

SENIOR MEMBER FORUM MEETING
Friday 11th February at 2pm
in the Garden Room/Zoom

Forum: Brenda Nixon, Charles Shiplee, Marc Newey, Pam Waring, Sarah Owens, David Blackburn

In attendance: Simon Baker, Dan Lott, Tristan McIlroy, Nicki Davis, Mariya Vlaykova

Apologies: Harry Alvarez, Vivien Harris, Richard Storer.

1. Minutes of the meeting on 21st October 2021/ Matters Arising

The Minutes of the meeting on 21st October 2021 were approved as read.

Matters Arising:

SB informed that they have not increased the number of the participants of the Pilates classes, however, they should review this when the Government ended the restrictions (probably in March).

SB notified the Forum that Ricky Alexis had joined the Club as Gym and Studio Manager. Currently, he was reviewing the class timetable and getting feedback on classes like pilates, aqua and hydro spin. More hydro spin bikes were coming the following week, plus, additional staff would have training to provide cover if the instructors were unavailable.

A poster with SMF Members' names, photos and generic email will be soon advertised.

SB reported that they were working on offering more healthy options in the Juice Bar, however, the demand was for sugary items. He has discussed with Ricky, personal trainers to recommend drinks and energy bars that will be available in the Juice Bar.

MN informed the SMF that Arnaud Delanney, the Executive Chef had left the business to work for Gordon Ramsey. The Club was recruiting for his replacement. Meantime, Kevin (Head Chef) was holding the fort.

Forum Members commented that they had noticed improved quality of the sandwiches and food presentation.

SB confirmed that they had looked at chairs with sticking out legs in the Club Café and had taken advice from the Club Health and Safety Adviser. The chairs are compliant with the current regulations and will be replaced when the Club Café is next refurbished.

MN talked about the dilemma DL had to organise more events at popular times to have participants and the backlash from Members who usually play at that time of the day.

BN commented that there was an issue for people like her and her tennis group to book an indoor court and when they came on the day, they found empty courts. MN explained that the courts were booked for group coaching. On the day, Members have requested to play outside and the coach had cancelled the court at the start of the lesson.

DL confirmed that all coaches were advised that they would lose their indoor court if they did not use it.

DL

The coach in particular has lost their group indoor court as they had cancelled twice their court.

MN commented that from next Autumn there will be ten indoor courts and a better chance for Members to book a court for a social play.

BN queried how often the Ladies Lunch League were playing. DL responded that there were two seasons between September and December, and January and March. 16 participants in each league with a maximum of nine fixtures. The games were home and away or three indoor tennis courts were booked for the nine home games.

DL and Andrew Wakely (Tennis Committee Chairman) will meet with the ladies concerned that they could not book an indoor court at a specific time.

DB and PW suggested the tennis booking system to prevent Members from booking more than three times per week unless on the day (like the golf booking system).

SB reported that he had a meeting with a designer outside to look at increasing the size of the bike racks. The bike shed at the front will be doubled up plus another bike rack will be installed in the rear car parking without taking any parking space. The project will take place late summer, subject to Board's approval.

2. Health Club

SB reiterated that Ricky Alexis was reviewing the classes and the offering for the seniors. New equipment was coming in soon for the gym. SB asked if any Member had any feedback to let him know.

MN added that the last survey has shown that 75% of the Club visits were to the Health Club. 55% were for golf and 55% for tennis.

MN also informed that they had installed a gate between the Health Club and the Member Car Park to ensure that Members sanitise before using the Club or do not bring guests without registering them at Security. The Board has decided to open the gate during the winter as a trial.

3 Food and Beverage and Social Events

ND reported that the Spring Social calendar was out with many walking talks, social events, opera trips. Last Tuesday of the month they have reintroduced Music Night. There is one

Carvery per month on the last Sunday. The Kitchen continues to offer specials for a fortnight. The buffet in the Club Café was reintroduced for children on weekends.

ND said that they were reviewing the breakfast menu and considering reintroducing the salad bar. The Club Night was Wednesday and will change from Curry Night to Thai Curry Night and then to BBQ during the Summer.

SB informed that they were planning to install a second pizza oven in the Club Café and were waiting for the ventilation to be recommissioned.

SB reported that they were working with the company Edge on two projects. One of them was reconfiguring the Club Café and the other installing business pods on the back wall of the Reading Room.

SO commented that the pods would be in the place where was the Art exhibition. The lighting was good for the exhibition and many Members were enjoying watching the pictures. She was against having business pods and was supported by BN.

Some SMF members felt that Roehampton was a sports and social Club and Members should not be encouraged to use it for business purposes.

MN informed the SMF that there was a significant demand for those business pods from many Members. Many of them were using the Club Café or the function rooms. They were taking a table for four alone and were taking calls disturbing everyone around them. MN reiterated that with the business pods they will please many Members. He will consider some alternative locations such as the Bandstand.

SO suggested installing the pods in the Juice Bar. SB responded that it had been considered, but the Juice Bar was very busy during the summer.

SO queried if from March the meetings would be in person and if more people could join the choir. ND responded that it would be down to the individual section and she would review with Anna the number for the choir for the next term.

4 Sports

Golf

TM reported that it was the time of the year when they were looking at the plans for the summer. Currently, Thursday was looking like a critical day in reference to whether they should continue with the two ball format or return to nine holes day. The Golf Committee was reviewing and would announce their decision in March.

TM was working on the projects for the IGC and soon the quotes for the internal fitting will be presented to the Board and the Golf Committee.

PW reported that some Members have the intention to play only nine holes, however, they were booked on 18-holes day. TM responded that nine holes were the preferred format for many Members. They have considered this feedback and that the front nine were more used

than the back nine holes and they have decided on Mondays the golfers to start from the back nine. That was effective. Unfortunately, the system did not allow for booking only nine holes. They were monitoring that with the Marshals. The booking records showed that since the beginning of the year over 105 played per day.

MN reiterated that the Golf Committee was looking if Thursdays should be two balls day (two balls and foursomes) or nine holes day (the most popular day on the golf course, last year).

MN talked about the presumption that more new golf Members were joining. He has shown stats at the Committee Consultation meeting, and it has become evident that fewer golfers had joined, however, there were more actively playing golf Members overall. MN said that it was difficult to predict the pattern of usage of the New Members and they were monitoring usages with the Marketing and Membership Committee (MMC). MN also said that they wanted Members to have knowledge of etiquette, knowledge of how to go quickly on the golf course, to not hold the other people behind. All new golfers had an induction with the golf pros. The MMC had considered that the longevity usage of Members should be respected even when Members can no longer play with the same handicap they used to.

BN asked if Members could turn up and play spontaneously nine holes golf. MN explained that it was possible if the golf course was free. DB confirmed that looking at the booking system, there were plenty of times when Members could turn up and play. TM added that the booking system was a live system, Members could check before coming to the Club or if the Club on another occasion could ask the Starters or Reception to book them.

DB queried what was happening with the 10th tee. MN responded that golf balls were leaving the estate, therefore they had to find a solution how to reposition the tee and to increase the netting to stop the rising ball from leaving the Club. This solution was currently reviewed by the planners. At the same time, PB was rebuilding the 10th tee, because of the dry weather. The earliest the tee would be available for general play was May. MN confirmed that they had applied for two applications, one for the 10th tee, one to put netting on the right side of the 11th tee and one of the back of the 12th tee to protect any balls leaving the estate.

Bridge

TM informed that Paul Mendelson was starting his classes on Friday morning in person in March. Many Members will be delighted to return to normal.

Croquet

TM reported that there was a presentation to the Croquet Section earlier that day. Over 60 Members were present and they have discussed the results of the croquet survey. Many events were scheduled for this year, including Croquet and Cocktails. More formal coaching will be offered. There will be a good mixture of competitive and social croquet.

Tennis

DL reported that the Tennis Committee were very excited about Airhall 2 and the possibility to change tennis court 10 to a double.

All vets' matches and social sessions were going well. He was working to organise a senior competition in the summer.

Padel Tennis

Padel tennis was very popular including the over 60s Pay and Play sessions on Mondays 11.00-12.00. There was a social padel on Sunday 16.00-18.00 and a Ladies Padel Morning on Monday 9.30-11.00.

Pickleball

DL informed the Forum that Seniors enjoyed the tester sessions on 11th November and there was a demand for the sport in the Club. DL considered that it was a good addition to the racket sports in the Club.

MN reported that Louis (current European Single, Double and Mixed Pickleball Champion) and DL had presented the idea to the Tennis Committee and the Committee was considering transforming tennis court 11 to four pickleball courts.

DL confirmed that currently, every single tester session was fully booked. They could mark court 11 for a month during the summer, temporary for four pickleball courts and include them on MyCourts booking system. After the trial, they can analyse the occupancy and make an informed decision about the demand for pickleball courts. DL considered that tennis court 11 was not well utilised as a tennis court, plus the Club was gaining a doubles court with the change of court 10. 20 people could play on rotation at the same time pickleball and DL was excited to have a dry run.

BN queried what would happen to the ball machine facility? DL responded that there were two tennis ball machines "Slinger" that Members could take to any court (mainly court 1 or 6 because of the netting) and it was easy to wheel them.

5. AOB

Masterplan 2035

MN reviewed the priority order of the Masterplan projects. If approved by the Board, the works for the Airhall 2 would start in July to complete by October. Court 10 would be a doubles court and the surface the same as the ITC – acrylic.

IGC was the second priority project. The Club was working with planners and if all approved the works were scheduled to start in April 2023 on the current practice area.

The third project was the Sports Shop – two storeys. Retail on the ground floor with a hub for the starters and different areas including offices for the pros on the first floor. That would allow then some of the staff (rackets and golf) to be moved to the Sports Shop hub. Other staff can be transferred to the Tulloch Clinic and the Tulloch Clinic moved to the Thatched Cottage. Most of the space of the current offices could then be used as a Member social area and a second snooker table. This will increase the sociability of the Club.

MN talked about keeping the restaurant area and the function rooms for meetings and sections events. Potentially moving the staff canteen to another area and open it for Members who want to have Café on the piazza. Club Café to be extended onto the balcony and transformed to be used in the evening as an area where younger Members can socialise.

MN then informed the Forum that they were finalising the second comprehensive member survey this spring and according to Members' feedback the Board will plan accordingly.

DB considered that the usages of the Club facilities will be different in a year time and they had to be careful to justify any future usage by the current.

The meeting concluded at 3.45 pm.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 9th June 2022 at 2pm in the Garden Room.