

Dear All,

Please find below an update as a follow-up to the open letter sent in July, reminders about the Awards and AGM, including information about proposed changes to the Tennis Sussex Rules which include two new Management Board roles.

2020

The year started well with our Sussex boys under 18 team coming 3rd in the top division and our girls coming a commendable top of division 2b at the end of February.

However, 2020 has certainly ended up being a year that we could never have envisaged and very tough for so many; it's good to reflect and look forward to hopefully a much healthier and safer year in 2021.

It was great to have so much feedback – ranging from those who feel that Tennis Sussex should stop all activities and wait for a change in fortune through to those who contributed to funds through many imaginative and admirable ways and sent their messages of support and suggestions to assist.

A number of successful disability tennis events took place including beach tennis sessions for adults with learning disabilities. In August the well organised County training catch-up and Sussex Matchplay Championships were very welcome and appreciated by all participants. Padel tennis continues to grow in popularity – any questions? Contact tennismichelle@hotmail.co.uk for more information.

One thing 2020 has highlighted is the important role tennis (and all sport) plays in our physical and mental health. Even when we haven't been able to get out onto a tennis court, there have been many initiatives based from home, activities involving forms of online competition (quizzes, remember the toilet roll challenges?! cake baking with a tennis theme). The friendships and community spirit inspired by our sport has been a strength to many.

Tennis Sussex Strategic Plan

Over the last few weeks we have reviewed and updated the Tennis Sussex Strategic Plan (<https://www.tennissussex.com/strategic-plan-2021-and-beyond-2/>). This latest version is now on the website and we would welcome any feedback.

As per my letter in the summer our objectives remain as:

Tennis Sussex to have a bigger profile in the County

To offer more Competition for juniors & seniors for all abilities of the game

To create more opportunities for more players to play tennis

To create and deliver a clear player pathway as part of our county/performance programme (all ages, all levels, all abilities)

To offer more opportunities for Disability Tennis within the County.

Financial status

On the finances, there were many amazing and impressive fundraising activities, including the auction of promises, a number of individual sponsorship initiatives and personal contributions. Many thanks to Julie Goldin who was fundamental in encouraging and managing much of this. Funds raised have been transferred into the 2020/2021 financial year (1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021) and will be allocated to the relevant activities, rather than contributing towards reducing the deficit in 2019/2020, which ended up as approximately £39k. With a 'loss' of £60k due to sponsorship being decimated, this was not as bad as it looked like being at one stage. Agreements have been reached with a number of new partners and we have ongoing discussions with others. Not all of these are dependent on the Wimbledon Championships proceeding as normal, though the majority are.

Tennis Sussex employees

The paid staff have been very flexible and worked on reduced hours and we have used flexible furloughing whilst working towards maintaining and developing the activities allowed. Thanks are due to all who have contributed over the past few months: the clubs who have offered use of their courts at reduced rates or for free; the many coaches who have given their time for free; the leads on competitions who have managed the constant changes; the many volunteers who have contributed in so many ways along with our Tennis Sussex team.

Awards and AGM

Having debated whether to postpone the Awards planned for February 7th and our AGM planned for 11th February 2021, it was agreed it would be best to proceed with both to be held online. Please make a note of these dates in your diaries and register your 'attendance' at either one with office@tennisussex.com.

Although the number of nominations for awards were lower than in previous years and the number of awards reduced we received many quality nominations which are being reviewed against the set criteria and are preparing for an exciting remote ceremony.

At the AGM there will be a number of changes to the Rules proposed – a full copy of these will be posted shortly with a summary of the changes listed at the end of this letter.

The Management Board (MB) roles with brief descriptions are now on the website ([Tennis Sussex Roles - Tennis Sussex](#)). They include the addition of a couple of new positions on the MB, one **to represent clubs (all venues)** and one **to represent parents/juniors**. We are very keen to ensure all relevant stakeholder groups are represented and encourage you to look at all of the roles and request more information or contact myself or any of the current MB if interested, to find out more.

We will also be advertising for a new role as Partner Liaison Lead. Details to be posted shortly but again if anyone is interested or knows anyone who might be, please do contact the office at office@tennissussex.com.

I would like to remind you that, in accordance with the Sussex County LTA Rules any resolutions or nominations for the AGM are due to be sent not later than one month prior to the meeting, i.e. by 11th January 2021. However, given the lateness of sending out more details this date is being extended to **17th January 2021**. They should be sent via email to secretary@tennissussex.com.

On behalf of Tennis Sussex I would like to wish you and your families a very peaceful, happy, safe and a much busier (tennis-wise) 2021.

Regards,

Anne Clark

Chair, Tennis Sussex

Summary of Tennis Sussex (TS) Rules (proposed changes):

1. General tidying up, adding in page numbers (accepted changes version only).
2. Added in references to safeguarding and the LTA safeguarding policy.
3. Removal of reference to the Ladies and Men's Match Secretaries and Captains in connection to Members of the Association.
4. Removal of TS staff (coordinator and support) from the MB (see point 9. below); Introduction of a Club representative and parent/junior representative; objective here is to ensure full representation of stakeholders across tennis in Sussex. NB there is a proposal to introduce a 'Partner Liaison' role as part of the TS team (retainer plus

commission). That person would be able to / expected to attend MB meetings (see point 9. below) and/or provide reports.

5. All MB representatives including the Officer roles to be elected at the AGM each year (as per this year's AGM vote – also AGM details changed clause 11.1).
6. Removal of the wording 'guidelines' for Clause 9.5:
 - Retiring members of the Management Board may be re-elected. [Guidelines for] the length of service of Officer roles are that the same roles should not be filled by the same person for longer than nine years. No volunteer should fill more than one role, whether Management Board or not, unless a suitable alternative volunteer cannot be found
7. A member of the MB can be asked to resign if requested to do so by not less than one half of the other MB members rather than three quarters.
8. Mention of introducing Standing Orders if wished.
9. Tennis Sussex office staff may attend all or part of Management Board meetings, as required by the Board, but without voting rights.
10. Clarification on numbers of meetings, quorate, expenses, decisions, conflicts of interest etc.
11. Trustees to take on more involvement in overseeing actions of the Association and Management Board.