

Jesmond Dene Real Tennis Club
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www.jdrtc.co.uk

To: David Hawkins

Chairman of The Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust

The generous donation of £50,000 from CCCT has enabled us to undertake Phase 2 of the refurbishment work of the Club.

At the commencement of this project the Club engaged the services of a local architect with expertise in the restoration of listed buildings. We felt this was an essential element in ensuring any building work did not detract from the building's heritage, and complied with all of the planning requirements.

As we detailed in our submission to you, the key objective was to upgrade the club room and hospitality area, known as the "Dedans". This is the main area used by members and was shared by the Club Professional and Club Administrator. We have refurbished the lean-to building at the current entrance to the court to provide a workshop, so that many of the professionals' tasks making balls and restringing rackets can be carried out there. This has allowed for the Dedans to provide members and guests with a comfortable club room.

A major part of the Phase 2 works involved levelling of the floor in the Dedans which was stepped, together with installing a drinks and coffee area. The room has been completely refurbished, replacing the old radiators, ceiling and lighting and redecorating. Ahead of this, we had to undertake remedial work to the Dedans roof which had started to leak. We also refurbished the bench for spectators which we understand was original when the court was opened in 1894.

We have also reversed the outside door. This is in preparation for the time when this becomes the main entrance to the Club when the area around the court is developed for housing. Although this has been delayed, we will then have to rebuild the rear entrance portico but have decided that it would be better to wait in case of any adverse effects from the developers' building works.

We also took the opportunity during the quiet month of August to resurface the court floor and to repaint the woodwork and historic details of the court.

We now have a very comfortable members club room which is the main viewing and socialising area. It also provides the facility for large groups of local students and scholars to be filmed and their lessons to be reviewed and critiqued on a large format TV screen.

As we had hoped, since the court was reopened before the start of the new academic year, we have started, to hold group sessions with local schools and students to actively promote the sport. We have had several school sessions, with both pupils and staff, with more planned.

We have also renewed our links with universities. Newcastle University is very active with a club of 15-20 students. In the past Durham University was a major participant and Northumbria less so. This has reversed so far this year, but it is early days and we are hopeful that the Durham numbers will match the numbers that we are seeing from both of the closest Newcastle universities. Another real success has been York University, who have started to send two minibuses up on Saturdays with 15 new converts!

In the past, our junior's section has been small but, over the last few weeks, progress has been fantastic. We have a group of around fourteen under fives and, whilst the teenage group is still relatively small, we have four very talented players who all have the potential to challenge our best adults before long.

The successful recruitment of young scholars and students is critical to the longer-term development of both the game and the club in the North East. Parents who are watching are also enjoying the facilities, whilst socialising they are taking an interest in playing as well.

We are very grateful to you and the Trustees of CCCT for their generosity which has made such a difference to us. We would like to invite you to visit the club and allow us to show you the difference that you are making.

Richard MacAlister

Chairman

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