

Dons Trust Board AGM Report

December 2005

Introduction (Tom Adam)

This AGM report provides a summary of the work undertaken by the Dons Trust Board over the 2005 year in pursuing the Dons Trust Aims. Since the Board has been reporting progress to their members on a quarterly basis throughout the year, this report focuses on key achievements and areas requiring more attention for next year.

The first task, without any hesitation, is to express my appreciation of the tremendous effort that both the incumbent and the newly elected Board members have put in this year to make the whole year such a success. As in the previous year, Board members participated in a workshop, where we identified work areas and we all took on specific responsibilities. I am pleased to report that the Board members, all of whom are volunteers, have responded well over the year to their assignments and that is why I am able to report so positively this year. However, it became apparent over the year that some of the Board members' assigned tasks were expanding to such an extent that additional volunteer support was needed, whilst for other tasks the need for help diminished. As a consequence, some load rebalancing will need to take place when the new Board is established in December.

I am pleased to report that as a result of various initiatives that have been put in place during the year, the decline in DT membership has been curbed and the management of our volunteer force is beginning to strengthen. I thank all those of you who have been involved with this work. However, I must stress the importance of sustaining and increasing membership because, without it, we risk losing everything we have created. It is incumbent on us all to encourage new members and to pursue old members who have yet to renew their membership.

While continuing to vigorously pursue our Aims, the Board has also focussed, during the latter part of the year, on reviewing the relationships between the constituent parts of the Trust (in particular between the Trust itself and AFCW PLC and its subsidiaries) as well as reviewing the workings of the Board itself. The outcome of this review will need to be addressed early on by the new Board.

Such reviews can, from time to time, be extremely healthy and this is one reason why new Board members are particularly welcome, since they tend to add value to such thinking. The result of our recent election was a little disappointing in this regard, but I am sure we fill the vacancy with a highly competent co-optee. We do appreciate, however, that the current high level of Board member workload can discourage members from offering themselves for election. This also needs to be addressed by the new Board.

Of course, our single biggest priority remains the reduction of our stadium debt. It is pleasing to report that during the year, our fundraising team has made significant in-roads into reducing the loan from Mr Khosla, which now stands at just under £500,000 - a tremendous achievement. I thank everyone for their contribution towards the remarkable amount that has been raised this year.

However, to reduce interest payments on the outstanding loan we need to continue to rely heavily on the Dons Trust Bond Scheme. For those of you who have yet to take up this opportunity, may I urge you to give the scheme careful consideration. Consideration is also being given to other funding arrangements to supplement the Bond scheme. I thank the Finance Working Group for all their effort in this area.

Although there are so many people to thank for their contribution during the year, I would like to single out a few individuals who have decided it is time to hand on the baton, having played a major role in the Dons Trust since its formation. In particular, I would like to thank Roger Dennis for his sterling work on Community Events and Junior Dons over the past few years. I would also like to record the contribution of Ron Trayhorn. Ron has been on the Board from the outset of the Trust and has played an instrumental part in bringing AFCW Ladies into the fold. Finally, Ivor Heller has decided not to re-stand for election to the DT Board, so as to concentrate on his activities for AFCW PLC and the Club. Thank you Roger, Ron and Ivor for all your hard work to date.

AFC Wimbledon

(Kris Stewart)

AFC Wimbledon has had an intriguing year. There have been many highs and a few lows.

The pitch has seen the most of the action, as it should have done. We won the Ryman League Division One in grand style and that, of course, was followed by our spectacular success in the Surrey Senior Cup. I am sure that no one who was there will forget the now legendary night at Gander Green Lane against Sutton United. This was followed by the Cup Final at Woking against Walton and Hersham. Once again AFCW fans turned Woking into a sea of yellow and blue. What an occasion and a great way to finish the season, with a 2-1 victory to regain the trophy that we last won exactly 50 years earlier in the 1954-55 season.

The Reserves and Under-18s performed brilliantly for the club and have won us many new friends and accolades. The Under-18s have now moved on and we have now entered the National Conference League. This has come about through our new link-up with Nescot College. We have taken up a scholarship scheme which offers football and an education to our young players – this will hopefully help to build a future for themselves and AFCW. This is a great achievement for a club that is not even four years old.

Off the field AFC Wimbledon have made giant strides in many areas, the most obvious being the Tempest End. The idea had been mooted some time ago and it was felt that the vast majority of our fans would like to see some cover at the Athletics End. The idea to

get sponsorship for this was, at first, a bit of a joke but it soon became clear that there was something to sell. We are grateful to Tempest Sport and the Football Foundation for supplying us with the money that we needed to fulfil this project. The roof is a great addition to the Fans Stadium and was well worth the extended wait.

The John Smiths Terrace is being improved with an extra step and a slight raising of the terraces. This will help for better viewing but at the time of writing the work is not complete. We hope you like it. There have been many other improvements in and around the Stadium – for example we now have highly visible and well-placed signage at all of the crucial spots in and around the ground. These signs are there for your safety and guidance. They have been made to a high specification so should last a long time. Please report anyone that you may see defacing or damaging them.

Functions continue to be popular but we could do with more bookings and help to improve this side of the club. Our caterers REDS are superb at supplying any form of buffet and up to a five-course dinner. The venue is under-used so please do not let anyone you know or indeed yourselves book a function anywhere else! There is a discount offered to DT Members so please take advantage of this.

Bar activities are increasing slowly. Once a month we have a very successful quiz evening and also once a month we have our Give and Go band nights. We believe that these events must be more regular, perhaps every week. We will work

towards this as we strive to make more use of the premises. If you have not tried either of these evenings please come along as they are great entertainment and great fun.

Commercially the club is going forward. Sports Interactive have agreed to a rolling deal with us, ensuring their involvement for some time to come. Their sponsorship is invaluable to us and we must send our gratitude to them. We now have someone working on the sales side of the business so please feel free to contact him on commercial@afcwimbledon.co.uk.

Merchandise sales have been strong all year. The third kit was launched in the summer and has sold well since. We have tried to develop specific ranges that have worked really well. In the spring we launched the 78 Unbeaten Run range. This sold out in record time, so watch out for more innovative and interesting items appearing in the shop before Christmas.

The Club and Trust are working on a couple of major projects that we will not go into in this report. Please check the Stadium Working Group's section on the AFC Wimbledon website for all of the relevant updates on our major projects.

All in all it has been another successful season at AFC Wimbledon. Here's hoping that we can build on that and keep on the path towards fulfilling our aim of returning to League football. Whatever happens in this coming year it surely will be a lot of fun as all of our previous years have been. Thanks for reading this and please feel free to ask any questions that you may have through the usual channels. ♦

Fundraising

(Geraldine Messenbird)

It has been a busy year for fundraising and the fundraising team which led to us achieving our target in the financial and playing year; and starting towards our new target of £100,000.

Looking back over the year funds came in from a variety of sources, with events both big and small; and everyone who helped deserves a very big thank you. I am bound to forget an event, and if I forget yours I apologise, but some of the highlights included:

- Dons Draw
- Boxing Night
- Race Day
- Valentine's Ball
- 5 A-Side Competition
- Walk for Wimbledon II
- Everstrong single – Take Me Home
- Walk Further for Wimbledon

- Golden Goals
- Recycling and Loose change

What is also important is to thank those people who raised money by small events and initiatives, e.g. the Kent Wombles and the Dorset Dons. Running a fundraising activity is significant, but thanks to all those who have dug deep and supported events over the last year.

Looking forward, however, we need to continue to raise money and our target this year is another £100,000. Until we reduce our debt, or hopefully clear it, we cannot grow the club in the way we would like. It is vital therefore, that we continue to focus on our debt as a top priority.

Currently we are planning this year to focus on the following:-

- Dons Draw – with the jackpot growing ever larger this is an easy and possibly lucrative way to contribute to the club
- Golden Goals – match day fun for a pound
- Recycling – we hope to raise £10,000 by being Wombles and making good use of unwanted printer cartridges, mobile phones and foreign currency
- Loose Change – we'll take your loose change (and notes) – we aim to raise £100 a game
- An Evening with...“a true Wimbledon legend” is in the planning stages
- A Silent Auction

We have more ideas in the feasibility stages and are always looking for support. Once again thank you for your support and a massive thank you to everyone who has contributed to this fantastic result.

Faz Ahmad and members of the Fundraising Working Group can normally be found in the back bar on match days. ♦

Communications

(Stephen Butterick, Marc Jones, Chris Philips)

This year, the Communications team has continued to try and improve the flow of information from the DT Board to the membership. A major project has been the migration of the old DT website to the DT section of the AFC Wimbledon website. This is nearing completion. Members are now able to see abridged minutes from DT Board meetings, and so monitor much more closely the activity of the Board. Working Groups (which carry out much of the work of the Trust, and are comprised of Board members and volunteers) now have an online facility by which they can publish their agendas, minutes and requests for help.

The Board considers it a priority that its work and most of its decision making be available to the membership, and we will continue to explore the best way to do that. The SGMs continue to be a good way in which the membership can directly question the Board, but we are always looking for new ways of being responsive to members. For example, all Board members can be e-mailed direct, and their e-mail addresses can be found on the club website.

Of course, not all DT members spend their time on the internet, so the SGMs will remain an important part of the Board's work, and we will continue to ensure that the Board's work and decision making processes are clear to the members, and that the Board responds quickly to any request directed to it by members. ♦

Community

(Marc Jones)

Over the past few months I have undertaken to develop a new portfolio for the Board, to address the work the Dons Trust does within and for its community. Whilst the catchall phrase “community” is oft spoken when explaining the remit of the Trust and indeed the birth of AFC Wimbledon, so far the DT’s work has concentrated on the successful and very worthy Community Football Scheme and on the Community Events Group.

The CFS work has been carried out within the portfolio managed extremely efficiently by Nigel Higgs but has been restricted to meeting the stated DT aim headed “Youth & Community football”. This aim is defined as follows:

“To operate a community football scheme consisting of organised coaching and activities for young people in the target area and to achieve the FA Charter standard for the youth aspects of the DT/Club within two years.”

The Club and Trust have had a high profile presence at community events under the stewardship of Roger Dennis. This is expected to continue despite Roger stepping down recently. This work has been both appreciated and valued by the Board and it has certainly been effective in keeping the work of the Dons Trust and indeed the name of the football club prominent at events such as the Wimbledon Village Fair and the Mitcham Carnival.

Now that the Community Football Scheme and Community Events activities are so well established, there is work to be done on behalf of both the Club and the Trust in terms of wider community activities. A number of other Trust-run clubs have established such activities and there is no reason why AFC Wimbledon should not do likewise under the Dons Trust banner. One possibility, using an example operated elsewhere, would be an after-school club providing support and facilities for children and making use of property under the control of the Trust and/or club, perhaps supported by some funding contribution from the DT and/or partners.

Work in this area has previously been hindered in part by the lack of a definition as to what our community is. Wimbledon and Merton are the obvious starting points, given that this area gave birth to the club in 1889. Valid arguments have been raised regarding Kingston - given the Club’s current location - although there is little apparent demand to extend the definition of our community to our former location of Selhurst Park.

Recent attendance at a Supporters Direct workshop has assisted me in getting a clearer concept of where our community lies and what we can expect the phrase to actually mean. The workshop was based upon a soon-to-be-published paper that has been three years in the making entitled “Rethinking ‘Community’ in Football”. This workshop strongly suggested that there is no single community – rather a set of communities all touched, influenced or affected by the football club. If this approach is accepted, then it becomes clearer that work can be undertaken in a number of spheres without too much time spent pondering just whom the club/trust should work with in geographical terms

My intention is to continue investigating this area of work utilising experience gained elsewhere (e.g. AFC Telford) and to attempt to define what can be achieved both short, medium and long term.

The role would require ownership on the Board and also places obligations on the Board and the Trust itself in terms of committing time, effort and funding.

The plan of action is as follows:

- Further information to be gathered in order to clearly define a potential roadmap for such a strand of DT business/objectives.
- A stated commitment to support and nurture such work controlled, managed and funded by the Dons Trust.

- Commitment where applicable from AFC Wimbledon ranging from potential usage of facilities, branding and possibly funding.

- To produce a paper, based in part on the published report “Rethinking ‘Community’ in Football”, defining where we would be seeking to work both geographically and indeed what social groups ought to be serviced.

- To propose a list of potential “pilot schemes” which could be supported and funded as one-off ventures pending implementation of a longer term programme.

- To clearly identify timetables and appropriate sectors that have available funding. For example, the Football Foundation offers matched funding for suitable schemes – as well as offering application assistance.

- Possible revision of the DT aim entitled “Working with the local community” - currently defined as follows: “To engage, consult with and reflect the needs of the local community (including via local authorities) in the development and use of facilities and to contribute to local community activities”.

- Creation of a defined role to be carried out by a nominated DT Board member.

- A commitment to funding such schemes both in general terms and in specific cases within an agreed yearly budget.

The Board has already given a firm commitment to provide an initial £2,000 in what will be branded as the “Community Chest” with further funding being allotted in this year’s budget.

This post is a new one previously not held by any Board member but will be one of the “cabinet posts” up for grabs following the post AGM reshuffle! ♦

Community Events

(Roger Dennis)

The Community Events Group organised a very successful Junior Dons Christmas party in December 2004. Over 100 youngsters attended. Father Christmas handed out presents, helped by Dave Anderson and many players. Most importantly, everyone concerned enjoyed themselves. We look forward to another great JD Party on 11 December this year. Once again, we expect that many players will be present. Tickets can be obtained from Nina Smith, at nina.smith@thedonstrust.org or on 020 8355 0746.

The biggest and most successful event organised by the Group was the third Family Fun Day, held at Kingsmeadow on 15 May. Most of the activities took place on the pitch, with the all-weather five-a-side pitches at the Athletics stadium being used by youngsters under the supervision of the club's Community Football coaches. There were many attractions on the day, including a number of stalls run by outside organisations. It was

good to see several players there, plus Dave Anderson and all his coaching team. One highlight was the opportunity for supporters to have photographs taken with the league and cup trophies and one or two players. Another was the unscheduled appearance of Frankie Howard in goal for a "beat the goalie" game. Thanks go to the Womble Underground Press who again sponsored the hire of the all-weather pitches and who also produced a programme for the day.

The Community Events Group organised successful participation by the Trust at Wimbledon Village Fair, Mitcham Carnival and three school fairs. These events provided excellent opportunities to remind local people of the club's and Trust's success and to promote activities such as the Community Football courses. A particular highlight at Wimbledon and Mitcham was the introduction of our own football speed game, where the speed of a shot can be accurately measured to within one mph. We look forward to players and others trying it out at next year's Family Fun Day.

All these events raised over £2,600 for the Trust. Merchandise sales raised considerably more than that for the club. The Family Fun Day and the Junior Dons' party enabled the club to gain from bar and food sales. All this is quite apart from the main objectives of promoting the Trust and club in the local community and organising fun events.

Barrie Scott has now taken over from Roger Dennis as Chair of the Community Events Group. In stepping down, Roger would like to thank members of the Group for their hard work over more than three years, plus the many volunteers who have helped at different events during this time. ♦

Finance Working Group report

(Erik Samuelson)

The Finance Working Group has met eight times this year. It aims to provide guidance on a wide range of financial topics that affect the football club and/or the Trust. This year's work has included:

- Advice and guidance on the proposed commercial loan
- Input on five year season tickets
- Devising a tax-effective scheme for re-selling unused season ticket vouchers for specific games, in effect providing the club with a tax-free donation and a refund of VAT on the voucher
- Reviewing the tax status of the Trust and the football club in a number of specific areas. This included working with Supporters Direct on some of the more complex issues
- Advice on season ticket and match day ticket pricing
- Reviewing the draft management accounts for the quarterly reports

Areas that are currently under review are:

- Affinity and similar schemes
- The possibility of using SIPPS as a source of funds

As always, DT members are welcome to attend FWG meetings which are usually on the first Monday of each month. ♦

Stadium Working Group (SWG) Report

(Tom Adam)

Over the year Stadium Working Group members have been deployed across a number of Planning, Development and Maintenance areas. As such SWG meetings have not been quite so frequent and have taken on more of a progress reporting role. A summary of the minutes of these meetings can be seen in the Dons Trust section of the AFC Wimbledon website. Progress across activity areas is as follows.

Planning – Primarily directed at planning applications which have varied from Change of Use issues such as Day Nursery in the back bar which was not finally pursued, the Athletics Stand Roof extension through to the Planning Period extensions for increasing the Stadium capacity which is still progressing. During the second half of the year the planning period extension application has been subject to considerable attention due to Royal Borough of Kingston Council officers calling for an update to the planning permissions, primarily concerning traffic management. This has meant employing professional consultants to undertake the necessary work, which will lead to the submission of a revised planning period extension application.

Stadium Maintenance – Concerned with overseeing the general maintenance of the fabric of the buildings and terraces and covering a range of issues such as leaky roofs, blocked drains, redecoration, lighting and resurfacing of terrace areas. This year, it is pleasing to report that there has been much less emergency maintenance work, thereby enabling us to move more towards to a scheduled maintenance approach.

Stadium Improvements – Directed at overseeing the provision of the roof over the terraces at the Athletics End, re-profiling the terracing in the John Smith's stand, evaluating the feasibility and cost of extending of the main stand roof out to provide a measure of cover for the first two rows of the main stand after the end of this football season and assessing various options to improve the bar areas, toilet facilities and changing rooms. Some suggestions under consideration in this regard are raising the ceiling in the middle bar, providing a formal club entrance for visitors and players, and refurbishing and rearranging the changing rooms.

Facilities for Training, Youth Football and Football in the Community - The focus has been to identify longer term needs and to assess whether or not these can be met in Merton. This is ongoing and is being pursued in conjunction with London Borough of Merton (LBM) officers.

Long Term Stadium – Liaison continues with LBM planners concerning possible stadium opportunities for the longer term in Merton and the possible inclusion of this requirement in the Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF is the planning framework in local authorities plan for development across their area against criteria set by central and local government.

Overall, SWG members have been very active over the year and I would like to thank them for the extremely valuable contribution they have made. These members, like all our volunteers, give of their time freely because of their personal commitment to the Trust and Club – I thank them all. ♦

AFC Wimbledon Youth and Community Football

(Nigel Higgs)

The 2004-2005 season saw the Academy grow to 14 teams from Under-8 to Under-15. On the playing front the teams were very successful; for the record the final round-up of the season showed that the teams won seven cups, finished runners-up three times, won six league championships and finished runners-up in a further two. Whilst the aim is to provide quality players to move up to the Under-18 and senior squads rather than to win silverware, there is much satisfaction to be gained from any success that comes along.

All the teams have done really well and thanks must go to all the boys who contributed to that success and to the parents, managers and coaches who support them and to the Dons Trust Board, the AFC Wimbledon Board and Sports Interactive who have provided the sponsorship to make it all possible.

As has been reported before, The Dons Trust Board charged the Academy with creating the best non-league Under-16 set up in London. Under the Trust Board's overall guidance the foundations of this goal have been largely achieved. However, the operational and financial input required to sustain the Academy and grow it as the senior club rises through the pyramid puts a huge burden on a body staffed entirely by volunteers and reliant on membership fees for its income. Consequently, the Boards of the Trust and the club decided that it made more sense to put the Academy into the AFC Wimbledon part of the organisation. This brings a number of benefits, such as all financial transactions being handled through the club office and recorded on the central accounting system, having closer links with the Under-19, reserve and senior teams and their management, providing a central point of contact and enabling the development of more efficient processes and use of resources. This decision also provides the platform for bringing costs for youth development in line with the requirements of the football club and gives clear accountability for the budget for elite playing provision.

This transfer has now been completed and the Academy is now fully part of the AFC Wimbledon Youth Development Programme, which consists of three sections: mini-soccer from Under-8 to Under-10, development centre from Under-11 to Under-16; and the Under-19 squad. Development Programme Managers Ben Canham, Paul Bentley and Steve Brindley head up these respective sections.

The objective of providing quality young boys to the senior teams means that the development programme concentrates on elite players and there will be many hard choices that have to be made. Unfortunately, that is the way of competitive football and there will be disappointments for many of the boys; but the commitments we make to any boy that joins the Academy include not letting them go mid-season unless there are disciplinary or other serious issues, providing quality coaching and playing opportunities and providing all kit and equipment.

Regarding the non-elite provision, the operational and financial side of the Community Football Scheme (CFS) has operated as part of the club since early 2004. Following the decision to incorporate the Youth Academy into the club the position of the CFS has now been formalised as part of a single department reporting to Youth and Community Director Nigel Higgs on the AFC Wimbledon Board. Previous reports have given details of the CFS progress and growth, which will now be clearly integrated with the club's goals and provide a further revenue stream as part of a discrete budget.

The visible impact to parents and children who use the CFS will be small, but one point of note is that the Matchday Academy will also be incorporated into the club. The community football section is in discussions with the Trust Board's community champions and the aim will continue to be the provision of quality football related activities and courses to Merton and the surrounding area and to expand this coverage into new ventures particularly around disability football and non-elite clubs and leagues.

In closing it is the belief of the directors of the Trust, club and AFCW PLC that these changes will make for a more focused and accountable department to achieve the youth and community football objectives of the Trust. ♦

AFC Wimbledon Ladies

(Ron Trayhorn)

The team ended the 2004/5 season in a disappointing fifth place but the high spot of the season was the win against the runaway league leaders Chelsea in the Surrey Women's Cup Final.

There were two main problems during the season that may have contributed to the team's final position. Firstly we had a problem obtaining a regular training venue once floodlights were required and secondly we were unable to acquire a coach for the team. Both these problems have been resolved for the 2005/6 season with Stuart Castledine agreeing to join us as coach for the first and reserve teams.

The Valentines Evening was organised by two of the players and resulted in over £900 being passed to the Dons Trust and a similar amount being paid to three charities. It is hoped that further initiatives of this sort will be organised to lessen the dependence of the team on the Dons Trust funding. A limited company has been formed prior to integration with the Trust and this is currently with the FA for approval.

Bert Dale and Ronan Warde have been instrumental in organising Under-12s and Under-14s girls teams which it is hoped, in the long term, will be the source of new players for the ladies teams. Toby Crisp is manager of the Under-14s and Nick Slinders for the Under-12s.

There was an indifferent start to both pre-season and the early league fixtures. As a result the manager stood down and last year's reserve manager, Lance Patey was appointed as first team manager, his

previous position being filled by Andrew Mander. At the time of writing the team is mid-table and has just progressed through the first round of the Surrey Women's Cup. Regrettably in the Women's League Cup we lost 3 – 0 to Sunderland from the National Division.

It is generally accepted that the Premier League South is going to be a really tough proposition this year and the team are currently depleted by a succession of injuries and some players being suspended. In addition, during the close season, we lost Maria Bertelli to Charlton and Rachel Axon to Bristol. Nevertheless we hope to improve on last season's position.

Finally, on a personal note, this AGM will be my last as a member of the DT Board. May I wish my successor all the best in carrying forward ladies football under the AFC Wimbledon banner to new successes. ♦

Membership and Volunteers

(David Cox)

I make no apologies for using this space to not only update you but also to remind you of our collective responsibility to the Dons Trust.

Without fear of contradiction the separate issues of The Dons Trust membership and our volunteer "army" is one of the most important areas before the Board. These two areas will always be considered "work in progress" - however far we take them, we will always have further to go.

The mantra "A Fans' Club, run by the fans for the fans" is as true today as it was when the Trust and Club took their first tentative steps over three years ago. Many of our fans regularly and generously support the club both financially and with their time.

Over time the Board have become aware that many fans have become fatigued with volunteer work, resulting in the responsibility falling on a decreasing band of weary but outstanding individuals. This is not a criticism, just a reminder. It is time to re-evaluate our individual roles within our organisation. And if any of you are thinking "I wonder what I could do to shape the destiny of football in our community" then now is a good time to step up to the plate.

You will have recently seen an article aimed at generating additional support for our volunteer stewards. (CONTINUES)

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However this is one area amongst many that require your support, not only in taking the Trust and its work forward but also supporting the club in ensuring that football takes place. In considering what you could do to help, please don't assume your skills, knowledge or time would not be valued. There is much to be done and, whether we know it or not, we all have the skills that can be of use to our collective task.

Turning to a review of 2005, significant progress has been made during the year.

An extensive survey of DT members was undertaken, to seek views on many key issues and also to identify how people could help in a range of ways including work that could be done by volunteers working from home.

One of the most pleasing outcomes was the appointment of four individuals to give greater focus to sustaining and extending membership - as well as more effective management of volunteers:-

- Membership Development Officer (South West London and North Surrey): John Lynch

- Membership Development Officer (National and International): Ray Armfield

- Resources co-ordinator: David Bugg

- Volunteers' co-ordinator: John O'Brien

I would like to take this opportunity to thank these individuals for their support and work. I am sure they would welcome any ideas or support.

With these people in post, we hope to make significant strides forward in the coming months and years. Previously outlined objectives included a desire to instigate a car sharing scheme by the start of next season, to get 100 lapsed members to rejoin by December 2005, and to have five or more supporters groups with 20 or more members. In addition we hoped to have a detailed timetable for events, fundraising and membership in place.

With volunteers, we have been aiming to implement a detailed database of our volunteers and an effective volunteer recruitment service with the objective of achieving a 10% increase in our volunteer pool.

These objectives remain current with successes recorded but, as already stated, they remain work in progress. I hope whoever takes over this portfolio in 2006 will have the energy and time along with your support to drive them forward.

It would be remiss not to mention Niall Couper who held this portfolio during 2005. I would like to extend thanks to him for his work. I would also like to register a special vote of thanks to John Stenbridge in his role as Membership Secretary - one of many unsung heroes who keep the show on the road.

I would on behalf of the Board and the Dons Trust membership like thank everyone who has helped over the past year to shape the destiny of football in our community. ♦

Legal, Constitutional & Secretarial

(David Cox, Mark Davis)

David Cox assumed responsibility for legal and constitutional matters during the year and Mark Davis succeeded Roger Cassells as Secretary. Both would like to thank Roger for his contribution during the previous year and for his ongoing assistance. The year has been a busy one and progress has been made in a number of areas. However, looking back at the 2004 Annual Report, it is evident that some of the goals set for 2005 remain work in progress.

General meetings

By the time of the AGM, four general meetings will have been held during the year. A number of resolutions have been considered and voted on at these meetings, including topics such as fixtures against Milton Keynes Dons, simultaneous membership of more than one Board within the Dons Trust group and a change to Rule 61 of the Constitution. The meetings have also been used to update members on developments generally and to answer members' questions.

The Board is not, however, convinced that either the frequency or format of general meetings is ideal. The amount of formal business conducted at general meetings is probably not sufficient to justify four such meetings per year and - perhaps because of the formality of these meetings - it is evident that they appeal to a relatively small number of members. What may be less evident to members is that these meetings occupy a significant amount of the Board's time.

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(CONTINUED) Whilst we will continue to convene the number of general meetings required by the Constitution, the Board hopes that the Constitution Review will bring forward a proposal to reduce the minimum number of general meetings. For example, one possibility would be to require just two general meetings per year. These could be supplemented by less formal open meetings and, only if there is urgent business to be put to members, additional SGMs.

Board meetings

Board meetings have been held at least monthly. Given that the Trust is run entirely by volunteers, these meetings are the only forum for bringing together the management team to discuss both day-to-day and strategic issues. As a result, the agenda is often quite crowded and the pace of discussions quite pressurised.

The Board is continuing to explore ways of accommodating as much business as possible within limited time availability. Some measures have been introduced to improve effectiveness, including a well defined timeline for dissemination of papers, a new tool for monitoring follow-through of actions and, as can be seen from the website, a new policy on Board behaviours. Further ideas will be explored in the months ahead.

In keeping with the wishes of the membership, the Board has attempted this year to publish more detailed minutes of Board meetings than in the past as a way of enabling members to monitor current issues occupying the Board. Nonetheless, it is necessary to edit the published minutes so as to remove commercially sensitive information and so as to remain within the principle of collective responsibility.

Group procedures

Although much of the Board's time is spent managing those activities under the direct responsibility of the Dons Trust, custodianship of AFC Wimbledon is at the heart of the DT's purpose. This role is exercised in a variety of ways, including control of the majority of voting shares in AFCW PLC, majority representation on the Board of AFCW PLC and its subsidiaries and periodic discussion of matters

affecting AFC Wimbledon at Dons Trust Board meetings.

The Board believes there is further work to be done over the year ahead to clarify and improve the avenues through which control is exercised. Clarifying reporting and approval procedures will be an important step. At the same time, it is recognised that there may be duplication of effort across the various Boards, which needs to be streamlined where possible.

Elections

In September, nominations were invited for elections to the Board. With six places available, it was hoped to attract a wide range of candidates and to generate sufficient interest in the election process to improve upon last year's turnout.

Only five candidates stepped forward and it was decided not to continue with the election process but to consider the five candidates duly elected. The Board looks forward to continuing to work with Tom Adam, Marc Jones and Erik Samuelson and welcomes Bert Dale and Sandy Lawrence to the fold.

Neither the Constitution nor the election rules provided for the possibility that there would be fewer candidates than Board places, and this will need to be addressed. More important, however, is the implication that the number of members who are willing to stand for election to the Board is beginning to dwindle.

During the year ahead, the Board will need to give careful consideration to how the Trust can attract members to want to join the Board. Perhaps our members also have some soul-searching to do if the concept of a club controlled by its supporters is one they cherish.

Once again, the Board wishes to thank the Election Sub Group, comprising Stephen Godfrey, Tim Hillyer and Matt West for their support during the election process.

Constitution

Progress on review of the Constitution has been slower than intended, partly because the issues are complex,

being so closely bound up with the wider corporate governance issues affecting the group, but also because there are so often other issues requiring more immediate attention. Nonetheless, the need to revise Rule 61 during the course of the year and to clarify some of the issues arising from the Board elections this year demonstrates that the difficulties posed by the current Constitution are practical as well as theoretical.

One dilemma facing the review is how to engage the key stakeholders – both the membership and the Board – in developing proposals that are workable and have buy-in. This is not easy when members' interest in the Constitution is relatively limited and when the time available to the Board to discuss such matters scarce. At time of writing, the Constitution Review Group is devising ways of engaging stakeholders on the major issues that the review needs to address.

In the meantime, work is proceeding on some of the more technical 'clean-ups' to the Constitution. These are likely to be relatively straightforward and will be presented to the membership as a package in due course.

If you would like to know more about the work of the Constitution Review Group, please e-mail secretary@thedonstrust.org.

Secretariat

During the year, the Secretary has been involved in supporting all of the above activities as well as other matters such as renewal of insurances, returns to the Financial Services Authority and maintaining the conflict of interest registers.

Added to the routine activities of preparing and circulating agendas and minutes, the workload of the Secretary is relatively demanding, and it is hoped to find a way of sharing some of this work among other volunteers. At the time of writing, we are also looking for a volunteer with legal qualifications to assist with our work. Anyone interested in supporting these activities should e-mail secretary@thedonstrust.org. ♦

Dons Trust Treasurer

(John Owen)

Included separately from this Annual Report is a copy of the annual audited accounts for the Dons Trust for the financial year to 30 June 2005. Those figures show that for the year under review, the Dons Trust realised a surplus of £123,725, compared to a surplus of £74,180 for the corresponding period to 30 June 2004.

Total income for the year to 30 June 2005 came to £57,853 (total turnover excluding fund raising). This income is principally made up of membership fees of £42,266, a reduced figure in comparison to the corresponding period, due to the number of members lapsing outnumbering new members joining. As at 30 June 2005, there were a total of 1,974 members (1,593 senior members and 381 junior members) in comparison to 2,077 members at the end of the corresponding period at 30 June 2004.

Corrective action was taken in respect of this fall-off in membership, with reminder letters being sent out just prior to the year-end reiterating the importance of membership to the Dons Trust. As a result of this initiative, and subsequent to the year-end, a total of 161 lapsed members rejoined the Dons Trust in the period between July 2005 and September 2005.

During the financial year to 30 June 2005 other income received included donations of £6,252, sponsorship of £1,500, as well as a windfall of £2,000 compensation received from the Royal Mail.

Overall, total costs for the financial year came to £41,990 and very much in line with expectations. However, in the final quarter of the financial year, costs relating to the AFC Youth Academy were a little higher than expected as costs that had been previously incurred and accrued by AFCW, principally in respect of pitch hire, were recharged.

As previously indicated, fundraising for the financial year was strong, the total being £107,640 and comparing favourably with £59,660 in the corresponding period - the top six fund raisers were the Dons Draw (£25,042), the Weird and Wonderful Rematch (£19,025), Golden Goals (£15,402), Walk for Wimbledon II (£9,694), Evening with Ossie (£9,170) and Sponsor a Seat (£8,066).

The Dons Trust itself only has a limited number of projects that it needs to finance, and as such funds that are surplus to its own requirements are regularly channelled through AFCW, by way of loans, to assist AFCW in reducing their debt to Mr. Khosla.

In this way, during the year under review, AFCW's debt to Mr Khosla fell from £935,000 to £540,000 - a reduction of some £395,000. First, AFCW were able to pay off a total of £175,000 in debt to Mr. Khosla from the receipts of the five year season ticket sales. This was made possible by the Dons Trust committing, in their turn, to lend £3,000 each and every month for the next five years to AFCW, effectively part of the profit to be generated from the Dons Draw, and these funds will effectively replace, back to back, the revenue foregone by AFCW as a result of this £175,000 capital repayment. Further, the total value of bonds issued by the Dons Trust during the financial year under review was £96,895. Also taking into consideration the surplus generated during the year of £123,725, the DT was able to transfer to AFCW, net of current account movements, a sum of £216,364, which in turn allowed AFCW to repay a further £220,000 to Mr. Khosla.

Turning to the first quarter of the financial year to 30 June 2006, the unaudited results for this period are attached as an Appendix. These results now show a comparison of the actual results for the current quarter to those of the same quarter last year, as well as a summary of the audited results for the year just ended to 30 June 2005.

For the first quarter of the financial year to 30 June 2006 a surplus of £18,653 was achieved. Whilst down on the £31,223 surplus realised for the same period in the corresponding period last year, this is in line with our current budget expectations.

The reason for this apparent downturn is due in principle, to three different factors - first, adverse timing differences, secondly a reduction in the number of fundraising events in the first quarter of the current year, and thirdly the result of the Trust seeking some one-off legal and professional services. All three factors were forecast and included within the current DT budget.

In reality, one of the goals of the Board is not necessarily to always try and do better financially, each and every year, but simply to keep the momentum going to create sufficient excess funds to help AFCW, and on a regular basis, to further pay down their debt.

This momentum was maintained in that between the 30 June 2005 and the end of October 2005, and with the assistance of the Dons Trust, a further £60,000 has been paid off the debt owed by AFCW to Mr. Khosla, bringing the outstanding balance down to £480,000. This was made possible by the surplus made by the Trust in the first quarter of the current financial year, the cash resources held at 30 June 2005 as well as £4,020 of funds generated from the sale of 6,700 A Ordinary Shares in AFCW to WISA, and the continuing monthly bonds that are issued.

Lastly, on 1 November 2005, the Dons Trust subscribed for a further 300,000 A Ordinary Shares in AFCW and as such, increased the voting control enjoyed by the Dons Trust over AFCW whilst at the same time helping AFCW to strengthen their own balance sheet. ♦

Conclusion (Tom Adam)

I am sure members will agree from this report that the Board has had another successful year in discharging responsibilities directed at meeting our Dons Trust Aims and that a heavy work programme awaits the Board for the coming year. Whilst meeting our Aims continues to remain paramount, the year has also been one of reflection on how best to focus our limited resources in this quest, in terms of work area clarification and prioritisation. This should lead to more devolution of work with priorities set accordingly, thereby reducing the load on Board members. However, for this to work effectively there will be a greater need for volunteers to come forward and to take up the work. So, if you can see your way clear to undertaking such work, please make yourself known to Board Members or the Secretary. This in turn, will give you direct experience of Board work and perhaps encourage more of you to stand as candidates for the next Board elections.

It is pleasing to note that our fundraising initiatives this year have made a considerable dent in our debt to Mr Khosla and we look forward to the successful outcome of the various schemes being proposed for next year to minimise the impact of the debt and ultimately reduce it to zero. Also that full consideration is being given to sustaining and extending the Dons Trust membership, as without it we would be severely weakened as a Trust. This is also true for our volunteer force which we need to grow and nurture.

On the football side, the year has seen the Club move into the Ryman League Premier Division and start to make considerable inroads in the Division with an aim to achieve one of the play-off places, the prospects of which remain on course. Also Youth football has taken on a new dimension including links with a college, the ladies are consolidating their league position and Community football is gaining recognition. On behalf of all members the Board wishes the Club, Ladies Football, Youth and Community football every success in their endeavours for the coming year.

Also in this report, you will have observed that the Club's future training needs, together with Youth and Community football needs, are being addressed at this time. The application for a planning period extension for increasing capacity to 6,000 at Kingsmeadow is also being actively pursued. Both of these initiatives are important to our future success.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has made the work of the Dons Trust such a success this year and to confirm that the Board remains fully committed to full transparency and accountability. Furthermore, the Board looks forward next year to matching if not exceeding the success of this year.

Tom Adam
Chair Dons Trust

APPENDIX
Wimbledon Football Club Supporters' Society Limited (The Dons Trust)

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT	2005/2006 Unaudited	2004/2005 Unaudited	2004/2005 Audited
	3 months to 30/09/05	3 months to 30/09/04	12 months to 30/06/05
	£	£	£
Turnover			
Membership Income - Adults	11,825	11,800	39,646
Membership Income - Juniors	840	550	2,620
Sponsorship Income	0	500	1,500
Donations	1,677	2,236	6,252
Bond Interest Receivable	0	0	3,990
Other	122	59	4,123
	14,464	15,145	58,131
Administrative expenses			
AFC Ladies	(5,000)	(5,000)	(12,060)
Membership Expenses	(274)	(496)	(10,124)
SGM Expenses	(604)	0	0
Legal & Professional Fees	(2,263)	0	0
AFC Wimbledon Youth Academy Sponsorship	(2,000)	0	(10,758)
Community Football Sponsorship	(600)	(792)	(2,844)
Community Chest	(500)	0	(2,000)
Communications	(500)	0	0
Bond Interest Payable	0	0	(3,990)
Other	(130)	(28)	(214)
	(11,871)	(6,316)	(41,990)
Fund Raising			
Dons Draw	10,405	853	25,042
Golden Goals	3,914	2,668	15,402
Loose Change	671	0	0
Donations	660	686	6,380
Sponsor A Seat	100	4,529	8,066
Weird & Wonderful Rematch	0	10,877	19,025
Walk for Wimbledon II	0	(3)	9,694
Evening with Ossie	0	0	9,170
Boxing Night II	0	0	2,180
Other events less than £2,000	310	2,784	12,681
	16,060	22,394	107,640
Excess of Income over expenditure	18,653	31,223	123,781
BALANCE SHEET	2005/2006 Unaudited At 30/09/05		2004/2005 Audited At 30/06/05
	£		£
Investments			
Shares in AFCW PLC	175,603		179,623
Current Assets			
Amounts due from AFCW PLC (net)	435,156		385,630
Sundry debtors	3,187		9,306
Cash at bank and in hand	19,322		41,505
	457,665		436,441
Current Liabilities			
Creditors falling due within one year	(8,873)		(13,777)
Net Current Assets	448,792		422,664
Total assets less current liabilities	624,395		602,287
Other Creditors			
Creditors falling due after more than one year	(243,435)		(239,980)
Net Assets	380,960		362,307
Share Capital			
Opening balance	1,593		1,751
Shares issued in the period	0		179
Less: Forfeitures	0		(337)
Closing balance	1,593		1,593
Reserve Fund			
Opening	360,714		236,989
Surplus for the period	18,653		123,725
Closing	379,367		360,714
Members Funds	380,960		362,307