

Chairman's Report 2019 – 2020

As I outlined last year, we have been working hard on plans for the medium to long term future of the Club, and I was delighted with the response to our new plans from the Club members at the AGM. We could so easily sit back and do nothing and wait for others to control our future, but the positive feedback and offers of help when needed have given us a mandate to go for a very exciting new facility knowing that the Club is fully behind it.

The good news is that we have been offered land by the Wheatcroft family and have already started the process of planning a way forward towards a new future which hopefully will provide us with a sustainable new home. The first hurdle has been addressed which is the problem of Green Belt status for the land. We have been through the Pre-planning process with Rushcliffe Planning department and meetings with Rushcliffe Sports Development Team and I am happy to report that both have been positive. The planners have highlighted areas concerning "Green Issues" which need to be addressed, and the sensitivity of the project as a whole which we can deal with in our formal plans which we will be developing this year. I am also meeting with Sport England and England Hockey this month with the aim of getting them firmly on-side, and hopefully getting some assistance with potential capital funding schemes. I am also meeting Helen Richardson-Walsh with the aim of gaining an insight into how Hockey is run in Holland where she has played professionally. I may also be able to persuade her to act as Project Ambassador, baby permitting (yes you heard that right!)

Meanwhile meetings with potential Club partners have proven very promising. There is real potential for collaboration with local Netball, Tennis and Bowls Clubs, who will bring in serious revenue and ensure that the new facility can be run on a firm financial and professional footing. I have also been working with a local alternative energy company to look at the logistics of making the Club fully energy self-sufficient and Carbon Neutral, using the car parking structure to house PV panels and air heat pumps.

In the new term we will be meeting with the heads of local schools with the aim of gaining buy-in for them to use our facility and coaches to enhance their sports options. We have already met the Sports team at Nottingham Trent University who have expressed an interest in using facilities during the week for their students.

In the next few months I will be announcing a number of meetings where you as Club Members can get involved in moving the project forward. We will need to design and finance the project carefully as I am fully committed to creating THE BEST possible facility for the future of Club-based sport. I am not prepared to waste our time on compromised resources due to underfunding. We have a one-time opportunity to create a brilliant community resource that will act as a template and inspiration for other clubs in a similar fight for their sporting future.

So – exciting times ahead. Along with planning for the future we will continue to do what we do best, enjoy our hockey and enjoy all the special "Bridgy" things such as the social side which will continue unabated next season. Get involved it is YOUR CLUB.

If we are serious about improving on-pitch performance next season we need to be fitter and better at hockey, so get down to training, and maybe get in some extra physical activity as well so that you are ready to go when the Leagues start. I have been swimming every morning for the last 4 months and have never felt better, so maybe the old hockey stick will come out of the corner of the garage? Don't tell Jo.

Training gets underway in August, and the first social events are booked so break out the diary and ink those in. Availability for the full season is on your Members page of the web site, so please let us know your availabilities as far ahead as possible. Subs can be paid online, or by BAKS with our new account number so get that sorted ASAP. Let's have a great season. Again.....

Geoff Bail
Chairman August 2019