



Clubhouse Regeneration Project

25th February 2025

INTRODUCTION BY CHAIR, NIGEL THORPE

The start of 2025 finds your Club in very good shape. Tennis thriving across the board. Our junior section is doing very well, and the junior teams won the Dulwich Cup last year. The adult teams are going well and social tennis is busy. We have a terrific coaching team led by Alex Heath and they have been inspirational and hard working in getting our tennis to its present level. Our annual tournament is popular and the new format very successful.

The job of the Club management is to deliver the facilities and services that enable tennis to thrive here. Financially, the Club is in a very solid place. We have recovered quickly from the large expenditure on Courts 3 and 4, and are once more accumulating cash. We are at capacity membership and still have a substantial waiting list. Our courts and grounds are all in excellent shape. Over the past year we have revamped our website, and adopted a new Club crest. The only asset which cries out for change is the Clubhouse.

The present Clubhouse was opened in 1987. It is, to say the least, tired. We know that the electrical wiring and systems and the plumbing need a lot of work to make them safe and serviceable. The bathrooms and kitchen need stripping out and replacing with modern, efficient facilities. We also have to meet LTA and Sport England safeguarding and disability standards, which at present we don't. Because it is in such a sorry state it doesn't get used much, except for checking in and a quick visit to the loo. Those of you who belong to other clubs or visit them when playing matches know that the facilities they offer are far better than ours. And this matters. In the long run we are in competition with other clubs for members and we must continue to offer the best that we can, so that our offer to the membership remains attractive in all aspects.

In essence we faced a choice between spending quite a lot of money on the present building to try to extend its life, or to invest for the long term and do a proper job. We chose the latter. We started to look at all this at the beginning of 2024. We surveyed our membership to test usage of the Clubhouse. The results were telling. There was no enthusiasm for the present building.



We set up a Clubhouse Project team composed of volunteers from the membership, all professionally qualified who were able to show us how the Clubhouse could look, if we were prepared to spend the money. We went further and started to look seriously at what the Club needed in terms of space and facilities, and how it could meet disability and safeguarding requirements as laid down by Sport England and by the LTA. We also spent a lot of time examining the present building so we don't start work and find something that throws our plans and budget into disarray.

We also need to be sure that we will get planning permission. The Club is on metropolitan open land which carries very restrictive rules about what can be developed. We went to Southwark Council for a pre-application discussion, taking a concept worked up by Bernard Stilwell and his firm. We had a good meeting and, subject to submission of a detailed formal application and fulfilment of a number of conditions, we are fairly confident of approval. We must also have the support of our landlord, Dulwich Picture Gallery, and we have had discussions with them. We have also talked to the Dulwich Estate, the Dulwich Society, our two councillors and to the Residents' Association of College Gardens. These are ongoing discussions and we need their support.

Finally, we have appointed architects. Although we had started some work with Bernard Stilwell's firm, we felt it essential to have a competitive process and we held discussions and meetings with two other local firms, both with recent experience of tennis clubhouses, but in the end we decided to continue to work with BSA, Bernard's firm. They know the club and the clubhouse better than the others, and they were competitive on price as well as having been very helpful in getting us to this point. Bernard project managed courts 3 and 4 for us and brought that project home on time and to budget, which was another factor.

We have established a Project Steering Group to oversee the whole enterprise. This includes Charlotte Ireson, Hande Reardon, Caroline Beck and myself. So we are embarking on what will be a very big project for a volunteer run club. But we are confident that we have taken the right decisions and followed a good process to date. We also believe that this is very much a necessary step for the Club.



THE BUILDING DESIGN PROJECT: BERNARD STILWELL

Karan, Sofia and I welcome this opportunity to share with you some 'work in progress' images taken from the still evolving project to deliver a **rejuvenated clubhouse**, which when finished we hope will serve the Club well, for many years ahead.

The first part of our presentation will consist of me telling you about our vision for the project and where we are; Sofia will then take us through some visualisations of what might be in the main clubroom, and I will conclude with some notes on where we go from here and then hand over to Caroline to talk you through the financial and funding.



This is a 'before and after' image, existing on left side and proposed on right.

For the successful **regeneration** of the Club's tired facilities it helps to have an overarching **vision** of what the Clubhouse might be, when all the project's phases are complete,

We have set ourselves three **main aims** for the **ARCHITECTURE** of the new building and the refurbished existing clubhouse:



The first aim is to **promote** sustainable construction methods and materials that do not damage the local ecosystem and minimise what we contribute to climate change.

This is of critical importance to some of the project's key stakeholders; Southwark Council, for example, who are rightly highly protective of Metropolitan Open Land. Southwark are keen to ensure that any building on our site does no damage to it. We must protect the trees, demonstrate that we have studied the ecology and that we know, understand and respect the site's bio-diversity.

At planning stage, we will have to pay more than lip service to this aim; we will need to demonstrate how it will be achieved.

This image shows how the space we need to add, to ensure our facilities comply with LTA and Sports England guidelines and Building Regulations, has been designed to be housed unobtrusively. We are avoiding damage to the existing trees, we are touching the existing building lightly, we are using roof glazing to capture daylight, and much more.



The second aim is to **produce** a building group – a visually attractive cluster - that adds up to more than the sum of its parts.

We want to minimise **waste**:

We want to **use what can be re-used** – the existing building, for example – and **add** only what we need to comply with LTA, Sports England guidelines and Building Regulations and to support the Club’s social life;



Our third aim is to serve the Club's members and visitors. We design for people: we want the project to **provide** an elegant backdrop, both outside and inside, for the Club's day-to-day activities and...



...on its big celebration days.





Opening up the opportunity during, say, the tournament fortnight, to add an extra *oomph* by setting up some stackable spectator seating with cover provided by a couple of giant parasol umbrellas.



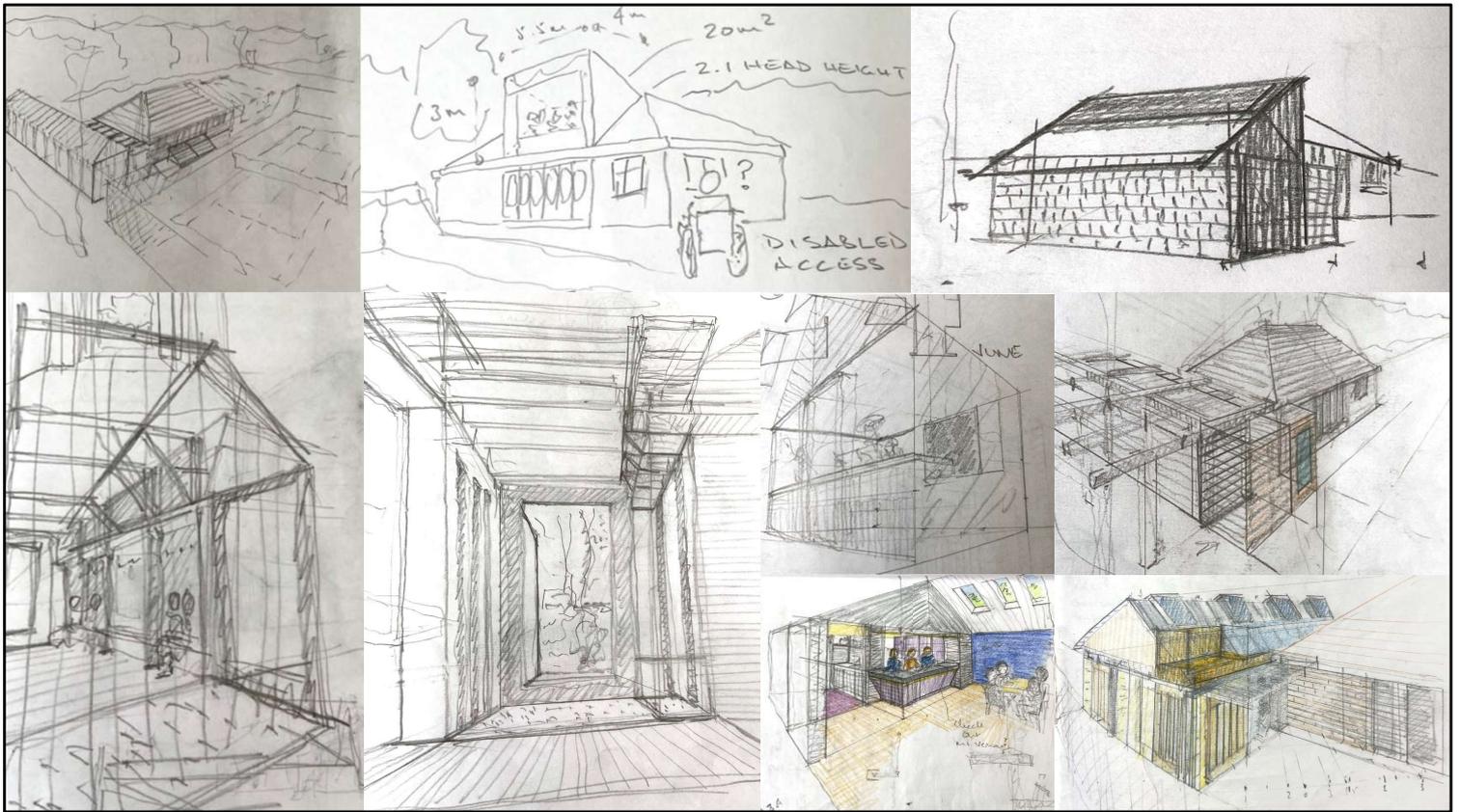


As Leonard played by Mark Rylance says in the film *the Outfit*: *You cannot make something good until you know who you are making it for.*

Getting to know the Club really well, in all its forms, requires tons of **groundwork**: The ‘heavy lifting’ :

- has involved observing how the Club operates at different times of day and week. We have built up detailed knowledge and understanding of who uses what and when – it is amazing how it changes: **from** complete quiet, to bustling with young children and their parents and carers, **to** jovial adults of all ages playing socially or in deadly serious competitive matches;
- And it has Involved talking and working with all the project’s **stakeholders**: **from** individual Club members, Club committee members, Club coaches, the Club’s appointed professional consultants, arboriculturalist, a team of ecologists and other specialists, **to** neighbours and Southwark planners and councillors.

This ongoing dialogue enables us to re-arrange the spaces to overcome the shortcomings we have identified. For example, by ensuring that the ‘WASH’ (which is an acronym for water, sanitary and hygiene’) facilities are separate from and can be used independently from the social spaces. This is only one example.

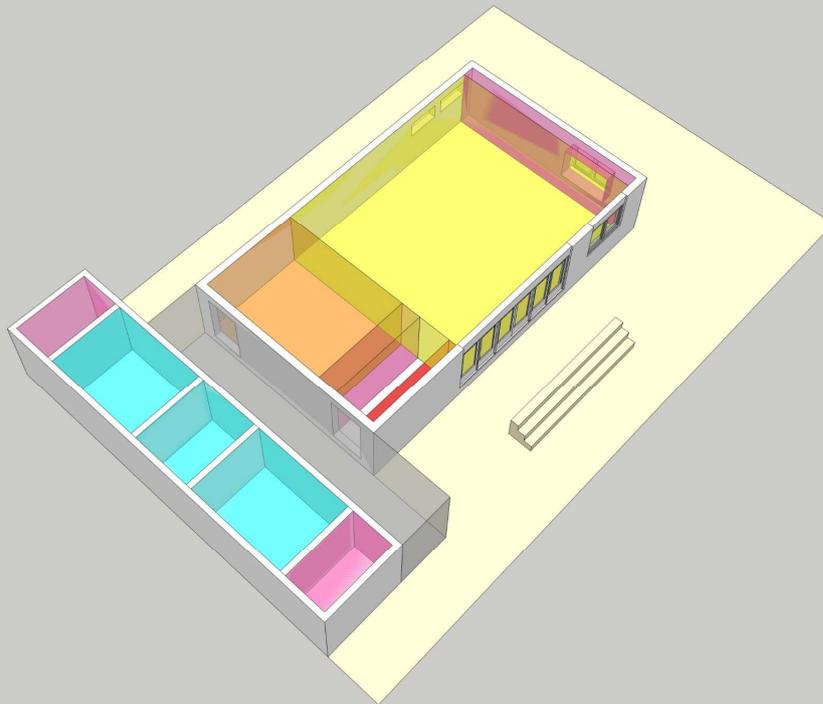


... Our design work has involved exploring options, configurations and permutations to ensure that no stone is left unturned in the search for an **affordable and sustainable** answer to the Club's requirements

It has involved developing a **phasing strategy** that will enable building works to be implemented such that the Club can operate throughout with relatively little disruption and not to be without the use of its facilities at any point.

Phasing also provides some flexibility if the Club needs to take a financial 'break' to suit its cashflow.

We are currently looking at four phases. Ideally these will run continuously but the strategy is designed to allow pauses, to enable the Club to secure the necessary funding:



Here we show an animation of the **Phasing Strategy**:

Phase 1, the coaches store moves into a temporary shed while the Club builds new WASH facilities – in blue - including facilities for disabled users, replacement stores and a new coaches office. The office will also be our medical room, where someone taken ill can sit and wait quietly for outside assistance.

Phase 2: in orange and red, consists of replacing the existing male and female changing with a new kitchen and bar and an everyday kitchenette;

Phase 3: in yellow, consists of stripping out the existing kitchen and bar and replacing them with new social spaces and a refreshed main clubroom;

Phase 4: would bring the project to a conclusion by re-doing the external spaces around the regenerated club facilities;



And it has involved turning all this into hard edged ‘architect’s technical plans’

This image shows, from the top (North to South):

- the new, larger clubroom spaces, in yellow,
- An enlarged kitchen and bar, and a small kitchenette in orange
- the new everyday entrance giving access to the WASH block, indicated by a red arrow;
- The new WC, changing and showering, including disabled facilities, in blue, served by the ‘gallery’, with a ‘locker wall’ in light grey;
- A new coaches office in green which will also act as a medical room – something we currently lack to comply with guidelines;
- Various stores in pink and engineering plant and a much need cleaner’s cupboard in dark grey;



It has involved, in parallel with the consulting, the discussing, the analysing and the designing, making ourselves very familiar with the existing Clubhouse building.

We have clambered all over it and under it, and talked in detail with John Barton about its current failings and shortcomings:



both visible and less visible ...



Hidden and not so hidden - Karan bravely climbed into the void under the Club, take the photograph on the left of some of what is lurking underneath



As you should expect from Architects and designers, we're not just getting the project's nuts and bolts aligned. We want to design good-looking, attractive spaces which members and visitors enjoy being in and using.

We want spaces and volumes, openings and surfaces, that optimise daylight and are visually attractive and practical, good-looking and easy to use.

We think well considered arrangements, can help ensure the inevitable visual 'chaos' of notices and lost property, and bins, and stacked furniture, and all the other paraphernalia a thriving Club generates, can live a little more happily inside a better ordered, nicely composed building



Back to where we started, this time looking inside the existing building.

If you look very carefully, you will see in a reflection on the tv screen, Sofia, Karan and me, probably wondering amongst the many questions we need to address, how best to answer the inevitable query: where will the ping-pong table be stored? You will be glad to know, we have this covered:

I will hand over to Sofia to talk you through some visualisations of various scenarios we have tested in response to the various set-ups needed to host the very different events this Club accommodates throughout the year.



SOFIA MILORADOVA

Good evening everyone, thank you for joining us today to review our 'work in progress' on the communal spaces.

As mentioned earlier by Bernard, we have been observing how the Clubroom is used. In ongoing discussion with the Club we are exploring ways of making it work better, testing six distinct configurations.

We are looking in these next few images how we can optimise the space and the Club can keep it much cleaner, more flexible and more inviting once we have moved the WASH accommodation into the new building.



This layout shows a typical set-up when the Club is holding summer camps for juniors. This is when we have peak numbers in the clubroom, watching TV, playing ping-pong, eating, sheltering from inclement weather or having a break.

We recognized that storing the ping pong table and unwanted tables and chairs in a designated area, in the upper left corner the upper left room, not only keeps the space clutter-free but also allows for a quicker, less stressful, and mess-free transition between activities.

This setup makes it much easier to store and retrieve items efficiently, ensuring that the environment remains safe and easy to organize at all times. I can speak from experience!



The regular women's social event that takes place at the Club has cultivated amongst this group a strong sense of community.

In this image we show how seating can be organised to enable easy conversation and interaction.

This layout ensures that guests can easily navigate the space and engage with one another, reinforcing a shared and vibrant communal experience throughout the event



This image illustrates the main space set up for the annual exhibition of members' work.

The suggested sub-division of the clubroom into three separate but linked spaces, using the additional space currently occupied by the existing bar and kitchen, would allow the loose furniture to be easily removed and stored allowing the main room to be quickly reconfigured for different purpose.

The smaller space with the existing windows could be used either to expand the exhibition area or kept as a comfortable seating area, at all times.

This approach strikes an ideal balance between visual appeal and functional adaptability



With that I would like to pass the presentation back to Bernard Who will now go through **Where do we go from here?**

The answer, if we were to use a tennis analogy, would be that the next stages are like the second week of Wimbledon:

- the rounds get tougher,
 - moving forward gets more challenging and
 - the consequences of not getting through more serious.
 - But with your support, we will be getting to the Final
1. We will need Planning consent from Southwark
 2. We will need to develop and co-ordinate the various Technical Designs
 3. We will need to submit the scheme for Building Regulations approvals
 4. We will need to long-list and short-list building contractors
 5. We will need to tender the project, select a building contractor and enter into a building contract
 6. We will need to build it!
 7. And last and most critically, we will need to fund it – before handing over to Caroline who will talk through ideas on what this involves, I will conclude with a brief summary of how some of the numbers Caroline is using have been produced



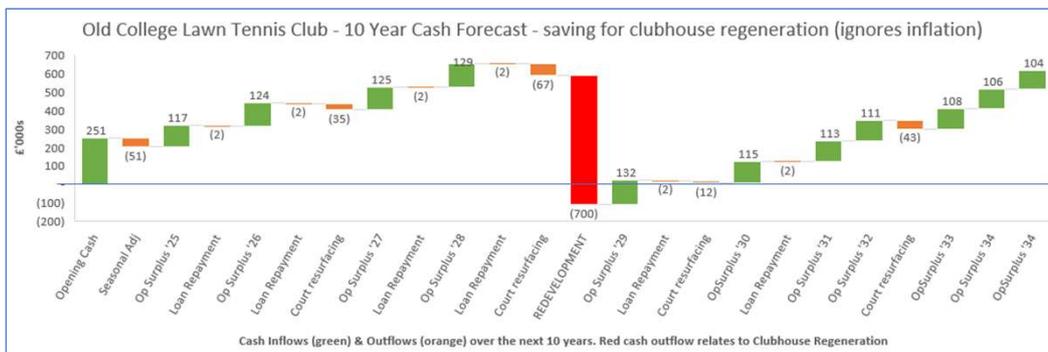
You will see from this chart that the majority of the project cost – shown as the dark green slice - is spent during construction. You will recall me mentioning the phasing strategy, and from the side bar you will see how each phase adds to the total. Between each phase there can be pause points, which ensures the Club's financial exposure can be controlled if something unexpected crops up.

The actual cost of construction will be known with some certainty once we have a fully designed scheme and secured tenders from reputable contractors. A lot can happen between now and then, some of it knowable but unquantifiable, some unknowable.

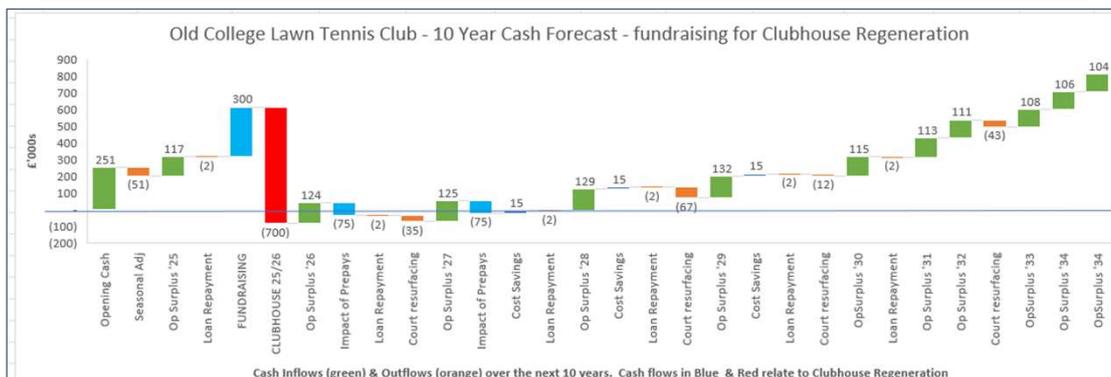
At this point, we have arrived at figures after some thorough work, using different square metre rates applied to different parts dependent on how radically they need to be changed.

Funding for the Clubhouse Regeneration

1. Saving for Clubhouse Regeneration
 - Wait until 2029
 - Ignore Inflation



2. If we raise funds then we could do complete regeneration in 12 to 18 months.



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We estimate that the cost of regeneration will be £700k that is based on the best information currently available to use. However, there are still a lot of unknowns and therefore this should be regarded as an estimate.

As a club we are generating a healthy cash surplus each year of around just over £100k as indicated by the green bars on the top waterfall chart. We can comfortably cover the winter months when cash outgoings typically exceed money coming in, the replacement of court surfaces in accordance with the capex plan and repay a small loan from the lta.

So if we continued to build up cash then we could regenerate the clubhouse in 2029. HOWEVER THAT IGNORES INFLATION AND IF IT IS 5%PA FOR BUILDING MATERIALS THEN WE WOULD NEED TO FIND £815k IN 2029 AND PROBABLY DEFER. We would have a very delapidated clubhouse which means that serious maintenance costs, members spend less there and go to other clubs. That in the committee's view is not a good scenario and not one that we believe members want.

The alternative shown at the bottom is to put these plans into place as soon as we get planning permission so we have a revamped clubhouse sometime next year. To do that we would need to raise funds.

We've estimated that we need £300k and we need most of that before the build starts. As a small concern from a bank's perspective they are not going to give us an overdraft facility nor a loan so that funding will need to come from you and friends of the club.

How do we raise the funds?

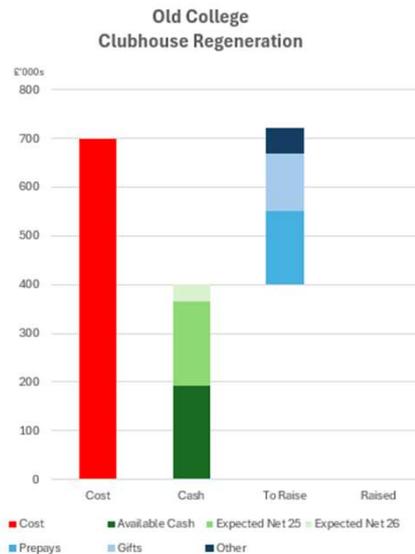
If we start in Sept estimated cash available is £365K.

We would need to raise £300K to complete without stopping

1. Ask you to pay 3 years' subscriptions by April '25
 - Credit amount paid against your future subscriptions
 - Subscription price freeze for years prepaid
 - Target: £150K

2. Ask you to make a gift using the UK's Gift Aid Scheme
 - If you donate £300, the club claims £75 from HMRC
 - For some of you, potential income tax benefit
 - Target: £120K

3. Other activities to raise funds
 - Fun fund-raising events
 - Keep the current court surfaces going for longer
 - Admit new members
 - Target: £50K



	Target	To Date	To Raise
Prepaid Subs	£150	0	£150
Gifts	£120	0	£120
Other (£'000)	£50	£0	£50

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We identified 3 ways of doing that:

Firstly, members can prepay 2026 & 2027 subscriptions by paying 3 years at once. For an adult peak member that would mean paying the 2025 sub of £ 326 as normal and then paying an additional £652. We would exempt members who prepay from inflationary increases to subscriptions during the prepaid period. In future years we would credit to subs due. This will be subject to a final check of the club's finances when subs are due to make sure that by giving prepaid members a credit the club does not go into overdraft. As we hope the building will start in September only those that prepay by 30th June would avoid inflationary increases. We will be providing forms to make this easier for you and for our record keeping.

Secondly, if you and your friends or your family have fond memories of the club then you may wish to make a donation yourself or encourage others to do so. As old college is classified as a Community & Amateur Sports Club (CASC) we are eligible for the UK government's gift aid scheme. This allows us to claim a further 25p for each £1 that you donate. In addition for some you there may be income tax benefits in classifying this as a charitable donation. Inevitably there is some paperwork so we will provide you with a form on the website

And then there are other ways of raising funds

- We could have a series of fun events where the net contribution goes towards the regeneration project.
- We can avoid costs – you've all seen the emails about sweeping the courts. That keeps the surfaces going longer and may mean we can defer some capital expenditure
- When we can and if we need to admit additional members
- Some other potential sources but as they are not going to make the difference as to whether we have enough funds or not they are not shown here.

If we are able to hit all our targets then we should have enough based on current estimates to go ahead with the clubhouse. SOME OF YOU WILL HAVE NOTED THAT THE TOTAL TARGETS > £300k AND THAT IS TO GIVE SOME FLEXIBILITY. There are so many unknowns at the moment we may need that.

Q & A