuesday night which links into Club Social Evenings. Jen runs this from 6pm until 7pm (on courts 4 and 5) and then Club Members who play on courts 1, 2 and 3 volunteer to go and mix in with the beginners. This is beneficial all round as the beginners get to know other club members without feeling intimidated and Club members (of a higher standard) don't have their games interrupted by weaker players

(8) Introducing tennis earlier and helping mum's health and fitness

- For age 5 and under, Jen introduced a Tots Tennis group (45 minutes) with on average 8 little ones attending each week for £3 per child.
- The parents enjoyed watching and chatting, a bit of a social gathering and we have raised enough interest for a couple of these parents to attend a Cardio group 5 till 6 on Tuesday nights (£3).
- Cardio tennis is very beneficial for keeping fit and promoting the club within the community. Numbers have been very high and there has been a variety of players in age, ability and fitness level. This class is very inclusive for those who would like to get fit and have fun too.
- Nic Weschenfelder has continued to provide more demanding Cardio classes on Saturday mornings

Great Ayton Tennis Club

Income and Expenditure Account 1st January 2021 - 31st December 2021

Balance 1st. January 2021

Current Account £5,428.12
Cash £18.47

Total: £5,446.59

Income:

Subscriptions £15,697.00
(204 adults, 88 juniors)
Donations £123.00
Lights £982.00
Match Fees £198.00
Coaches £1,754.50
Yorkshire Tennis refund £550.00
Stripe Payments 980.44
Grants £18,483.00
Miscellaneous £40.00

Total: £38,807.94

Expenditure:

Sports Facility £2,604.00
Loan repayment £10,000.00
Level 4 Coach £3,268.40
Utilities/Council tax £791.14
Admin./Domestic £77.55
Rent/Insurance £783.00
Balls/Equipment £506.15
League fees £250.00
Website £1,277.50
Grounds/Courts Maintenance £4,026.33
Miscellaneous £230.38

Total: £23,814.45

Income - Expenditure: £14,993.49

Total:	£20,440.08
---------------	-------------------

Outstanding LTA Loan: £5,000.00

Balance	£15,440.08
----------------	-------------------

John Harrison
Auditor

J. Harrison

24/5/22

Barry Adamski
Treasurer

B Adamski

24/5/22

Great Ayton Tennis Club

Income and Expenditure Account 1st January 2021 - 31st December 2021

Balance 1st. January 2021

Current Account £5,428.12
Cash £18.47

Total: £5,446.59

Income:

Subscriptions £15,697.00
(204 adults, 88 juniors)
Donations £123.00
Lights £982.00
Match Fees £198.00
Coaches £1,754.50
Yorkshire Tennis refund £550.00
Stripe Payments 980.44
Grants £18,483.00
Miscellaneous £40.00

Total: £38,807.94

Expenditure:

Sports Facility £2,604.00
Loan repayment £10,000.00
Level 4 Coach £3,268.40
Utilities/Council tax £791.14
Admin./Domestic £77.55
Rent/Insurance £783.00
Balls/Equipment £506.15
League fees £250.00
Website £1,277.50
Grounds/Courts Maintenance £4,026.33
Miscellaneous £230.38

Total: £23,814.45

Income - Expenditure: £14,993.49

Total:	£20,440.08
---------------	-------------------

Outstanding LTA Loan: £5,000.00

Balance	£15,440.08
----------------	-------------------

John Harrison
Auditor

J. Harrison

24/5/22

Barry Adamski
Treasurer

B Adamski

24/5/22