

Holmer Green Sports Association

Chairman's Report for AGM - 10^h December 2018

This is my 13th Chairman's report at the end of what I regard as another successful year for HGSA. It will also be my final Chairman's report as I will be stepping down tonight.

I am pleased to report, that in the year we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Club's formation, we managed to return a very small profit for the year. Danielle Iacofano, who is also stepping down from the role of Treasurer, will provide more details later in the evening.

Fund raising:

- Hall Hire bookings on target and in line with previous years.
- Club Membership (Loyalty Scheme) slightly improved verses last year.
- Bar Sales were up verses last year, mainly due to the impact of the heat-wave and England's unexpected success at the World Cup.
- Best Beer and Music Festival ever (in my time as Chairman at least) – in terms of visitor numbers, profit and feedback
- 50th Anniversary celebration event – afternoon tea provided to ex committee and section representatives. Again, feedback was good from attendees. Unfortunately, we were unable to invite everyone who deserved it.
- Oktoberfest – a new event this year in September, broke even and was enjoyed by many people. We certainly learned some lessons, which should make for an even better and more financially rewarding event in future years.

Facility Improvements:

- Additional improvements to our security and I am pleased to report an absence of break-ins this year.
- Patio doors installed at the bottom end of the hall to provide a link-up between the Clubhouse and the green space, without relying on the use of the cricket outfield. We believe this will be popular with hall hirer's in the future.
- A new deck area was installed outside the patio doors. As well as facilitating the link to the outside, this area will provide a new viewing platform for people to gather and to enjoy the grounds.
- We are very pleased to welcome Green and Grounds café to HGSA. The café opened in October, so outside this Financial Year. We hope and believe that this new facility will prove popular with various groups and have a positive impact on the Club by introducing more people to HGSA. We all wish Hannah and Laura every success with their new venture.
- Bar redecoration was completed by Kay Jones (our new Bar manager) through her bar staff and other volunteers.
- Our playing sections have continued to invest in their facilities and I thank them for continuing to improve the facilities on offer to their players.
- Cricket – reclamation of the area in the far corner of the field, additional fencing, outdoor nets and an outfield mower.
- Football – pitch treatments and drainage improvements, fencing and new goals.
- HGSRG – refurbished changing rooms and showers
- Ground improvements – managed by Ed Harris and completed by numerous volunteers
- Accessible toilet – through the considerable efforts of Ed Harris and Sarah Banning funding has been secured to pay for the installation of an accessible toilet. The intention is to complete the work in the Spring.

Sections:

- Football, Cricket, HGSRC and Micklefield Judo all continue to thrive
- Short Mat Bowls – seeking new members
- HWMEC – maintaining membership levels and interest
- Hazlemere Runners – club night experiment proved difficult. We all underestimated the popularity of the activities and the numbers of runners who would use the facilities on a Monday night.
- Tennis – sad to say this section is in decline. It urgently needs new members, improved facilities and some new people with energy to run it (not necessarily in that order).

Charitable Trust status:

I regret the fact that we have made little progress towards our vision of changing the constitution of the Club, to that of a Charitable Trust.

We have a clear strategy and now understand the steps we would need to take to effect the necessary changes. We also have a clear idea of the costs involved. However, we have not felt able to initiate the work required or commit the club to the necessary spend before obtaining agreement in principle to the changes from our landlords CDC). We have met with them to share the vision and request answers to our lease-related questions, but to date, despite the efforts on our behalf from LMPC Councilors, Sandra Geraghty and Jane Fallon, we have been unable to make significant progress.

At the same time, we have continued to engage with HGSS; to understand their expansion and development plans so that we can work together to improve the sports facilities available within the village. Their own plans have been blighted by bureaucracy and delays in decision making from potential funders.

I firmly believe this remains the right vision for the club and I hope the new committee continues in this direction.

Challenges for the incoming committee; there are a few:

- Building maintenance – it's an old building with a decaying, flat felt roof that will need more and more attention in the future. The toilets need some attention and the furniture, which I had hoped to replace in my first year, still needs to be replaced.
- Cashflow – we currently have a cashflow problem. This is not a unique situation. It has happened from time to time down the years and the committee will need to act to steer us through the lean Winter months.
- Over reliance on the beer festival – we only need one wet May Bank Holiday and the Club will be in real trouble. We are so reliant on a successful event and the new committee should look at ways of spreading the risk.
- The car park needs attention, as do the tennis courts.
- Achievement of the vision to become a Charitable Trust would, in my view, provide us with access to the funding necessary to address these issues, but as I have said that remains elusive at the moment.

Committee Matters:

My thanks go to all the members of this year's committee: namely:

Sarah Banning, Danielle Iacofano, Rob Shed, Ed Harris, Bob Day, Bob Asprey, Paul Horseman, Eric Stevens, Julian Monteiro, Geoff Ames, Kay Jones and Nick Brewer, without whom the Club

would cease to function effectively.

I would like to single out Danielle, who began her role as Club Treasurer as a Ransley and finishes as a Iaciovano, which is a lot harder to say and to record in meeting minutes. Like myself, Danielle has decided to step down from the role and I'd like to say a big thank you to her for all she has done to manage the Club's finances so efficiently in recent years. It has been great having Dani around, initially as a top Bar Maid and more recently on the committee as Treasurer.

I would also like to mention Kay Jones, Matt Gomme and Katie Pike and all our bar staff and cleaning staff and offer my thanks for all their hard work.

As you know, Sarah Banning left the Club recently after 10 years of service and sacrifice for the good of the Club. I regret the manner in which Sarah's involvement with HGSA ended and feel sad that we were not able to show her how much her contribution to the Club was appreciated by all that worked with her and all those who benefitted from the work she did here. I hope that in time she feels able to visit the Club in a social capacity so that she can continue to enjoy the facilities she helped to create.

I would like to thank Matt again for stepping into the role of temporary Administrator, following Sarah's departure. He has certainly helped to maintain a continuity of operation during what has been a difficult few months.

My thanks also go to all the Chairmen, officials and helpers of all the sections of the Club. I have enjoyed working with you again this year, as I have with most of your predecessors and appreciate your help and cooperation in moving the Club as a whole in the right direction.

And finally, I would like to thank my wife Sue for her patience and support to me whilst I was performing the role of Chairman. It has been quite a commitment from both of us over these past 12 years and I thank her for allowing me the freedom to do what I needed to do, when I needed to do it without a moan or a gripe. It certainly has been a team effort from both of us.

Farewell:

I have very much, almost exclusively, enjoyed my time as Chairman of HGSA. There were times when I would have rather been doing something else, but those difficult times were always overcome. The good of the Club always came first.

I think we have generally maintained and to an extent, improved, things around here and I am proud of what has been achieved.

I wish the Club as a whole and the next Chairman in particular all the very best for the future and I look forward to enjoying everything this Club has to offer for many years to come.

Martin Little
Chairman of Holmer Green Sports Association
10th December 2018