
Clubhouse Redevelopment

A Member Update from the Board • October 2026

Many of you have asked us how the new clubhouse project is progressing, and we're conscious it's been a while since our last update. We're sorry for the delay in writing to you. A great deal has been happening behind the scenes, and in the spirit of keeping you properly informed, this note is honest about both progress and the challenges we're now facing.

PLANNING AND TENDER

As advised in earlier emails and newsletters we secured planning permission in February for a plan to convert the changing rooms and workshop of the squash building to a bar/social area and new unisex showers and toilets. Since our last update we have completed a competitive tender process: three contractors submitted quotes. Those quotes have shown the likely cost of this scheme to be significantly higher than first anticipated. This has led the Board to stop and seriously question whether, at this cost, the current proposal is the right solution for the club. We set out why below.

COST AND AFFORDABILITY

Taking into account the recommended tender price, and making an allowance for additional costs, we now need to budget for expenditure in the region of £350,000 — a significant rise on the original £250,000 estimate, driven mainly by essential structural work, more detailed costs and some additions to the original specification. At this level the project would need significant commercial borrowing, and the Board has concluded we cannot responsibly commit to that until we're confident the club can afford it. We've therefore paused further decisions while we establish exactly what we can afford, look at ways to boost income, and put a proper business plan in place, which we're aiming to have ready in early 2027. This is a deliberate pause to protect the club's finances, not a decision to shelve the project.

COURTS 3 & 4

Separately, this summer's dry weather has caused subsidence damage to Courts 3 and 4. The budgeted repair cost has already risen from £90,000 to a minimum of £165,000 and possibly more. The full extent won't be clear until further investigations have been carried out. The current recommendation by the court contractor and a structural engineer is to wait until the spring to see what effect that rainfall will have on the ground before carrying out further investigations. This unplanned cost is a further reason we need a clear picture of what the club can afford before committing to the clubhouse build.

LISTENING TO MEMBERS AND VALUE FOR MONEY

Whilst we have had a lot of positive feedback from members on the new project, there have been some concerns expressed about the design. We have taken every comment seriously, including concerns raised about changing arrangements, storage and ventilation. As we firm up our plans, the Board is committed to making sure whatever we ultimately build offers the best possible value for money, deals with safeguarding concerns regarding the current changing rooms and toilet facilities and delivers the facilities members have told us matter most. We'll be asking for your views directly through a member survey soon.

We know the pace of this project has tested everyone's patience, and we're genuinely grateful for it. Every decision we're taking — on cost, on the courts, on safeguarding issues and on listening to your feedback — is aimed at protecting the club and delivering a clubhouse we can all be proud of, on solid financial foundations. We'll keep you updated as things progress and a full update will be provided at the AGM in November. In the meantime, please do get in touch with the Board if you have any questions.

Thank you for your continued support.

The SLTCC Board