

Dear Pelicans & Pelican Supporters

We hope more than anything that this letter finds all of our fellow players, members and supporters safe, physically healthy and mentally well in these current strange and worrying times.

In the absence of an AGM we hope the following will provide you all with some useful information and an insight into what is going on behind the scenes and a look forward to our next season. Our AGM will still go ahead in a slightly different format (possibly at the start of next season) but we will keep you updated.

Our Club

All of us have very diverse skills and jobs outside of Pelicans. A lot of our members are still essential workers, including NHS staff, carers, delivery drivers, supermarket staff or working in essential roles. Thank you to all of you for keeping going and doing what you do, we are immensely grateful and proud of all of you.

On top of this many of us are trying to adjust to more time at home, supporting children with home learning, caring for elderly or vulnerable family members and tackling many other difficulties including having to adjust financially which are just some of many issues the current isolation and restrictions are causing.

Many of our younger Pelicans will have been faced with uncertainty about GCSE or A level exams and the worry about how this will affect their next steps, a worry that most of us have never been faced with before in our own lifetimes.

What I hope is that whatever you have been facing or struggling with that you know that all of your fellow Pelicans are here to help you out if you need it. Please don't ever think you cannot reach out. Likewise, this is why it is so important for us to check in with each other every now and then, so we all know there is someone looking out for us.

There is a reason that we are looking to enter our 100th year as a club and that is all down to the commitment of our players, members and supporters.

The end of last season

England Hockey recently called an end to all remaining games, fixtures and tournaments for the remainder of the season. We are still unclear as to where that leaves each of our teams in their own leagues but we will filter this down as soon as we have a clearer idea. We are also liaising with Norfolk and East Hockey and will keep you up to date with any news.

What is not yet clear is exactly when the next season will start. At the moment we are still planning for the usual start at the end of August, however of course this could change. As soon as we have more information and a clearer timeline, we will start looking to preseason and training sessions.

It is great to see that although our season came to frustrating and abrupt end, we are still managing to keep up our comradery on social media and group chats. The inventive and

usually humorous posts, challenges and discussions have been a brilliant distraction and a great way for us to all keep connected. We hope this is a trend we can keep up and keep making the most of our social media and although we have to be physically distant, we can all stay connected.

Keep an eye on our social media platforms (in particular Facebook) as we will be posting more content over the coming weeks including some training and fitness ideas. Any ideas you have or think would be useful or interesting to our other members then please contribute as much as you can.

Our Mens 1 XI in particular were striving forward towards their goal of promotion and will be disappointed to have been denied this glory; and our junior players' confidence and development as young players was beginning to show fruit. A real enthusiasm and incredible support from parents was evident as we organised tournaments and improved the use of group chats and social media. We hope this will continue next season and are excited to see what this will have in store for them.

Getting ready for next season:

We hope you will all agree that we need to use this time as an opportunity to build and develop all of our resources and plans so that next season we start with a bang and continue to strive to be the best we can. We have set a goal to achieve all of our pre-season planning before the end of June 2020. We are already a great club but we also have so much more potential and areas we know we can do better. We cannot do this without your help and support.

We know many of us are even more busy at the moment trying to juggle full time jobs and family but there are also some of us who are finding we do have some spare time on our hands and between us have an endless and broad list of skills to offer. We can definitely use all of this skill and resource.

If you are one of these people, there are many many tasks that the club need to achieve before next season and even if usually you cannot spare any time to volunteer – any assistance will be always greatly received.

Finances

Thankfully (and mostly down to Matt Bower and his tight management and future planning as Treasurer), the club is in a healthy position financially. Our overheads out of season are relatively low and therefore and we are looking healthy going into next season whenever that may be. Of course we will continue to rely on our generous sponsors and membership subscriptions but reassuringly we are confident that we are not going to need to increase any match fees or subscriptions next season but membership as ever is going to be vital to our continued success.

Committee

Your committee continues to communicate and work tirelessly on everything involved in running the club behind the scenes. As always before a new season, we will review our committee positions, vote in existing and new members for next season and fill any positions

which are vacant. This would have usually been done at the AGM so we will have to be a little more creative about how that is done. There are a number of roles which are vacant and are currently being filled by committee members doubling up which as you can understand is not sustainable in the long run. It is also important to ensure we spread out responsibility and make sure we remain in touch with the club members.

With such a wealth of skill and talent throughout the club we would like to see more volunteers coming forward to offer their services to the committee. We would also like to see that we can secure the commitment to these roles before the end of June 2020 so that each committee member can begin to spearhead their own roles and responsibilities next season. Keep an eye out for list of committee roles and the voting process but if you feel you can commit your time as a committee member then please get in touch for more information.

Next season we also plan to include our captains and coaches in committee meetings as we know that we need to improve continuity and cohesion across the club.

We will also be working hard on the passage of information and transparency of the committee actions including making sure reports are accessible and everyone has a clear understanding of policies, standards, expectations and goals.

Volunteering

Volunteering in general is the absolute backbone of your club. We simply cannot survive without the passion and dedication that you all provide. Volunteering ranges from a 'one off' or 'every now and then' basis maybe supplying cakes or time on the kitchen rota or pitch side at tournaments, maybe organising a social event, through to more regular roles and commitments of umpiring, coaching, coaching assistants and managers (some of which we discuss in more detail below).

We cannot make it any clearer that we need more volunteers next season. If our club is to succeed, then we all need to step into a role of volunteer at some stage and in some capacity next season. Please get in touch if you think you can volunteer in any of the above-mentioned roles.

Coaches:

All being well in the world we anticipate that Wayne Masters will be returning as head coach along with the support of Jack Major and Iain Page amongst others in support.

Unfortunately, we say goodbye to Sean Kerry as head junior coach and know that this is a key position which needs to be fulfilled without delay.

Ideally, we would also be able to employ a coach for the ladies' teams for the upcoming season. As we are a club that relies heavily on volunteers and with only a limited budget for paid roles, the task of finding new coaches is never an easy one.

Wayne has made a seriously impressive impact in his first season back at the club and is working tirelessly and passionately to push the club forward. We need to support him also, whether this be the commitment of players at training and games or additional support from

coaching staff. Pelicans have a proud history of growing coaches from within our own ranks, we have the ability to send and fund anyone interested in becoming a coach on all of the relevant qualification courses and only ask for their commitment in return.

With both the coaching courses and the umpiring courses below, the committee have agreed to fully subsidise courses for those attending in exchange for your commitment (historically we have only part funded them) and England Hockey has agreed to facilitate as many courses as we can fill.

Our junior parents are a key element to future planning for the club as hopefully they remain committed and move up through the club alongside their children and bear in mind the courses we would offer. We have been privileged to witness the growth of the junior parent volunteers. We will continue to support the training and development of the U10 & U2 managers and if there are any other parents or members who are interested in developing roles as coaches please get in touch.

Umpires:

Having personally managed the Umpire allocations this season with much help and support from Charlie Lankfer, Bob King and the captains. We cannot begin to thank every single one of the umpires who have dedicated their time to the club this season. Quite often their flexibility and willingness to step in at the last minute has made the difference to whether a game was played or not.

We have been blown away by the dedication and commitment of our Umpires. Perhaps this has previously been taken for granted (turn up for a game and the umpires are there).

This season we played over 80 home games, supplied umpires to over 15 away games and also hosted a record amount of tournaments on Sundays. This was achieved by between 10-15 regularly dedicated and available umpires, most of who are also players who week after week, wind or rain or sun umpired those games and quite often more than one games and even sometimes ALL of their weekend.

Next season we need to grow this umpire pool. We need to recruit and train more umpires and develop those who are new or less experienced.

Again, if you are interested please let me know as soon as possible so we can get an idea for numbers and dates to run courses.

Please can our existing umpires also get in touch to confirm your availability for next season.

Club forum/Feedback

Thank you to everyone who has already provided feedback to the club so far. We will be reissuing some opportunities to give feedback so look out and respond to these if you can. Alternatively, all comments and suggestions (positive and negative) are always greatly appreciated.

It is our intention that once we have sorted the structure for next season we provide all club members with a clear set of objectives and structure to lead the club into next season.

Objectives for next Season

Over the next weeks we have a number of objectives which include nominating captains, committee members and finalizing our objectives for the coming season.

We want to prepare and be ready to make this one of the most successful seasons. This will be even more the achievement in light of the current worrying times we are in.

We have first class facilities and are blessed with the support and back up by Lynnsport. We also have some of the best pitches in the region and beyond and we have the reputation as one of the most hospitable and welcoming clubs who always make our visitors welcome.

We also want to build on the relationship with East and Norfolk hockey and continue to host as many tournaments as we can across all age groups. Of course, we rely on your support for this and we continue to be eternally grateful for the support all of you show your club.

Festival/Club day

Another victim of the abrupt end to the season was that we couldn't have our junior and senior awards events. This will be one of the first priorities of the new season and will be conducted at our club day and festival at which we will be starting off the season with a long overdue celebration. Anyone who can spare some time to help with the organising of this please get in touch.

Anniversary year

Finally, but by no means last this year is our 100th year as a club. As you know the Covid-19 pandemic has meant our anniversary dinner had to be postponed but we are really excited to let you know that this will now be taking place in June 2021.

In closing we just wanted to thank you once again for all of your support this season. We hope we can rely on you again next season whether it be as a new or continuing coach or umpire or a volunteer for as much time you can spare.

Our club is great because of every single player, member and supporter. It is all of you that has got us to our 100th year.

In the meantime, stay in touch. We hope you and your families keep safe and well in these strange and worrying times and remember if you need anything your Pelican family are always here to help.

We cannot wait to see you all soon and we hope you can still join us when we do eventually get together to celebrate our great club.

This is going to be a great season!

Your Committee