

BRAID ESTATE RECREATION GROUNDS (BERG) NEWSLETTER 2023

On behalf of BERG I would like to thank the committees and office bearers of the Braid Bowling and Braid Tennis clubs for their efforts in 2022 to get back to something approaching normal after the disruption caused by the pandemic. Looking at the combined membership of our two clubs, it will be seen that some 400 members whose ages range from 10 to 90 continue to enjoy the facilities that were first opened in 1890.

Work has continued both to maintain and indeed to improve our playing facilities. Particular thanks are due to Graham Dunsmore, the Bowling Club Facilities Manager, who ensures that the Grounds are properly maintained; that essential repairs are identified; that areas for future action are flagged up and that commissioned work is carried out successfully.

The BERG committee is always looking for new members to represent the interests of the householders of the Braid Estate. Commitment rarely extends beyond participating in the AGM. If you are interested, then please contact eric.melvin@btinternet.com.

The 2021 BERG AGM will be held in the Bowling Club Pavilion on Sunday 18th March at 2.30. Coffee/Tea & biscuits will be provided. The meeting is open to all those who are interested in the management and future of the Braid Estate Recreation Grounds.

Finally, I would like to thank the club secretaries for providing reports for this newsletter which you will find below. **Eric Melvin, Chair BERG, February 2023**

BRAID BOWLING CLUB

After two years when play was subject to the rules and restrictions made necessary by the Covid pandemic, members of the Bowling Club enjoyed a return to more normal conditions in 2022, with a full playing season extending from mid-April to late September. Members participated in a wide range of internal and external competitions, including weekly League matches, as well as the sociable and popular Mixed Play afternoons and evenings. The Summer Fair, the Club's major fund-raising event, was held in blustery conditions in June. The Annual Dinner took place in late October, when prize-winners were presented with their trophies.

At the end of the 2021 season the Club had 109 members. Despite losing a number of members through death and retirement from bowling, the recruitment of new members meant by 30 September 2022 membership had increased to 111, of whom 10 are Associate (non-playing) Members and 2 Honorary.

The Men's Section has its opening day on 15 April and the Ladies' on 17 April. New members are always welcome and for their first season pay a reduced subscription

of £50. Those wishing to have a go at bowling before committing themselves to joining the Club are invited to attend "Try Bowls" sessions on Sunday afternoons, starting on 7 May, with participants being asked to come along at 1.45 pm. Bowling shoes are available to borrow for these sessions and the Club has a range of bowls for all to try. Experienced members will give guidance and instruction as required.

Peter Graham, Club Secretary, February 2023

BRAID TENNIS CLUB

Braid Tennis Club membership has never been higher in all its 133-year existence. Pandemic restrictions increased demand for home-based activities and all of our neighbouring tennis clubs experienced a similar demand for memberships. We had to keep a large waiting list at the beginning of last year, but luckily managed to accommodate all those still wanting to join. As a consequence, we now have 315 full playing members plus 31 temporary winter members. It is likely we will be able to take in the winter members. Owners in the Braid Estate have priority should they wish to join. Despite the numbers, there is still court time available.

Everyone enjoyed the return to something nearing normal. We had 8 adult teams playing in the East of Scotland LTA Leagues as well as a couple of junior teams. The ladies and mens vets and the supervets were also able to compete. We ran a very successful club championship in August and a senior tournament a month later. Our social tennis sessions, the Golden Oldies and Saturday Social run every week with many regular players. There is still some caution around taking part in social activities in the clubhouse, but we were able to host our annual BBQ-helpfully outside of course- with over 100 members and guests attending. Excellent food of course -and it never rains!

The new court surface and lights are greatly appreciated by everyone, members and visitors alike. We did have to close the courts before and after Christmas due to ice and snow and we also had a problem with a frozen pipe in the clubhouse. Plans are already underway to further frost proof the clubhouse to avoid problems next winter. The clubhouse has been decorated and is in good order otherwise. Our facilities management team work throughout the year in conjunction with the Bowling club to keep the grounds in good condition.

We were able to host the Edinburgh Southern Orienteering Club in October. The organisers needed a dry base to set up computer equipment to time their members racing over Blackford Hill -running the race in the dark! The orienteers were most grateful to be warm and dry in the clubhouse.

As a result of the pandemic and the subsequent increase in membership, the club is in good financial order, with sufficient funds for the future.

Susie Jackson, Secretary Braid Tennis Club February 2023