

April 2024
Volume I Issue I

THROUGH THE GATE

The Official Newsletter of The City of Peterborough Sports Club

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIR

By Martin Collcott

Welcome to the first edition of the Sports Club's new Newsletter.

We know that sections keep their members updated with news on a regular basis via their own newsletters and social media updates so it has been suggested that we should do the same with wider Sports Club News and information.

After each Management Council Meeting there are always so many things happening which we would like members to hear about from us directly. We also want to keep you updated on upcoming events, and progress on major projects which your subscriptions are supporting, as well as news from each section.

If there is something you want to know about, let us know either directly or via your section Chair. We are always happy to receive feedback, good or back and if you have suggestions about the club, please let the Sports Club Manager know - see the p10 for contact details.

We hope you find this newsletter useful and plan on another issue every couple of months.

Martin

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CITY OF PETERBOROUGH SPORTS CLUB

Hot off the Press

Operations & Commercial Manager

We hope everyone is now aware that Jonathan Short has taken up his new job as Club Manager, and we are happy to report that he is settling in well with the support of section chairs, Club Officers and Gary Rice around the grounds. The Club offered thanks at the recent AGM to Neil Hoskin (Squash Chair) who has been overseeing the practical aspects of running the club and is spending a few weeks handing over to Jonathan to ensure a smooth transition and will continue to work on the Bar Management, whilst Jane Wilson will still manage the car parking for the meantime. Jonathan is already looking forward to bringing his expertise from his professional life to streamline some aspects of administration, and being able to focus more on the commercial side of the role as the Club strives to increase its income streams.

Beer Festival 2024 : July 19th - 21st

We were deeply disappointed to have to cancel last year's Beer Festival, so planning for this year's event is already well under way to make sure there aren't any bumps in the road. Gareth Andrew, who masterminded the event when he was manager, has taken the lead this year for us working alongside Neil Hoskin and Jonathan Short. Sponsors are coming in as beers are identified, a corporate event is in the planning stages with Hunt & Coombes, and detailed logistics for the weekend are being worked out. Watch out for the publicity posters going out on Social Media as well as in the Clubhouse, and also keep your eyes peeled for news of what each section will be doing over the weekend to ensure that the footfall from members makes it another tremendous success!

Car Park - Safety updates





For safety reasons, we have now introduced a one-way system in the car park – after several near misses and damage to the new green fence where people have reversed into it trying to get out of their space, something needed to be done. The road alongside the fence is now "No entry" as you come into the car park, and is one way as an exit road; cars must either reverse into spaces along the fence OR drive in forwards from the adjoining row - so cars exiting those spaces will always be driving forwards. The lane closest to the astroturf and the one down the middle of the car park will be also be marked as one way towards the clubhouse once we have the right paint for the tarmac , although if the car park is not busy common sense can be applied about driving to the exit.

In addition, extra disabled parking bays will be added to the existing 2, with proper cross-hatching to mark all of them, and "no parking" cross-hatching will be put across some bays to ensure both emergency and delivery vehicles can access the parts of the ground which they need to.

Members are asked to respect the new signage once it is all in place - all these changes are designed to keep everyone safe

Insider Stories



Time for a coffee? The coffee machine in the bar has proved so popular that people have been asking for it to be available when the bar is closed or is super busy, so we installed a self-serve machine in the hallway to meet the demand. Not only does it dispense the same delicious bean-to-cup coffee as the bar machine (in a slightly smaller cup), but also offers tea and soup to cater for all tastes. It takes cash and cards (including contactless) so please make good use of it.

Hot and Sweaty? After the excellent refurbishment work in the men's toilets and ladies changing rooms in the spring last year, some initial snagging issues were fixed, some tiles in the showers replaced and re-sealed, and after further investigation into the continued overflowing in the men's toilets, a regular regime of drain cleaning has been implemented which has fixed the problems there. The men's changing rooms have also just been cleaned to remove the damp patches, which are believed to be caused by poor ventilation (always a hazard in the winter months) rather than a leaking roof. The dead hairdryer in the ladies changing rooms has recently been replaced. The disabled toilet will also soon be signed as gender-neutral as well as disabled to ensure we are as welcoming as possible to all our members and visitors.

The next project on the radar is a full refurbishment of the men's showers - which has not been done for quite a few years - as well as work necessary to ensure all the showers are of a standard required to allow juniors to use them safely. Brian Howard and Alex Mitchell are working on funding streams and quotes are being sought at the moment.





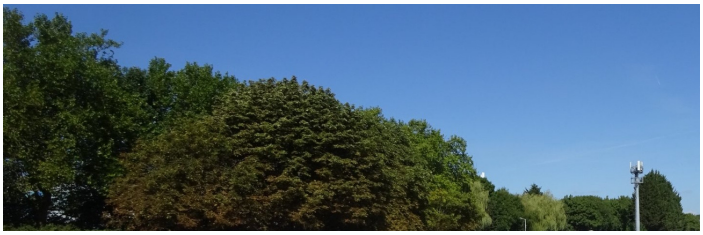
Man's Best Friend.

The Club has always welcomed dogs around the site, both inside and out, and we are very happy that so many members and visitors bring their pooches with them when they come to play or watch sport. However, the increasing numbers mean we have had to create a Dog Policy so that everyone is singing from the same hymn sheet. Most of it is common sense - like where you cannot take a dog at any time - and a reminder that wherever you are, your dog should be under close control even if off a lead - except when running round the cricket outfield where a little more leeway is permitted!

The only major change is that we are now asking that all dogs be kept on a lead when in the Lounge/Bar area at any time of the day or evening. We have made it a one-rule-for-all so that bar staff don't have to decide if it's busy enough to warrant this, and it makes it safer for those moving round the lounge or those who are nervous around dogs.

The new policy is effective from 2nd April and signs will be put on the Lounge doors as a reminder as well as sections circulating to members.

Around the Outside





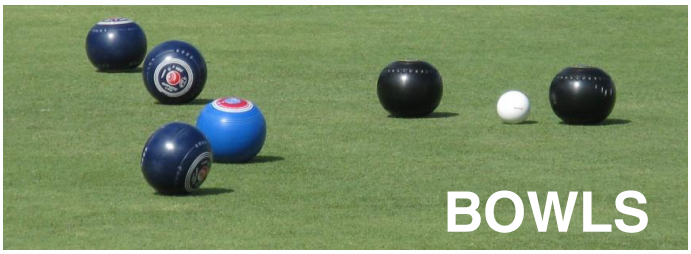
The trees and bushes around the site have been growing happily unchecked for a while and in several places are in need of pruning or more radical cutting back to avoid damaging the sporting infrastructure such as the Tennis Dome and the Astro. A full survey of the grounds has given us a list of what needs doing – some will be undertaken by volunteers under the watchful eye of Head Groundsman Gary Rice, whilst the more complicated work will be done by a firm which specialise in these things and have the necessary equipment to do the job safely. The specialists are booked in for May and other work is being done as weather permits. We are also always grateful to Peter Hings and Rob Fisher (Hockey) who do work every year on the mound behind the hockey pitch to keep it in check.





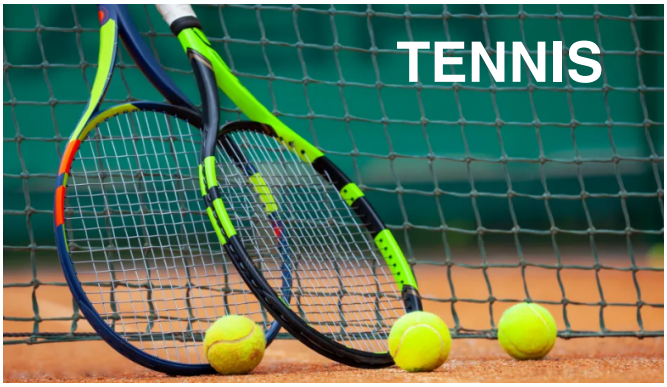
External drains and soakaways may not be the most exciting subject for many, but it is crucial that they all function efficiently to avoid flooding around the site and leaks into the fabric of the building. Our squash chairman Neil Hoskin has already done an excellent job in building a proper soakaway where none existed under the gravel car park to stop the water ingress into the building. Over the winter, despite the frustration of so much rain, he has also done the same to the area outside the entrance to the hockey pitch, which remains fenced off as it has been reseeded recently. A survey of the flat roof over the main lounge area uncovered a downpipe filled with a variety of balls which has now been unblocked and covered to prevent further issues, and the possibility of a new roof is being investigated - one with a pitch so that water does not collect in pools. There remains however one further area to investigate, which are the downpipes and patio in front of the clubhouse - until the slabs are lifted and the area dug, the true extent of work needed won't be known but it is likely to mean another full new soakaway being built. That work is now planned for mid-September, as it has to be done once the cricket season has finished because the cricket outfield could well be disturbed. We will ensure that access into the club for the winter sports is not disrupted more than necessary if too many slabs need to be lifted. In the meantime, work to level the most uneven of the paving slabs is also being investigated now that the slabs outside the cellar have been re-laid and the new path alongside the gravel car park has bedded in nicely.

Section Snippets



Bowls has the shortest season of any of our sections but they make best use of the summer months available to them with matches of some kind almost every day of the week. Our Bowls rinks and pavilion are widely regarded as amongst the best locally and last summer attracted Huntingdonshire to hold some of their County matches at the Club, with the winners going on to the National Finals at Leamington. The membership is now growing and also - much to the delight of chairman Keith Mansbridge - drawing in a few younger members. It has been good to see a number of new bowlers drawn from other sections, in particular hockey which mainly runs for the months when bowls has its off-season and offers a haven for those whose hamstrings have finally persuaded their owners to take up a slightly less energetic sport.

This year, weather depending, they hope to start their season on April 18th, with leagues due to start on 23rd April. 2 of the 8 league sides from last summer were promoted so the Club now has representation all 3 Premier Peterborough divisions, and with several members having represented Northants Federation in County sides last year, hopes are high for another successful summer.



Another busy summer for tennis looms with league sides and Club Championships taking centre stage as outdoor play becomes an enjoyable option for a few weeks, and the sides of the Dome will hopefully be open more often than not. Even during the winter, the coaching team is kept busy with the terrific number of juniors who come every week with such enthusiasm, as well as offering summer camps for so many age groups.

The Club was sad to see Max Lambert depart for a new job in Melbourne, Australia just after Christmas, but it was an offer he couldn't refuse. However, L4 coach Luke Wainwright has now joined the club from Corby where he has been coaching for 6 years to fill the vacancy and with a couple of other new recruits, the coaching team is looking very strong once more.

It was great to have a visit from LTA President Sandi Procter last month to view our facilties and enjoy our hospitality, and also to award CoPTC the Club of the Year for Cambridgeshire, which is a wonderful accolade and testament to the hard work of all the coaches and the committee.

The courts are all incredibly busy, so the new Dome is eagerly awaited - more about that on p9.

Section Snippets



Hockey has just finished its full season, with 11/13 sides maintaining their league position for next season. Sadly, however, our men's 1st XI had a very frustrating season and were relegated back into the East Prem next season, and the men's 4th XI found the higher league this year just too tough and were relegated as well. Our mini players (aged 5-12) continue to play up until the start of the school holidays in July, with over 70 children turning up almost every week, whilst parents and coaches have also taking junior teams all over the East in Cup competitions and festivals all winter. With 8 adult mens sides and 5 ladies sides turning out every weekend, the logistics are immense and it is no wonder the section needs such a cohort of coaches, managers, captains and umpires every week. Fixtures and results are published on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.
Attention now turns to the annual 16-team Roger Brummitt Mixed Tournament which this year will be held on 20th & 21st April and always creates a tremendous buzz around the Club as 200+ players and a host of supporters and friends descend on the Club. Later in the summer, expect to see the regular Summer 7s midweek tournament, the Annual Summer 7s mens/ladies/mixed Tournament, and the SWAN fundraising day which just gets bigger and raises more money every year.



Being our only completely indoor sport, squash has the luxury of being able to play all year round without having to worry about the weather stopping play!
The new Glass Back Court, now into its 3rd full year of operation, is proving very popular and has meant that the Club has been able to begin hosting external events such as the Masters County Championships last year along with regular league matches and junior events. Racquetball is also proving very popular with lots of younger players finding it a great introduction to the sport, and Sunday sessions are well attended.
The section has also entered into a Corporate Membership agreement with Anglian Water, where their employees can take advantage of courts in off peak times which are not utilised by members. Squash are unique in being able to offer such a partnership and uptake has been encouraging.

Section Snippets



CRICKET

Cricket had the most exciting summer in its history last year as Bretton Gate was not just the venue for regular Club matches every weekend but also played host to a whole range of external events. The club has gradually been building its reputation as a venue for cricket matches and has working with Northants CC over opportunities as well as other outside agencies.

As a result, there were several firsts last year. We started off the summer by playing Serbia (who knew they played cricket?) in an evening T20 as part of their week long tour of Cambridgeshire. We then hosted on Friday 28 July the PCA England Legends (Professional Cricketers Association) drawing a crowd of around 500 as a host of former England internationals graced The Gate (see photo above). Lunch in the marquee for over a hundred guests was a truly special affair and the wonderful array of selfies as people (young and old) had their photo taken with players who had been their heroes for years was fantastic. This was followed two days later by hosting Northants Steelbacks vs Cambridgeshire in a one day game with all the logistics that involved. In August we hosted Cambridgeshire v Cumbria in a 3 day County match in the National Counties tier of English cricket. And finally, in early September we hosted a 4 day game between Northants 2nd X1 and Sussex 2nd X1. The whole club was buzzing all summer and amongst all of this the club fulfilled all of its regular Saturday and Sunday league games as well as midweek cups. The junior section continued to flourish playing around 100 fixtures across U9, U11, U13, U15 U17 and the emerging girls team.

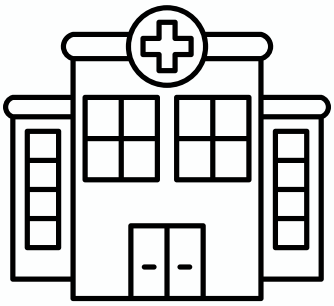
Brian Howard and his committee have continued to build on these foundations for the new season which starts in mid-April assuming it ever stops raining. Not only is there the usual full season of weekend league matches, plus local and national Cup matches, but the club is hosting more external events - a full calendar of which will be posted on the Sports Club website in the near future. Along with the thriving junior section including more girls each year, the club is busy every evening of the week during the summer.

The club was also awarded a substantial grant from the Clothworkers Foundation which funded a new irrigation system for the Cricket ground. This is remote controlled which means that the ground can be watered during the night when the rain is not forthcoming with the need for anyone on site to turn it on an off. Watering at night is obviously better as the water doesn't evaporate so it should save us money on water usage as well. Gary Rice is looking forward to using his new toy this summer!

On top of this, cricket also obtained grants from Tesco, NISA, Cambridge Foundation Trust, North Northants Council and the ECB to help run and develop the cricket club, and some of which also contributed to wider sports club facility projects.

General Jottings





Is there a Doctor in the House? The Club has established a partnership with Peterborough City Hospital to give annual group membership for medical students based there as part of their rotations. Many of them are housed in the building to the right as you drive into the club (which looked like a collection of shipping containers when it was being built for those new to the club). As you can imagine, this leaves them short of things to do when not on shift, so the hospital is funding membership for them at the club. They have the option to take part in whichever sports they wish - tennis and squash are the main options during the winter and they can pay as they play which makes life easier - and they can of course use the bar as a social area. Brian Howard (Cricket) has been the lead in getting this set up via a parent of junior cricketers who is a Consultant at PCH, and and several students are now coming forward to start using the sports facilities so we are hoping this will be a long and constructive relationship.





On the Menu. Another new initiative, which is the brainchild of Kevin Senior (hockey) is Sunday Roast at the Club. Sundays at the Club can be quiet if there is not a big game on - either hockey or cricket - so the idea is to fill the lounge with hungry members and their families and friends to enjoy a traditional Sunday Roast in a convivial atmosphere. So far 2 have been held and as the word gets out, there were over 70 people across 2 sittings at the March event. Linda who caters for many of our events - lunches, Thursday night suppers, buffets, and teas - is in charge and offers up a range of mains which have included lamb, beef, turkey, gammon and vegetarian options as well as a yummy range of puddings. Advanced booking is needed - the form goes up in the bar each month - numbers are limited so don't delay and miss out!

Project Planning

Second Tennis Dome

The tennis committee received the excellent news last autumn that planning permission has been granted for the new single Dome. Those outside the section may not be aware that based on the case put forward by the Tennis committee, the club was one of just 5 in England to be given an almost-new air Dome from the LTA and plans have been ongoing for the past 2 years over how to fund its installation. The build will be funded by a combination of a loan from the LTA and fund-raising/sponsorship by the Tennis section, so now the hard work to raise this money is underway with various applications for funding being submitted and a very detailed project plan being drawn up in conjunction with the contractors who have been engaged to do the build. One of the early discussions is around the best access to the site which is alongside the existing dome, and how the large amount of earth which will be extracted in order to build the foundations will be disposed of. The mound behind the Bowls Green was created from the earthworks from the current dome, so it's not an insubstantial amount of earth to find a new home for in the most cost-effective way.

Watch this space, as they say, for more updates!

From Shop to Board Room

The Club purchased the lease of the former G&L Sports Shop in early 2023, after G&L sports concluded that a retail space was no longer a viable proposition.

The decision was taken to convert it into a room which can not only be used by club committees for meetings, or club members who need space to for meetings to organise club events, but also can be hired out by external organisations, groups, and companies for meetings and events.

Work was completed during last summer to rectify issues with the flat roof to ensure it is now fully waterproof, and then the inside was gutted and new wiring installed. The walls have been fully re-plastered after taking down the wooden cladding and the internal furniture removed before painting took place and new flooring was laid. New blinds for the windows and an improved security system as well as connections for computers to project either on a TV screen or via a portable projector have all been fitted.

Management Council and other section committees have been using the room regularly, and now a more detailed plan has been drawn up to turn the space into one fit for companies to hire out - whiteboards, flipcharts, some plants to help soften the echoes, and new furniture (tables and chairs) to give it a more professional look. If anyone knows of any large offices who are having a change of furniture please let their section chair know so we can see if we can help rehome it!

And finally we are also looking at various options for the walls - the Club logo as a piece of wall art, and images of the city of Peterborough through the ages to create a talking point during coffee breaks.

Keep in touch

If you don't know how to keep in touch with the club, we have plenty of different ways for you to keep up with our news or find out about the club in general

Website www.cityofpeterboroughsportsclub.co.uk
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/cityofpeterboroughsportsclub/
Twitter (X) @cityofpboroSC
Instagram @cityofpeterborosportsclub

If you need to contact the club by email, it's
manager@cityofpeterboroughsportsclub.co.uk

If you need to contact us about anything to do with car parking it's
carparkptsc@gmail.com

Management Council

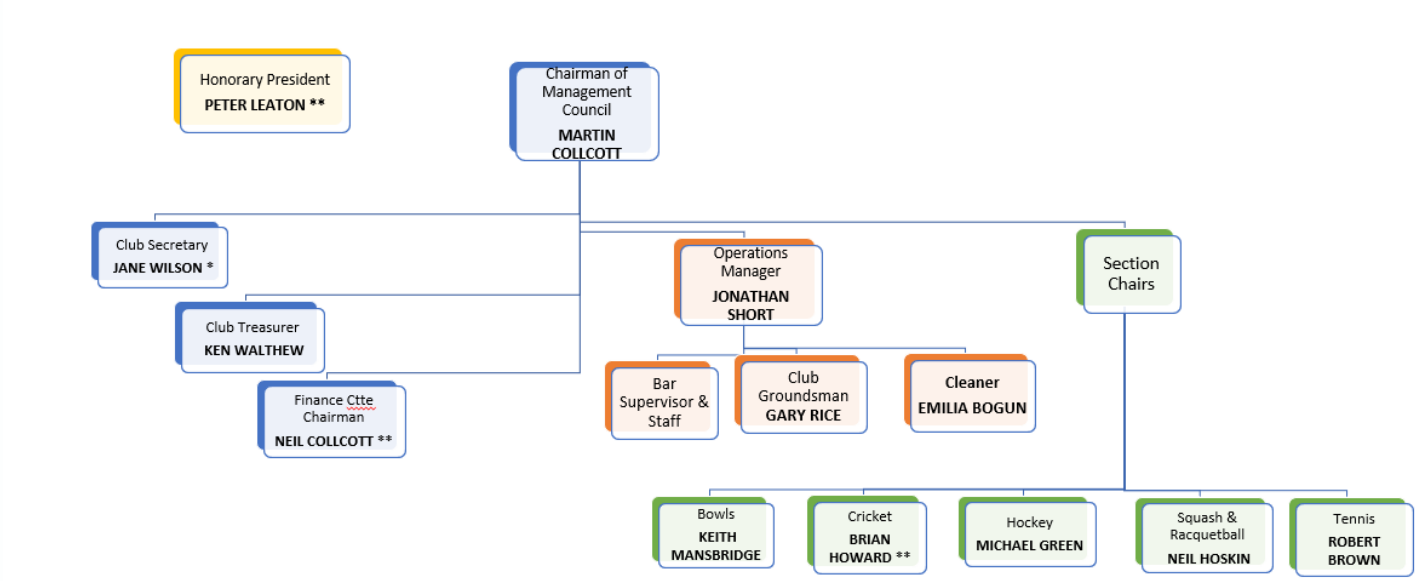
Chairman - Martin Collcott
Club Secretary - Jane Wilson
Treasurer - Ken Walthew
Finance Cttee Chair - Neil Collcott

Sports Club Operations & Commercial Manager - Jonathan Short

Bowls Chairman - Keith Mansbridge
Cricket Chairman - Brian Howard
Hockey Chairman - Michael Green
Squash & Raquetball Chairman - Neil Hoskin
Tennis Chairman - Robert Brown (Council Rep - Bill Skeed)

The Club Structure

City of Peterborough Sports Club :
How the club works for you



- Company Secretary

** Director of PTCH&S

Management Council consists of the Officers of the Club and the Section Chairs

Management Council

- Manages strategic direction of the club
- Approves major financial spend recommended by Finance committee
- Approves major project work
- Approves new policies and amendments to existing policies
- Manage club finances including all income & expenditure, subscriptions and bar
- Manages club discipline
- Recruit senior staff roles to manage the club

Club Staff

- Manage the day-to-day operations of the club
- Manage the commercial activities of the club including lettings and Club events
- Maintain the grounds and club physical infrastructure
- Manage major Club Projects
- Recruit staff as required (bar, cleaners, assistant groundsmen) to run the club in agreement with MC

Section Chairs

- Manage all activities relating to their sport
- Responsible for compliance with all policies and requirements of their governing body, including safeguarding
- Manage recruitment of members to the club
- Manage finances relating to participation in their sport in conjunction with Club Treasurer
- Manage section-run events, fund-raising and section sponsorship