

March 2022

# SPARTA Newsletter



**SPARTA Fitness Class**  
Every Friday 12.30  
Live Online or in GMH  
It's FREE

## GET FIT FOR THE SUMMER

Welcome to the March edition of the SPARTA Newsletter.

You will all be pleased to hear that I managed to complete the 50 mile challenge last month in 25 days and I didn't count any of the running that I did over the month to the total.

I wasn't the first person to complete the challenge. That honour goes to Jess Jackson, from the DfT Leeds Office. She took just 18 days to complete the challenge. Well done Jess.

We are keeping the challenge open till the end of March so you still have time to walk 50 miles in a month and we will be awarding prizes to all finishers.

Walking 50 miles wasn't the only challenge I took on during February, I also ran the National Cross-Country Championships at Parliament Hill Fields in London on 26<sup>th</sup> February.

Funnily enough the 88 bus route,

which stops outside both the DLUHC and DfT HQ offices terminates at Parliament Hill Fields. More details on how I fared and on running events that you can get involved can be found on the next page.

This month we are hosting a special LIVE yoga class in GMH and online open to all staff, see the side panel.

We want all our members to have access to the facilities and clubs that they need to improve their health and wellbeing. So, you will be glad to hear that I have negotiated access to the Home Office gym facilities for all our members.

Full details are included later in this month's newsletter.

With club activity beginning to return to normal, we have a report from the Tenpin Bowling club on their activities.

Sign up to as much as you can in 2022. It's going to be a great year.

## SPARTA 50 YOGA CLASS

**23rd March at 12.30 in Room LG1, GMH.**

Sue Johnson is running a special Yoga class in Great Minster House this month.

If you can't make it in person then you can join online.

An appointment will be sent round to all SPARTA members, but the class is open to all staff from DfT and DLUHC. Please feel free to forward the appointment to anyone who you think may be interested.

As Sue is now retired, we are looking for someone to take on her SPARTA role of Deputy Chair.

If you think you know someone who would be interested or suitable for the job then please get in touch with us.

You can download the job description by clicking [here](#)



**Check out the SPARTA website for upcoming events**



# SPARTA RUNNING

*SPARTA General Secretary, Jason Marchant, reports on running through mud & upcoming Civil Service competitions.*

I used to be a very keen runner when I was younger and represented SPARTA in a number of Civil Service athletics events.

These days I coach athletics and whenever I do any running I am, according to the athletes I coach, slower than your average snail.

Despite this I decided to enter the National Cross-Country Championships at Parliament Hill Fields in London on 26<sup>th</sup> February.

A niggly hamstring problem prevented me from doing any meaningful training in the lead up to the event and so I started with the goal of “just getting round”.



There were well over 2000 entrants in my race, and, as it was the 10<sup>th</sup> race of the day over the course, the terrain had

been completely destroyed by the previous races leaving some areas incredibly boggy for my race.

I got an enormous amount of personal satisfaction just from completing the full 12km race over the difficult terrain, plus I was lapped by Olympic Triathlon Champion, Alex Yee, but thankfully not by 6 times World Snooker champion, Ronnie O’Sullivan.

If you fancy some running events the Civil Service AA has just announced its events for this year. They are:

- 18th May** 10K & 5K, Battersea Park, London
- 19th June** Half Marathon, Freckleton, Lancs
- 10th August** Track & Field, Nuneaton
- 28th Sept** Race Walk, Birmingham
- 12th Oct** Cross Country, Parliament Hill, London

Why not challenge yourself to complete one of these events this year. I can guarantee that you will be really proud of yourself from just finishing any one of these.

Also, by representing SPARTA at one of these events we will help with the costs of you attending.

If you are interested in entering any of these events, or helping to coordinate our running team, then please get in touch with us at [SPARTA@dft.gov.uk](mailto:SPARTA@dft.gov.uk) and we will give you more details.



## UPCOMING SPARTA CLUB FIXTURES/EVENTS

### March

**Whole Month** – SPARTA 50 Mile Walk Challenge

**8<sup>th</sup>** – SPARTA History Society Talk – A War of Empires - 1:00pm – Live Online & in Room LG11 GMH

**23<sup>rd</sup>** – SPARTA 50 Yoga Class – 12.30pm - Live Online & in Room LG1 GMH

Details of club contacts can be found on the SPARTA website

## WANT TO START A CLUB OR MAYBE JUST HELP AT A CLUB?

SPARTA are always looking to build on our portfolio of clubs. If you want to start a club or are already running one and want SPARTA’s help, then please get in contact.

Want to help at a current club? Then please get in contact with us: [SPARTA@dft.gov.uk](mailto:SPARTA@dft.gov.uk)

Details of current club contacts can be found on the SPARTA website

[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/)



# SPARTA TENPIN BOWLING CLUB

*SPARTA Honorary Life Member, Rose D'Costa, gives us an insight into the SPARTA Tenpin Bowling Club.*

The Bowling Club was originally formed in November 1969 and was based at the Streatham Bowling Club.

We started with 4 men/women teams and created the Travaux league that took place on Wednesday evenings. The club also competed in CSSC events. These challenge matches were held in various places from Southend to Norwich and coaches were always full for these away events.

The Travaux League was often referred to as the marriage bureau as many couples met, became engaged, and then married after meeting at the bowling club. The weddings often had many of the bowlers attending.

At the beginning of the club only people working in the Departments (Transport/Environment) plus their family members were allowed to bowl. We have since expanded and now we have bowlers from other Civil Service Departments, Agencies and ex Civil Servants.

In 1985, Streatham Bowl closed so we were forced to find a new home, so we moved to Lewisham Bowling where we have been ever since.

In 2019, the SPARTA Tenpin Bowling Club celebrated its 50 year with a special competition with trophies donated by the late Jon Reeves who had been a member since 1971.

We have held many Charity Matches were held particularly at Easter and Christmas and over the years more

than £75,000 has been raised for various charities - the highest being for Motor Neurone Disease.

The club has individual awards for everyone involved in raising money for charity, the most coveted being the highest amount raised by an individual bowler and this has gone nearly every year to Gwendolyn Morgan who is still bowling with the League now.

The STBC entered the World/Corporate Games for many years from 1991 as did other SPARTA Clubs and won many medals - the best year was when 88 SPARTA members participated, and the bowlers had their best competition winning the Divisional Award.

Peter D'Costa is the only member from the original bowlers who started the League in 1969 and is still bowling. A lot of the bowlers have been bowling for over 30 years and at present we have recruited quite a few new young people which is great. We are always looking for new bowlers as reserves are always needed and when we get enough new people, we enter them into the league. Coaching is given and Rose proudly boasts that she can teach anyone to bowl in 6 minutes.

So, if you are interested in joining us, we bowl at Lewisham Bowl on Wednesday nights at 7.30 p.m. and you will be very welcome. The bowling is subsidised and we have to thank SPARTA for supporting the Club, all this time.



## SPORT AND WELLBEING DAY 2022

22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

SPARTA are busy putting details together for a very special Sport and Wellbeing Day this year.

Would you like to help make the day special for all those that attend the day?

We are currently looking for volunteers to help in any way that they can to make the day a success. You could be doing anything from helping to collect money at the entrance, pumping up footballs, to running a sports event for the participants.

All volunteers will receive food drink and travel for their much needed help.

If you are interested in helping, then please get in contact with us:

[SPARTA@dft.gov.uk](mailto:SPARTA@dft.gov.uk)



# GYM NEWS

## *Working in Central London and need to use a gym but can't afford it? SPARTA have the answer*

One thing I am always asked when I am walking around Great Minster House is when are we going to get a gym. It is one thing that I have campaigned for a long time to be included in the building without any success.



Well you will be glad to hear that I have negotiated with Active Space, the people that run the Home Office gym, for all SPARTA members to have access to their gym

Their facilities include:

- Fully Equipped Gym with 3 rooms
- Sports Hall/ Studio (Exercise Classes, Football, Badminton, Soft Tennis & Netball. Table Tennis room also available)
- Changing Area with showers/lockers.
- Locker and Towel Hire
- Beauty Clinic
- Health Checks & Health and Wellbeing resource website
- Various Classes

I have to say that the facilities available will suit any need that you have, and the staff are very friendly and helpful. Like most gyms you will need to do a 10 minute familiarisation session on first joining the gym.

### Cost

Active Space have two very simple membership plans that cost £12.50 per month or £15.00 per month. Discounts are available if you pay for a year's membership in one go.

### Access to zMS

To get access to the zMS gym facilities you will need Red (CTC), Yellow (SC) or Green (DV) Civil Service passes for unescorted access. If you don't have a pass of this nature, we can arrange for you to be escorted to the gym.

Once inside zMS take the lifts or walk down main Atrium stairway to the lower ground floor. Go right once facing the restaurant. Follow the walkway through the double doors and the Active Space entrance is located at the end of the corridor on the left. Once in the centre follow the walkway through the centre until you reach the club office next to the gym.

### Opening Times

The current club opening times are 8am to 7pm. (Mon to Fri). Club opening times are reviewed regularly and will be extended again in the coming months.

Take a positive step towards your health and wellbeing goals with Active Space membership.

For more details get in touch with us at [SPARTA@dft.gov.uk](mailto:SPARTA@dft.gov.uk)



### Membership Rates

#### **Gym only/ Classes only or Sports Only:**

£12.50 per month by direct debit. Alternatively, the offer annual rate is £112.50 (By card - receive 3 months discount!)

#### **All- inclusive Membership:**

£15.00 per month by direct debit. Alternatively, the offer annual rate is £135.00 (By card - receive 3 months discount!)

### **Current Classes**

Yoga – Tues Lunchtime and Thurs Evening

Active and Tone – Tues Evening

Circuits – Weds Lunchtime

Total Body Workout – Weds Evening

For more information contact [SPARTA@dft.gov.uk](mailto:SPARTA@dft.gov.uk)



## THE SPARTA CLUBS

*SPARTA supports a number of clubs and associations across the UK and is always looking to start new clubs. Here is just a taster of the current clubs*

### CD CLUB



[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/cd-club](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/cd-club)

### SPARTA



### GOLF SOCIETY

[www.spartagolf.co.uk/](http://www.spartagolf.co.uk/)

### YOGA CLASSES



[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/yoga](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/yoga)

### SUPERSTARS CRICKET CLUB



[www.superstarscricket.org.uk](http://www.superstarscricket.org.uk)

### SOFTBALL CLUB



[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/softball](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/softball)

### YOUR CLUB HERE

Start a club and it can be advertised right here

### CIVIL SERVICE CHOIR



[www.civilservicechoir.org.uk](http://www.civilservicechoir.org.uk)

### HISTORY SOCIETY



[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/history-society](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/history-society)

### FITNESS CLASSES



[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/fitness-class](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/fitness-class)

### TENNIS CLUB



[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/tennis](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/tennis)

### TENPIN BOWLING



[www.spartarecreation.co.uk/tenpin-bowling](http://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/tenpin-bowling)

**EXCITING NEW CLUBS  
COMING SOON**

Check out all the SPARTA clubs on our website

**SPARTA**  
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