

## **Wolverley Tennis (CIO) Annual Report to Charity Commission for 2023**

Wolverley Tennis CIO was set up to allow Wolverley Lawn Tennis Club (WLTC), also known as Wolverley Tennis Club, to transition to a charitable organisation. As reported in our previous annual return, the process started many years ago and culminated with the current Tennis Charity being set up in 2022. The object of the exercise was for once the charity had been set up, that the assets of the Lawn Tennis Club would be transferred into the charity and that ultimately the Lawn Tennis Club would close down.

The process of setting up the charity having been completed, we had been waiting for a new bank account to be set up and this was ultimately done at the beginning of 2023.

During this time both Wolverley Lawn Tennis Club and Wolverley Tennis CIO have been in discussions with Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust (WMCT) regarding the position of the organisations in terms of tenancy on the land currently occupied by Wolverley Lawn Tennis Club since 1952. The whole site including Tennis Club, Social Club and other land is leased to Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust by the Parish Council who hold the land in trust on behalf of the local community. During the last 3 years Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust had been pressing for an agreement to “regularise” this situation. WLTC is protected by covenants set up as part of the original documentation in 1950 and subsequently 1961 and reinforced by agreements between Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust and the Parish Council in 2019. These covenants gave the Tennis Club and other organisations, the right to remain on the land without paying rent. Over this last 12 months the WMCT demanded-agreement has expanded into having a lease and these discussions have continued with both the Lawn Tennis Club and Wolverley Tennis CIO, but the Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust has consistently changed its position and attempted to limit the ability through the lease details, for either tennis organisation (or other organisations on the site ) to obtain grant funding; in consequence no lease has yet been signed.

Funding which had been offered by a third-party funder to the value of £40,000 for renovation of the Club Hut, which is used for toilet facilities and storage, has subsequently been withdrawn because there is no lease in position which meets their governance requirements . This obviously is very regrettable, but more recently, the Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust has served notice on the charity to quit the site and has followed this up by numerous aggressive solicitor's letters. It has also endeavoured to involve others to harass and bully the Tennis organisations. Whilst it has been the strategy for the club to transition from an unincorporated organisation to a CIO, no assets have been transferred and the process is unlikely to now proceed in the short term. The Trustees of Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust continue to be highly aggressive viz. attempting to over-lock the gates and prevent members of WLTC accessing the courts; and involving the police to harass members for removing the overlocks, attempting to get the police to bring charges for criminal damage.

Despite being told this is a civil matter individual trustees (of WMCT) continue with their harassment. They are also refusing any form of arbitration which has been suggested by the Parish Council in order to come to a legitimate agreement which would continue to give the Tennis Club the rights over the land currently held by the WLTC. It has recently come to our notice that in 2022 without consultation, WMCT attempted to remove all rights of occupancy from the Wolverley Tennis Club and other local organisations on the site via "a license to assign" which was promoted to the Parish Council and some members of its own Trustees as solely a document to change the name of the trust apparently at the behest of the Charity Commission. Currently there are discussions on going with the Parish Council about this matter. Until the Wolverley Memorial Charitable Trust is willing to offer a suitable solution, it remains unlikely that the Wolverley Tennis (CIO) will be able to operate effectively and provide its prime objective of providing direct sporting facilities to the local community; but it will of course still offer as much support to the community as it can.

[Report prepared September 2024]

## Wolverley Tennis (CIO)

### Income and Expenditure for year ending 31 December 2023

#### Income

Loan from Wolverley Lawn tennis Club	387.00	
Sundry income	198.64	
Total Income		585.64

#### Expenditure

Miscellaneous Expenses	133.01	
Total Expenses		133.01

#### Surplus for the year

452.59  
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### Wolverley Tennis (CIO) Balance Sheet at 31 December 2023

#### Current Assets

Cash at bank and in hand	452.59
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#### Current Liabilities

Loan from Wolverley Lawn tennis Club	387.00
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#### NET Assets

65.59  
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Balance brought forward

65.59  
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*WT(CIO) Inc and Exp Acc – Bal Sheet 2023 vf*