

## May 2020 Newsletter



Most importantly we hope that all members and their families have kept safe and well during the 'lockdown' period. As we are all aware this next stage, with some easing of the arrangements, still presents significant challenges and we urge everyone to follow the Government guidance.

As members know the Club courts have reopened and, using the LTA terminology, we have been able to return to 'restricted play'.

At the time of publication of this newsletter we do not know when the easing of the lockdown will apply to opening the Clubhouse nor being able to

have general play at the Club. However, we will ensure that members are kept up to date with the latest news when we receive it.

The Committee has continued to meet, via Zoom, during the last two months and the purpose of this newsletter is to maintain communication with our members and keep people informed on what is happening to ensure that **Stockton Heath Lawn Tennis Club** continues to thrive.

### 'Return to Restricted Play' LTA

At present restricted play means that only singles can be played for most people. Members of the same household can play doubles. Social distancing must be observed whilst at the Club and the guidance that has been issued to all members is based on the LTA information (see below).



*'We know how important it is for people to be active, and the particular role tennis can have in the physical and mental wellbeing of those that play it. By its very nature, tennis is an activity whereby close person to person contact can be avoided, with the Government saying tennis is a good example of an activity that can be undertaken in a way compliant with social distancing restrictions.'*

*Based on our discussions with Government and following the adjustment of lockdown restrictions, the LTA has developed a set of practical guidelines for venues, coaches and players to follow so that tennis can be played in England during lockdown, where the local environment allows.*

*These guidelines apply to both tennis and padel, and outline adaptations so that tennis activity can be enjoyed in a way that is in line with Government advice and helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19. They include measures to limit hand to shared surface contact and minimise unnecessary interactions with others.'*

<https://www.lta.org.uk/globalassets/news/2020/lta-guidance-for-tennis-players---covid-19.pdf>

Please visit the LTA website and follow the guidelines which cover players, coaches and tennis venues.



## 'Return to Restricted Play' SHLTC Advice

All members have been sent a number of documents via email explaining the arrangements for playing during this period. The one below gives the most important information and all members are asked to adhere to the guidelines. Court booking is essential.

### Stockton Heath Lawn Tennis Club

Coronavirus (Covid-19) Latest Advice

Players please note the following:

- The courts can be played on from Weds 13 May 2020. Only one shale court and courts 4 (coaching court), 5, 6 and 7 can be used.
- Please follow the Government and LTA guidelines; only singles play allowed and doubles where all participants are from the same household. Singles players can be from different households.
- Social distancing must be adhered to at all times and the Clubhouse will remain closed currently.
- Please wash your hands prior to play and directly after playing. There is an outside tap for water and bring your own soap, hand sanitiser and towel.
- You must book a court for one hour playing sessions. You cannot turn up and play without booking. If at the end of your allocated hour there appears to be no booking for the next slot you can carry on playing.
- The booking procedure has been emailed to each member.
- During play please ensure 2 metres distance is observed between yourself and the other player(s). Where possible do not change ends and if you do crossover do so on the opposite sides of the court.
- Separate seating arrangements have been provided on each court if needed and leave your tennis bags well away from the other player's equipment.
- Do not share any equipment, drinks or snacks during play.
- Avoid using your hands to pick up tennis balls that aren't yours – use your racquet/foot to hit/kick them to your opponent or return them to another court.
- At the end of your session please leave the court net set; do not touch the net winder. Lock the court behind you and ensure you wash your hands.
- Clean and wipe down your equipment, including racquets and water bottles, before and after use.
- If you need to sneeze or cough do so into a tissue or upper sleeve and avoid touching your face.



Thank you

Please read and follow the guidelines on the LTA website 'Guidance for Tennis Players Covid-19 Return to Restricted Play'



### Why do I have to book a court?

- to ensure fair access to courts at this high demand period
- to manage social distancing effectively
- to ensure only Club members use the courts

### How do I book a court?

- contact Sarah Szunko first and obtain the court code  
shmembership@hotmail.com
- contact Sue Hendry with details of booking request  
shlhc-chairman@hotmail.com

### Coaching court

- Ant and Iain will be using court 4 for coaching and this should not be used for any other play

### Court 7

- Generally, court 7 will be booked for players who need the extra distancing of access adjacent to the top car park

### Locking courts

- Please ensure all courts are locked when you finish playing



## Club Membership

There have been numerous emails sent out with regards to club membership during this time. We have tried to be fair, consistent and understanding of the situation in all cases. If you have any further queries about membership subscriptions then please contact Sarah or Sue.



Sarah Szunko:

shmembership@hotmail.co.uk

Sue Hendry:

shlhc-chairman@hotmail.com

Thank you to everyone who has, and continues to, support the Club.



## New Members!

We have welcomed some new members to the Club recently and that is really encouraging. We are not able to have our usual social tennis and Club events, at the moment, however we look forward to the opportunities for us all to mix socially and on court.

If you are aware of anyone who might be interested in playing at SHLTC please encourage them to get in touch. Milton is updating the Club website and Ant has been posting on Facebook which has generated a lot of interest in the Club. Thanks, guys, for all your hard work!

## Club developments



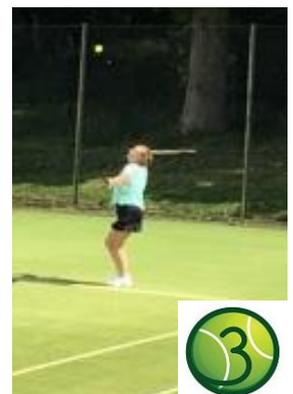
There is plenty of 'behind the scenes' work still being done by various members of the Committee in terms of the major capital build project. It will be no surprise that increasing the Club membership numbers is a vital part of future developments, as is raising internal funds. To this end there are a number of fund-raising opportunities that members can get involved in:

**The 100 Club** – initial information and sign ups occurred prior to lockdown and we decided to delay the full roll out until we started playing again. Paul Ewing is co-ordinating this so please contact him if you are over 16 and haven't already contacted him. A draw in July is planned so please contact Paul, sign up and help the Club.

**Easyfundraising** – is an initiative to raise money for the Club through people's on-line purchases. Please let Sue Hendry know if you are interested in joining this scheme. shlhc-chairman@hotmail.com See more information on page 8

**SHLTC - CASC (Community Amateur Sports Club)** – HMRC confirmed our designation very recently and the Club can now claim tax relief and gift aid, thus raising more funds in future. Thanks to Howard for all his work here.

Please support all of the fund-raising efforts of the Club as it really will make a difference to our ability to translate plans into improved facilities. If you have any ideas or suggestions then contact any Committee member.



## WDLTA (Warrington and District LTA)

George has provided the following summary of the key messages from the WDLTA Committee:

*All LTA organised events and league competitions remain suspended for the time being.*

*With no prospect of being able to play tennis without social distancing until June at the very earliest, though likely much later than that in reality, we came to the following conclusions.*

- 1. Regrettably, the Men's and Ladies league competitions for this season are cancelled.*
- 2. It is still hoped that we may be able to run a Mixed competition later in the season.*
- 3. The Warrington Senior and Junior Open tournaments are both cancelled.*
- 4. The KO and o45s competitions have been suspended pending further advice and review*

*We will continue to monitor the advice from Government and the LTA, and if and when that advice changes, we will look to provide some form of competitive tennis for you to enjoy; our over-riding concern remains the health and well-being of our members, and the general public at large.*



Despite little prospect of any competitive tennis in the near future, it is good to see so many of you taking the opportunity to brush up on your silky singles skills! Thanks to Sue for taking on board the unenviable task of co-ordinating court bookings on top of all the other "Chair" responsibilities. Hopefully it won't be too long before we can all start playing doubles again.

George Szunko (Men's Match Secretary)



### Coaching



Ant and Iain are able to run one-to-one coaching sessions in a safe way so please contact them if you would like to arrange this.

**Ant 07970 530705**

**Iain 07946 730169**

### Racquet restringing

Please contact Darren Minjoot on 07899 985289 if you need a restring. Darren has kindly offered to make a donation to the Club for every racquet he strings for members. Thanks Darren



## Singles Players List



Some of you have asked if we know of any other members who would like to play singles tennis with them. If you would like to be part of a scheme where we try to pair/buddy up please let me know. I will keep a list and share phone numbers/email addresses for those who are interested.

Sarah Szunko: [shmembership@hotmail.com](mailto:shmembership@hotmail.com)

## Courts and Grounds

As always, our grounds require a great deal of looking after. For obvious reasons we are not currently organising working parties, however if you are able to give a little time then that would be greatly appreciated. There is a list of straightforward jobs that can be done safely by people working on their own.

Please contact Barrie Whittam at the Club.

## Contact us

As mentioned before, Milton has been working on updating the website and Ant has done a lot of publicity on Facebook. Since we have had new members join the Club recently it is perhaps timely to remind everyone of the key ways of contacting people and keeping in touch.

SHLTC website: [www.shlhc.co.uk](http://www.shlhc.co.uk)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Stockton-Heath-Tennis-Club-144879825560361/>



The website has dedicated email addresses for certain Committee members:

[enquiries@shlhc.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@shlhc.co.uk)  
[membership@shlhc.co.uk](mailto:membership@shlhc.co.uk)  
[secretary@shlhc.co.uk](mailto:secretary@shlhc.co.uk)  
[social@shlhc.co.uk](mailto:social@shlhc.co.uk)  
[coaching@shlhc.co.uk](mailto:coaching@shlhc.co.uk)  
[match.ladies@shlhc.co.uk](mailto:match.ladies@shlhc.co.uk)  
[match.men@shlhc.co.uk](mailto:match.men@shlhc.co.uk)

Sarah Szunko  
Brian Aitchison  
Alison Lewis  
Ant McCarthy  
Lynne Humphries  
George Szunko



Brian Aitchison



Alison Lewis



Milton Wimpenny

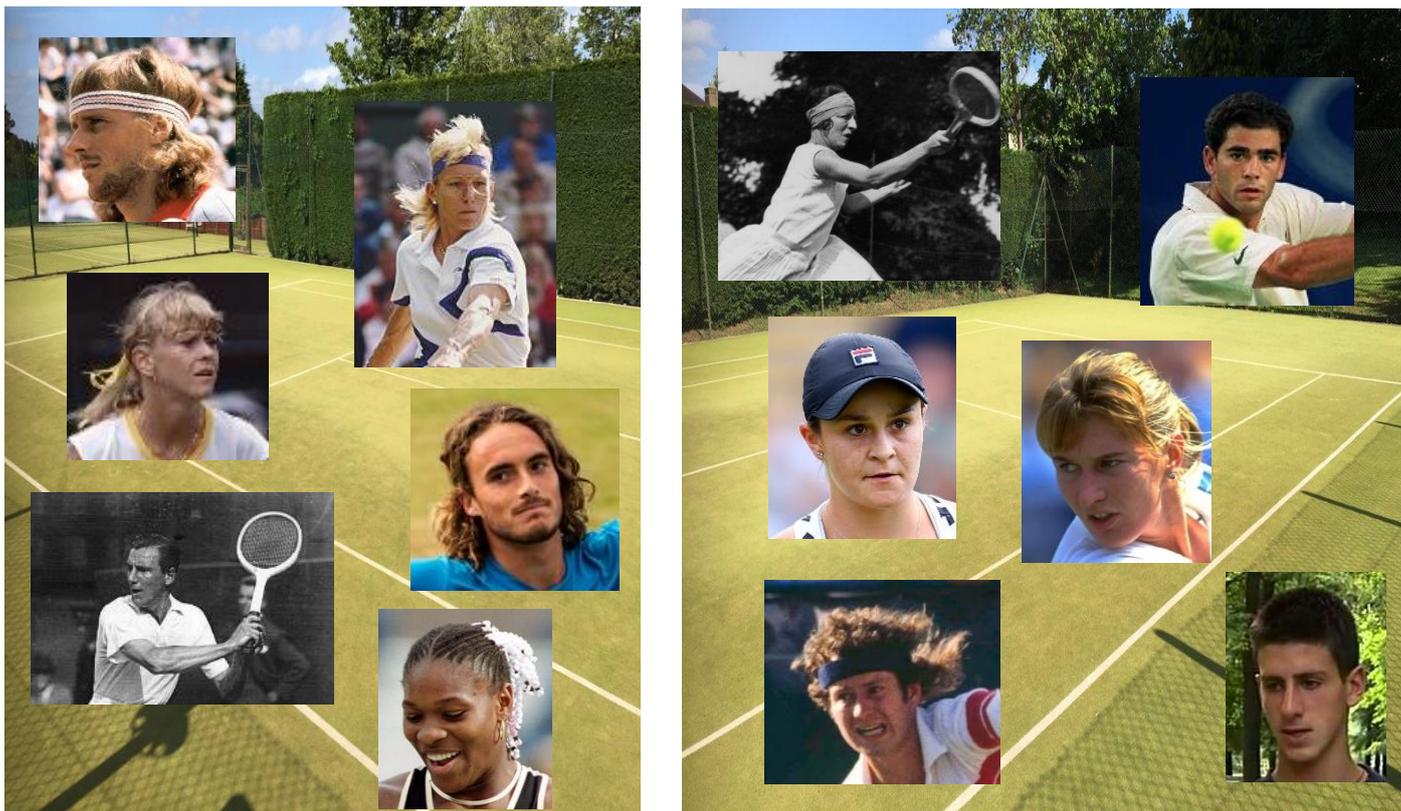


Ant McCarthy



## Who's playing at Stockton Heath?

A quiz to see how many famous tennis players on both sides of the net you can name!!



## SHLTC Defibrillator

The defibrillator has been moved into the porch so it is accessible and visible during the time when access to the Clubhouse is only for emergency purposes.

## Obituary Notice

Sadly, during the period, we have been in lockdown we have learned that we have lost two friends of our tennis Club.

Reg Humphries' wife Brenda has passed away this month. Whilst not a playing member of the Club many of you will remember Brenda attending socials and the New Year's Eve party with Reg.

Reg was a very able and popular member of the Club and was still playing until just recently.

I am also personally very saddened to let you know that Paul Stanton has passed away. I have fond memories of watching tennis matches with Colette and Paul, whilst sharing a glass of wine.

Both Colette and Paul were great supporters of the Club either attending Quiz Nights as a family or helping with the Junior events and supporting their children, Issy and Paul.

We send our sincerest condolences to both families.



## Meet the Head Coach at SHLTC ..... Ant McCarthy

I'm sure a lot of you are already aware that I am Ant, your follically challenged Head Coach of our glorious tennis club.



Here's a bit about me and the sport I fell head over heels in love with at the age of seven.



My tennis story began when a couple of coaches came into my school, Liverpool College and gave a taster session. Following the session, I persuaded my mother to take me to the Liverpool Tennis Centre and I did a session – I didn't want it to end! I kept hitting against a wall for thirty minutes after the end of the session and that was it .... I was hooked and have been ever since! (by the way a wall is one of the best hitting partners you can have)

After returning to the UK I coached at Liverpool Tennis Centre for a year. It was whilst I was there that I coached Shaun O'Brien, a player who won most improved deaf player for the GB team two years on the bounce (tennis pun intended). Shaun won the Junior Deaf Championships and European Doubles Deaf Championships to boot!

I moved from Liverpool Tennis Centre to SHLTC where I have been for the last thirteen years and have had the pleasure of coaching some fantastic juniors. Some have gone on to achieve scholarships to play college tennis in America.

The adults are a dream to work with and a lot of the members of the club I consider to be close friends of mine.



Contact Ant  
07970 530705  
xltennisuk@gmail.com



At the age of 15 I represented Great Britain in the LTA Two Nations challenge vs USA and I've played doubles to a very high level. I started coaching at the age of 17 and at 19 completed a six-month internship at John Newcombe's Tennis Ranch in New Braunfels Texas.

### Texas



This is where I honed my coaching skills whilst hitting with some of the best players in the USA including former top 40 ATP player Ryan Harrison who was only 11 years old 😊 Even at this age you could see he was destined to make it as a pro! He won the French Open Men's doubles in 2017. Think his invite to me was lost in the post!! (Ryan's on the right)



I am proud to say that SHLTC won the men's A division in the first couple of years of my tenure at SHLTC and recently we won the Arden Cup.



The coaching programme we have built up offers sessions for all ages and abilities. The oldest person I have coached at the club is 86 and the youngest is just 3!



I believe that learning tennis is like being given a key, in so much as wherever you go you can go to a tennis court and join in and be made welcome. Tennis is a sport you can play your whole life -that is one of the things that has made it so attractive to me as I am getting older! It is the love of my life (with my wife, of course!).

Ant



## A message from Sue, our Chairman

Dear Members,

I am sure everyone is delighted that the courts have been allowed to reopen, albeit with Government and LTA guidelines in place. As those of you who have already been down to play you will have seen that at the moment, we cannot open the clubhouse. Brian has kept us up to date with notices on guidelines and when you are down perhaps you could all re-read them to keep everything about safety fresh in your minds.

We were fortunate that during the period that we were closed, several of our members have kept an eye on the club by visiting as part of their daily exercise routine. Initially we did have some non-members taking advantage of our absence and we did have to take measures to ensure the courts were not being damaged by misuse.

We were given notification On Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May that courts could re-open in a few days' time on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup>. I will leave you to imagine the massive amount of hard work it took from Peter and Barrie to get the courts ready to open for you on the Wednesday, and in such excellent order. A massive thank to you for this Barrie and Peter.

We have now been open for restricted play for a few weeks and I would like to thank and mention the hard work that Sarah has put in to helping with the temporary booking system as well as dealing with the many new membership enquiries.

I am really looking forward to the time when our club can re-open fully and we can resume our play and all the social activities we had planned. Hopefully, it is not going to be too long 😊

Take care everyone,

Sue



## A bit more on Easyfundraising .....



Huge thanks to everyone who has already signed up for our SHLTC easyfundraising. All monies raised will go towards Club improvements.

We have already managed to raise some money at no extra cost to ourselves. All you have to do is sign up at this web address:

[https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stocktonheathlawntennisclub-1588079958-1992875856/?utm\\_campaign=raise-more%26utm\\_content=gs-f1](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stocktonheathlawntennisclub-1588079958-1992875856/?utm_campaign=raise-more%26utm_content=gs-f1)

Once you have joined and you are ready to start shopping online all you have to do is go onto the website and enter the website address of the retailer you are buying from. If they have signed up to easyfundraising you will be taken to their website. You make your purchase and they will send us a small donation at no extra cost to yourself. There are thousands of retailers who have joined the easyfundraising scheme so please join up and check out next time you buy.

Thank you for supporting our Club.

## And finally..... thanks again

Our thanks go especially to Sue and Sarah who have dealt with many enquiries concerning membership and latterly booking of the courts. And of course, Peter and Barrie who worked so hard to get the courts ready for play in such a short time after the long 'lockdown' period.

*If you have any items for future newsletters then please contact Brian Aitchison*

*secretary@shlhc.co.uk*

