



Chairman's Report

OVERVIEW

Good evening everyone, and thank you all for coming.

It is a real pleasure to welcome you to another Southgate Hockey Club Annual General Meeting.

Looking back over the last twelve months we've achieved a huge amount together. We've celebrated success on the pitch, continued to grow off it, and perhaps most importantly, we've secured foundations that will benefit this club for generations.

There is a great deal to celebrate this evening.

But there is also a great deal still to do.

That combination—pride in what we've achieved and ambition for what comes next—is what makes the club at an important place in its history- an exciting place to be. Not without its challenges.

Across the club we've seen success in almost every area.

Our women's section continues to go from strength to strength, with both first teams competing in the National League and the wider section enjoying one of its strongest seasons in recent memory.

Our junior section has continued its remarkable growth. Membership subscriptions have increased by 31% this year alone and, over the last three seasons, we've grown from around 300 juniors to approximately 450. Alongside that, our award-winning outreach programme now works with more than 30 state schools, introducing hundreds of young people of all backgrounds to hockey and strengthening our links with our local community.

Today we field 29 junior teams from Under 8 through to Under 18. We now have over 150 children in our Tots to Under-10 programme alone.



Our men's section has also enjoyed a largely encouraging season. Our Men's 2s have successfully established themselves in the National League following promotion, while our Titans secured promotion back to the London Premier Division. Although our Men's 1s suffered the disappointment of relegation after three dramatic seasons in the Premier Division, we remain ambitious. Lee Ible joins us as Head Coach with an exciting vision for the future, and we're confident the next chapter will be a positive one with strong player retention from a committed and talented young side.

There is more we want to achieve with our senior men's programme, but these are important steps in the right direction.

A word also to thank Justin Edwards for his work building our umpire programme, we have had more umpires turning out this year (in smart new tops) including new umpires- than in many previous seasons- young umpires like David James and Tom Davies getting assessed, many members taking advantage of the free online level one course online and a real push to get more of our women's section umpiring was rewarded with much better representation in the last months of the season. There is still more to do- but a big step forward from last year.

We have also opened a club shop following on from member demand.

FREEHOLD

Without question, however, the defining achievement of the year has been securing the freehold of our home here at Trent Park.

This is transformational and worth us reflecting on.

For decades, people have spoken about what Southgate *could* become. Owning our own home means those conversations can now become plans, and those plans can become reality.

It gives us control over our future.

It gives us the ability to develop the land behind us and creates some real opportunities- like Padel.



That achievement belongs to many people, but I particularly want to recognise the vision and determination of SLT Chairman Neil Murphy, together with our Trustees and everyone who has contributed to this extraordinary project.

Future generations of Southgate members will benefit from what has been achieved this year.

PADEL

And speaking of which many of you will understandably be asking about the padel courts.

The project has taken longer to get to the construction than we had hoped. Planning issues, drainage challenges and the discovery of significant clay beneath the site all required changes to both the engineering solution and contractor.

The good news is that those issues are now largely behind us, and construction is expected to begin within the next month, with a build time of around four months. The Padel brings with it some significant new income and a great and popular sport into Trent Park- we can't wait to see the courts in action.

COMMITTEE

I have the privilege of chairing a committee made up entirely of volunteers who give enormous amounts of their time, expertise and energy to this club. Their commitment often goes unseen, but without it Southgate simply wouldn't function. It has also been great to see James Duthie take on his presidential duties with such gusto and commitment- James has made the role his own already.

I consider myself incredibly fortunate to work alongside such a talented and dedicated group of people, and I thank every one of them.

This year we also say farewell to our Women's Club Captain, Charlotte Childs, as she begins an exciting new chapter in Australia.

Charlotte has given this club an enormous amount, both on and off the pitch. She has been an outstanding leader, an exceptional volunteer and a wonderful ambassador for Southgate.



Charlotte, we owe you a tremendous debt of gratitude.

Thank you.

At the same time, I'm delighted that Magda and Jasmine have put themselves forward to join the committee.

Last year I said that this is your club.

It is run by members, for members.

Anyone can help shape its future.

You simply have to step forward.

It is encouraging to see people continuing to do exactly that. And we hope more members will get involved in ways big and small- there is always much to do.

DOH

I'd also like to recognise our Director of Hockey, Chris Pearce, who has now completed his third year in the role.

Working alongside Chris has been one of the real pleasures of my time as Chairman. He cares deeply about every member of this club, regardless of age or ability, and that culture is reflected throughout everything he does.

His Mixed Masters sessions have become one of the club's great success stories, while his work developing our outreach programme was deservedly recognised by both London Hockey and England Hockey.

The growth we've seen across our junior section is no accident. It is the result of sustained hard work and clear vision.

LIZ

This year also marks the beginning of another significant transition.



After twenty years of extraordinary service, Liz Moss has announced her intention to retire as Centre Manager.

It is difficult to imagine Southgate without Liz.

For two decades she has been the constant at the heart of this club—keeping everything moving, solving countless problems and supporting generations of members.

There will be many opportunities over the coming months to celebrate Liz properly.

For now, I simply want to say thank you.

The plan is for Liz to oversee a gradual handover as we recruit her successor, with that process expected to begin towards the end of August

CLUB FINANCES

In terms of our financial sustainability. Neil and Caroline work incredibly hard to keep subs affordable, but costs continue to rise and our facilities require sustained investment. The purchase of the freehold gives us enormous opportunity—but opportunity alone doesn't generate income. Our task now is to unlock the commercial potential of Trent Park through sponsorship, events, partnerships and making better use of the wonderful facilities we now own. We must become less reliant on the extraordinary generosity of a handful of individuals and build a model that is sustainable for the long term.

We still have more work to do maximising our commercial potential. The committee works very hard to keep the cost of our subs both competitive and affordable- yet costs as we know are going up and our facility which we are so proud of needs care, love and attention and at times money and investment.

What does that look like- aside from simply donating - which is of course encouraged , but just as is encouraged is for each member being an ambassador for the club, to be proactive, spread the word, speak to friends, invite people down to watch a game, get people to try out the sport in our B2H sessions, book an event at the centre, hire the pitch for a game, play summer hockey- every little helps. And it all adds up.



SOUTHGATE HC

ON THE PITCH

On the pitch our M1 after 3 dramatic years in the Premier Division fell short at the last and were relegated into Division One South. Lee Ible will come in to the coach the team after impressing us with his vision for the team and we are excited to see what the next chapter will be.

Our W1 under new coach Ronan Casella maintained their status in Division One South and will look to really push on and challenge for promotion into the Premier Division now with Adam Mulholland's W2's in the East Conference.

Our W3's secured promotion and our W4's pulled off a great effort to hold their status in Division 2 North.

CLUB GROWTH

Yet moving down from the performance teams while we've achieved remarkable growth in our junior section, our next challenge is strengthening our adult membership.

In particular, we want to start a rebuild the core of our men's section, where we've reduced from ten teams before COVID to seven today. Our M7 will move back to the East League to offer a more accessible entry level experience for those players and we are introducing an 070's team for the first time. We'd also love to see the return of a Women's Masters side and more growth throughout our Women's section. We have the capacity here to field more teams, play more hockey and generate more revenue for the club.

This matters.

Not simply because bigger clubs are better clubs—but because thriving adult hockey creates the volunteers, coaches, parents, committee members and role models who sustain every other part of Southgate.

Over Christmas, some members came together to tackle the challenge, and I was hugely encouraged by the response.



SOUTHGATE HC

Players including Chloe Voss, Claire Roughton, Victoria, Mon, Bhu and many others have since then brought enormous energy to this work, organising meetings, sharing ideas and helping build an even stronger club culture.

That team spirit is exactly what Southgate is about.

Every member has a part to play.

So recruit a friend using the new incentives Neil and Caroline have laid out in the subs for next season

Encourage a former teammate to come back.

Introduce someone to back to hockey.

Umpire a game

Take an online course

Volunteer to be a match day helper

Become a friend of Southgate

Introduce a potential sponsor

Organise a friendly social game

Come down buy a drink and cheer on the 1s or 2 or 3s or magnums or any club side.

In ways big and small you can make a difference and shape the future for Southgate. Don't rely on the handful of people on the committee- or Chris. If every member did just one of these things we would exponentially improve the club at all levels.

END

We stand two months away from what should be a great season 4 teams in the national league, our newly promoted W3s in London Division One, on the cusp of welcoming our 500th Junior member, our Titans back in the Premier Division and a new team formed in the form of our 070's competing in a brand new league not to mention the opening of 6 padel courts by the Autumn.



1986

SOUTHGATE HC

Much to look forward to and much to do. My thanks all our members for all you have done over the last 12 months and subject to election I look forward to serving you for 12 more months as your chairman.