

This report provides a summary of the work undertaken by the Dons Trust Board, since the previous SGM on the 16 June 05 in pursuance of Dons Trust Aims. I must apologise for having to bring forward the date for our September SGM but you may recall that this possibility was mentioned at our June SGM due to the need to bring forward a Resolution calling for clarification in the Constitution on Dons Trust board member election rules. The urgency being dictated by the need to initiate our annual Dons Trust board membership election process by the middle of September.

This period has been one of primarily focusing on our Community Aims which includes community events, youth and community summer football programmes and generally increasing our profile in the community. I must say this work is critical to our future success, since it consolidates our customer/supporter base in the broadest sense and goes a long way in meeting our community obligation. I thank all of you who have been involved with these activities and long may this work continue.

Also over this period you may have noticed that more information on Dons Trust matters is becoming available on the web site, various membership/volunteer initiatives are emerging, constitution issues are receiving more attention as well as improvements to our Stadium. To all of you who have made these activities happen, I thank you.

Further to advancing our Aims, it is pleasing to note that AFC Wimbledon has been strengthening the team to successfully meet the challenge of Ryman Premier football as are the Ladies and Youth teams in pursuance of success in their respective leagues. I am sure I speak on behalf of the whole Trust by wishing all the teams every success for the forthcoming season.

Our single biggest priority continues to be the reduction of our stadium debt and as many of you will have noted from recent announcements that the Khosla debt continues to reduce. Over this quarter, income arising from the five-year season tickets initiative has made a major contribution to the reduction in this debt. However, while the debt remains, reduction in interest payments is paramount. The Dons Trust Bond Scheme remains the "flagship" of our endeavours in reducing the level of interest payments and for those of you who have yet to take up this opportunity may I urge you to give this scheme careful consideration

Furthermore, I am delighted to report that during this Quarter our Fund Raising initiatives have secured in excess of £100k for the last financial year, which is a remarkable effort, and may this continue for the current financial year. I thank all those who have made this happen and all of you who have given so generously. However, it should be borne in mind that these achievements have been secured by a relatively small team and to be able to sustain these levels of success for the future, possibly exceeding them, it will be important for all of us to ensure that the fundraising team receives the additional support it needs, particularly in event management. You may recall in my earlier reports that I mentioned that when it comes to members contributing to our funds none of us have "bottomless" pockets, so may I suggest you endeavour, where possible, to seek fund raising participation beyond our membership.

The following paragraphs set out the achievements of the various groups during the period. For completeness the name of the Dons Trust member responsible for the specific area is given in brackets against the heading. The intention is that further financial information will be available at the SGM meeting.

Finance Working Group (Erik Samuelson)

Since we last reported, the Finance WG has met twice. The following matters were addressed:

- Finalisation of tax advice from professional advisers regarding various aspects of the DT's activities. A paper on the subject, making recommendations for a number of specific actions, is now with the DT board for consideration. Some generic tax matters were also covered in a joint meeting between the advisers, the DT and a Supporters Direct representative
- Providing advice and support regarding a possible loan from a bank. The FWG has a number of members who specialise in matters such as this and they have been providing input to our current application
- Completing a review of the 5-year forecast that was included in the prospectus two years ago. The purpose of the review was to identify areas where we could improve our longer-term planning
- Starting a review of the benefits of affiliation schemes for the DT and/or AFCW. This is likely to be a matter we return to over the next couple of meetings

Finance Working Group meetings are open to all DT members.

Dons Trust Treasurer (John Owen)

The previous SGM took place towards the end of June 2005 during which unaudited management accounts were presented for the 9-month period to 31 March 2005.

Whilst the completion of the annual accounts is well under way, and with the results planned to be issued as soon as is practicable, there are still a number of issues that need to be resolved relating to income as well as to costs.

As such, and taking into consideration the fact that the financial year end has already passed, it has been considered inappropriate to prepare unaudited management accounts for the full year, as were presented at the last two SGM's, to ensure that these figures are not mistakenly taken as audited full year figures.

As a guide however, and as indicated elsewhere in this report, fund-raising in the 4th quarter of the financial year remained strong with income in excess of £30,000. The major contributors to this figure were the Dons Draw, Walk for Wimbledon II, and Golden Goals. There were also a handful of other activities or events that resulted in surpluses of around £500 each.

During the 4th quarter of the year a further £40,000 was transferred to AFC Wimbledon that was applied to reduce further the Khosla debt. As at 30 June 2005 the cash resources of the Dons Trust remained buoyant with bank balances of in excess of £40,000.

Legal & Constitution (David Cox)

The Constitution review process is under way. The newly formed Constitution Review Group has met on several occasions (see the Legal & Constitutional Working Group found in the Dons Trust section of the club's official website www.afcwimbledon.co.uk for a summary of meetings) and has agreed working methods and identified areas of the Constitution which need to be reviewed.

Our objective is to present to members a revised Constitution, to be voted at the March 2006 SGM. To give members time to review and consider the changes proposed, we are aiming to send out later this year (most likely with the AGM papers to be sent out in November):

- A draft of the revised text of the Constitution reflecting changes which are essentially of a technical and drafting nature (and accompanying explanation); and
- A paper presenting the key issues of principle which need to be resolved and, as relevant, the proposed solution or options for solving them.

Recognising that time to discuss these issues at the AGM is likely to be limited, and that the revised Constitution will be put to a yes/no vote at the subsequent SGM, we are looking for other ways of involving members in the Constitutional debate. These are likely to include an open meeting in late 2005 or early 2006 as well as regular publicity via the website and matchday programme. Meetings of the Constitution Review Group are open to members and will be publicised on the website.

Whilst the above work is aiming for completion in March 2006, it has been necessary to put forward an immediate change to Rule 61 of the Constitution to allow the 2005 Board elections to proceed in the manner intended (see proposed resolution to be voted at the September SGM).

Secretariat (Mark Davis)

The Secretary has continued to provide ongoing administrative support for the Board and for SGMs during the quarter and is participating in the Constitution review process.

The Election Steering Group has now been mobilised to oversee the 2005 Board elections and members will in due course be advised of arrangements for candidacy and voting.

Following the resolution passed at the June SGM, a letter has been sent to Supporters Direct requesting them to establish a policy on refusing to allow into the membership of Supporters Direct any new Trust formed by a splinter group of fans, or one that supports a franchised club or any other organisation that is fundamentally at odds with the concept of democratic supporter ownership and recognition.

Given the workload and skillset required to perform the Secretary's role, the Secretary continues to draw upon a number of people in performance of his role. Particular thanks are due to David Cox, Roger Cassells and Phil Hatcher. Members interested in taking on secretarial tasks from time to time are encouraged to contact Mark Davis via secretary@thedonstrust.org.

Stadium (Tom Adam)

This Quarter, the Stadium Working Group on behalf of the Dons Trust Board, continues to actively pursue, either collectively or as individual assignments, work on repair and maintenance of the stadium, conversion to a reality some of the planned improvements, negotiation with RBK Officers and Councillors concerning extension of planning periods for the stadium and liaison with London Borough of Merton senior council officials concerning future football facilities in Merton. The results of some of this work is now beginning to show through the emergence of a roof over the athletics end terracing, improved terracing in John Smith's stand and general resurfacing areas around the ground.

Fundraising Update (Geraldine Messenbird)

Since the last report the Fundraising team has been enjoying the summer break; whilst Fazal Ahmed has been enjoying life with his new born son – congratulations to you and your family!

Planning has started for events large and small for the 05-06 season; and like last year we will be evaluating proposals to ensure with our limited resources we make the best use of the time and people we have.

Our ongoing activities continue:

- Loose change
- Dons Trust Bond
- Recycling mobile phones
- Sponsor a Seat
- Recycling toner and printer cartridges
- Foreign currency conversion
- Dons Draw
- Golden Goals

If you would like to run your own fundraising event please contact fundraising@thedonstrust.org. The fundraising team can supply advice, guidance and support.

AFC Wimbledon Ladies (Ron Trayhorn)

By the time this report is circulated the 2005-6 season will be under way but on the footballing front there is nothing significant to report.

Regretfully we have lost Rachel Axon to Bristol Rovers and Maria Bertelli to Charlton during the close season. Rachel has been in the England under 21 squad and Maria wishes to play at a higher level to boost her England chances. Both will be sorely missed but we wish them every success with their new National League clubs.

On a brighter note we have secured the services of Stewart Castledine as coach for the senior teams. Having an ex Wimbledon premiership player taking coaching has been warmly received by the players especially after a season with no coach and problems with a training venue. (continues)

Bert Dale has been instrumental in setting up two new girls teams, under 12 and under 14, this is our first step to build up our community involvement for AFCW Ladies and we hope that this will be a start in creating opportunities for local girls to progress and provide new talent for the senior squads.

Community Events (Roger Dennis)

The third Family Fun Day was held at Kingsmeadow on 15 May and was a great success. Most of the activities took place on the pitch, with the all weather five aside 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.

Roger and Linda Dennis would like to thank the Community Events group for all their work to help organise the event, the volunteers who helped on the day and the Womble Underground Press who again sponsored the hire of the all weather pitches and who also produced a programme for the day.

In addition, the Community Events Group organised successful participation by the Trust at Wimbledon Village Fair, Mitcham Carnival and 3 school fairs. These events provide excellent opportunities to remind local people of the club and Trust's success and to promote activities such as the Community Football courses.

All these events raised over £2,600.00 for the Trust. Merchandise sales raised considerably more than that for the club, while the Family Fun Day also enabled the club to gain from bar and food sales. This is quite apart from the main objective of promoting the Trust and club in the local community.

Golden Goals

In the 2004-05 season, sales of golden goal tickets raised £15,402.00 for the Stadium Fund. In the three seasons that golden goals have been running, they have raised £43,484.00 for the Stadium Fund. The golden goal organisers, Roger and Linda Dennis, would like to thank all the volunteer sellers for helping to raise this amount, particularly for selling tickets in the cold and/or wet winter months.

Junior Dons (JDs)

The Junior Dons held their own Player of the Season vote. Richard Butler won by just one vote from Rob Ursell. Richard's trophy was presented to him before kick-off at the final home game of the season by two Junior Dons: Bethany Ardley (aged 3); and Ronnie Robinson (10). Both regularly attend Dons' games and were drawn at random from the JDs who voted.

Birthday cards signed by the players continue to be very popular with JDs (and their parents) and a number of JDs have been able to meet the players after home matches.

Conclusion

It is pleasing to be able to report that DT Board members continue to maintain the momentum during the non football season period, by focussing on community, fundraising, completion of year end accounts and putting in place financial management arrangements for the coming year together with preparation for the next football season. All such efforts can sometimes go unnoticed but I can assure you that securing a sound community base and good financial management coupled with preparation for the challenges our teams face on the pitch is fundamental to our ongoing success. All this cannot be possible without the hard work and dedication of Dons Trust members and others. I thank you all.

Last but not least, may I extend on behalf of the Dons Trust Board and our Members, our wishes for success and support for the forthcoming season to AFC Wimbledon as well as our Ladies and Youth Teams.

Tom Adam
Chair Dons Trust