



ANNUAL REPORT 2023

SPARTA

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FOREWORD

by our Chairman, Rod Paterson



Looking back on 2023, the SPARTA year started on a real high as we were delighted when our Deputy Chair, Sue Johnson, was recognised in the New Years Honours List receiving an MBE for all her work for SPARTA and our charities. Sue has been a critical part of SPARTA for many years devoting an enormous amount of her personal time to help us provide opportunities for staff in DLUHC and DfT. She has even continued to be our Deputy Chair despite retiring several years ago! It was a very well-deserved recognition of all that Sue has done over a prolonged period and we couldn't be prouder.

It was great to see so much activity across all our SPARTA clubs this year. The SPARTA History Society held another wide range of events including arranging a history walk in Leeds. I am particularly keen to see our representation grow in the regional offices, so events such as this are a great beginning. The Civil Service Choir were once again very active and held some excellent concerts including a performance of "Will Todd Mass in Blue and other choral jazz" which was part of the EFG London Jazz Festival. I was delighted to be able to attend what was a wonderful evening which brought great joy to all the participants and the audience. I am also keen to highlight that with Yoga classes restarting, thanks to the effort of Sue and Jason, a popular lunchtime Table Tennis session and Jason's Friday fitness class, SPARTA is running regular activities on three lunch times a week alongside many other lunch time events throughout the year. I also know how many of you give your time up in the evenings to run or participate (or rehearse!) in many of our activities.

This year's Sport and Wellbeing Day was another incredible success with well over 500 people attending and enabling us to make a sizeable donation to the Charity for Civil Servants and the British Heart Foundation. I'd like to thank all the volunteers who either help run the huge array of events and the charity raffle or who help out on the day. Jason leads the way working over several months to make sure the day is a success. You may also have noticed that this year the day was delivered in closer partnership with the Civil Service Sports Council (CSSC). Overall, this was really successful and created new relationships with the

likes of Sports Society and Rounders England. With Sport and Wellbeing Day 2024 set for Friday 2 August 2024 I hope many of you will be involved again because we need you! As you read through this Annual Report you will once again appreciate that SPARTA only functions thanks to the dedication of the people who run and participate in all our clubs and societies. As I have reflected in previous years, we continue to be keen to attract new members both for our own future as an Association but also to be the next generation of volunteers who will continue to take our clubs and societies forward. Events like our “Meet the Clubs” lunch time promotions are critical to attracting new members and we aim to run these at least twice a year. They need all our clubs and societies to participate, to promote what they do and help drive up our membership. I am also hugely keen to make sure we respond to the increasing presence in our Regional Offices and SPARTA is not seen as solely a London focused organisation. There is a really vibrant and self-starting community already in our regions that I am keen SPARTA supports in any way we can.

As ever, I want to thank my fellow committee members for their hard work once again. I have already mentioned Sue and Jason so would like to also really thank Paul Jones who since becoming our Treasurer has put our accounts on a much firmer and sound footing. As Chair of SPARTA, I hugely appreciate the peace of mind Paul’s rigour brings to our financial health.

I don’t know about anyone else, but the year appears to fly by! I hope I will manage to get to many more of our clubs and societies activities in 2024. I’d say it is a New Year’s resolution, but I am not very good at sticking to them!

I look forward to seeing you in 2024!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rod Paterson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'R'.

Rod Paterson
Chair, SPARTA
DLUHC and DfT Sports and Recreation Association

FINANCIAL REPORT

22/23 YEAR ENDING 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023

by our Honorary Treasurer, Paul Jones



This year's accounts (22/23) are currently being audited by Oliver Poxon and are subject to his confirmation that the financial statements are free from material misstatements and gives a true and fair view of the accounts. Once received, I will present the audit report to the Finance Committee.

The SPARTA bank account is in a reasonable condition at this time as we held a bank balance of £67,728.67 at the end of the financial year (2022/23).

SPARTA Income for the year was £14,785

This was made up of three income streams, CSSC, Membership and Sports Day. CSSC provided their main grant of £8,500 (in two instalments). Down from the previous year's grant of £17,500. Last year's grant was inflated by an extra £5,000 to celebrate CSSC 100th Anniversary. The average grant has been £12,500 per year.

Membership income was £4,847. This was down on 21/22 which had been £4,901. That is a drop of £54 which equates to 1.10%.

Even though membership has dropped, it appears the fall is slowing year on year. There is no available evidence to conclude why this drop took place although it is reasonable to assume that Covid-19 and the "new" hybrid working patterns may have had some bearing on this drop of income.

Sports Day generated income of £1,108.

Income Type	£
CSSC 22/23	8,500.00
Memberships	4,847.00
Barclaycard Credit back	30.00
Yoga	115.00
Reimbursement of CSSA 5-10km run	185.00
Sports Day Income	1,108.00
	14,785.00

Due to temporary difficulties accessing the yoga bank account some yoga income has been paid directly into the SPARTA account.

Expenditure for the year was £20,170

This is made up of payments made and cost accrued for the year.

Clubs Bids for 22/23 (calendar year 2023) totalling £11,740 were paid out to all the clubs apart from the Fitness, Table Tennis and Yoga.

Breakdown:

Expenditure Type	£
Clubs Bids - Cricket - 22/23	620
Club Bids - Golf - 22/23	3308
Clubs Bids - Ten Pin Bowling 22/23 Advance	300
Clubs Bids - Ten Pin Bowling 22/23 Advance	497
Club Bids - Etcetera Choir 22/23	3984
Club Bids - Tennis 22/23	486
Club Bids - History 22/23	2501
Clubs - Leeds Climbing Club	44
	11,740.00

Regional Bids (Rebates to Affiliated branches) totalled £825.

Currently only DVSA Nottingham has claimed for 21/22.

Breakdown of the Regional rebates:

Expenditure Type	£
Regional Bids	
DVSA Nottingham Rebate FY 21/22	825
Reversal of accruals	
Clear accrual DVSA Nottingham Rebate FY 21/22	(978)
Clear-TRL 19-20 as over 2 years £221.14	(221)
Re-accrued for 22-23	3733
DVLA Swansea Rebate 22-23	825
DVSA Nottingham Rebate 22-23	221
TRL Crowthorne Rebate 22-23	
	4,406

The “Rebates to Affiliated branches” is showing an expense figure of £4,406 as the accounts had to be adjusted to clear the over accrual for DVSA Nottingham 21/22 payment and TRL write off for not claiming for over 2 years.

Accruals have been put on for DVLA Swansea, DVSA Nottingham and TRL for 22/23.

I have included a further years accrual for DVLA Swansea. The proposal is for DVLA to reclaim their rebate direct from CSSC, however this arrangement has not yet been agreed and finalised and therefore we may need to pay the rebate for years 20/21, 21/22 and 22/23. This has been agreed with the auditor last year as a matter of prudence and hopefully we will be able to clear these once we get confirmation DVLA are claiming direct from CSSC.

Sports & Wellbeing Day cost totalled £5,293

Expenditure Type	£
Sports & Wellbeing Day	
Medals for Sports Day 2023	335
Bouncy Castle Sports Day 2023	906
Band Sports Day 2023	900
Sports Day Equip & misc	707
Reprographics - sports day programme	1,244
Petty Cash payment to Sports Day float	17
Sports Day Float	1,000
Mr S Hatrill Sports Day 2023 Expenses	31
Peter D'Costa Raffle	33
Trophy Engraving	120
	5,293

The main cost for Sports Day was paid directly by CSSC.

Raffle payment - we paid over to Peter D'Costa the raffle ticket card payments we took on Sports Day.

They were two further categories of expenses for the year which are shown below:

Breakdown:

Expenditure Type	£
CSSC CSAA Cross Country Run Entry Fees	15
CSSC CSAA Entry Fee:	470
Reimbursement of CSSA 5-10km run	(185)
	300

Expenditure Type	£
Miscellaneous	
Hobs Repro - SPARTA Banners	324
Website cost	40
Barclaycard Anywhere Card Transaction costs	11
Barclay Card Credit Back	(30)
Meet the Club Events: Expenses	239
Charity Donation to Mind & Charity for Civil Servants 21/22	800
Charity Donation to Stroke Assoc in remembrance of Rose D'Costa	80
	1,463

The next page contains a statement of SPARTA finances as at 30th September 2023.

Financial Statements

	FY 22/23	FY 21/22	FY 20/21
INCOME STATEMENT	Year Ended	Year Ended	Year Ended
	30-Sep-23	30-Sep-22	30-Sep-21
Income		£	£
Sports day income	1,108	1,122	-
SPARTA Member subscriptions	4,885	4,901	5,187
CSSC Rebate	8,500	17,500	12,600
Other revenue	-	50	-
TOTAL INCOME	14,493	23,573	17,787
Expenditure			
Rebates to affiliated branches	(4,406)	(3,413)	19,498
Grants to clubs	(11,740)	(8,945)	(11,952)
Representative matches	-	(258)	-
Sports day cost	(5,293)	(9,680)	-
Entry fees	(300)	(477)	-
Miscellaneous	(1,463)	(2,674)	(594)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	(23,203)	(25,447)	6,951
NET SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(8,710)	(1,874)	24,738

BALANCE SHEET	At	At	At
	30-Sep-23	30-Sep-22	30-Sep-21
Current Assets			
Debtors	350	-	-
Petty cash	21	38	177
Cash at bank	67,729	73,113	71,699
Cash at building society	0	0	0
Unpresented cheques	-	-	-
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	68,100	73,152	71,876
Current Liabilities			
Creditors	(115)	(0)	(0)
Accruals & Provisions	(13,488)	(9,945)	(6,672)
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	(13,603)	(9,945)	(6,672)
NET CURRENT ASSETS / (LIABILITIES)	54,497	63,206	65,204
NET ASSETS	54,497	63,206	65,204
Equity and Reserves			
Equity at beginning of year	63,206	65,204	40,466
Movement in Reserves	-	(124)	-
Surplus/(deficit)	(8,710)	(1,874)	24,738
TOTAL SHAREHOLDER EQUITY	54,497	63,206	65,204

MEMBERSHIP

Our finances show that membership income was down during the financial year 22/23 by 1.1%. There is no available evidence to conclude why these drops took place although it is reasonable to assume that Covid-19 and new hybrid working may have had some bearing on this drop of income.

We have new members within DLUHC who currently are not shown within the membership numbers as DLUHC have not collected and passed on membership fees to us. We have been in discussions with DLUHC HR in order to rectify this. This has now been done and we will be receiving members fees in 23/24.

Even though there has been an increase in membership applications that has been offset/reduced by gradual decline in numbers.

As always it is not easy to determine the precise size of our membership due to the different ways that people can join, i.e. new members who might pay an annual membership directly to their SPARTA club. Our finances show that we currently have 193 members who pay directly to SPARTA. That is a decrease of 14 members from the start of the year (207).

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

The 49th Annual General Meeting was held on 18th January 2023.

The meeting was held in Room LG11, Great Minster House, 33 Horseferry Road, London, SW1P 4DR and was available virtually online using Microsoft Teams

No motions were proposed at the meeting

A copy of the AGM minutes is available on the SPARTA website

THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (GMC)

This year the General Management Committee met on 4 April 2023.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee also met this year on 14 March 2023 at 4pm in Room 4.16, Great Minster House and online using Microsoft Teams. At this meeting the club bids were considered to be recommended for the GMC and were passed forward and duly agreed.

Regional Associations

No reports were received from Regional Associations during this period.

SPARTA LONDON BASED CLUBS

The SPARTA London based clubs had a good year. A report of each club is below:

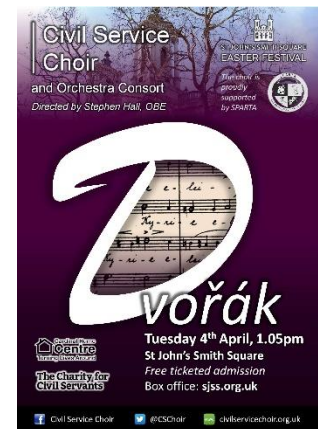
The Civil Service Choir

The Civil Service Choir has grown during 2023 to boast around 200 members from across Whitehall departments.

By the end of the year the choir will have given three formal concerts; and sung in nine church services (including the Whitehall Carol Service and the choir's own carol service); at civil service award ceremonies at Lancaster House and at the Old Bailey; at three departmental events, and at two ceremonies of remembrance.

Concerts in 2023

In April, the choir returned to the St John's Smith Square concert hall to perform Dvořák's Mass in D with an orchestra as part of the venue's Easter Festival. This concert had been planned for 2020 but was cancelled owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was therefore a special occasion for the choir to finally perform the concert after a three-year wait.



Feedback following the concert included:

- *“How brilliant”*
- *“The choir sounded very good, indeed thrilling at times, with an astonishing amount of power.”*
- *“I felt privileged to experience the performance.”*
- *“The choir achieved a superlative level of excellence throughout and fully deserved the extended period of applause.”*
- *“A brilliant experience.”*
- *“A triumph!”*
- *“It was very special to have that time in a different world.”*

- *“It was a stirring and uplifting experience.”*
- *“I’d like to go to the concert all over again!”*
- *“The quality of the choir’s singing was outstanding – a really polished and compelling performance, full of confidence and enjoyment.”*

In December 2022, the choir reached its 150th performance since its formation in 2009. As a belated celebration of this milestone, the choir’s concert in July was *A Medley of Musical Memories* featuring a selected piece of music from one concert in each of the years since 2009. The celebratory concert was held at St Stephen’s Church, Rochester Row where the first concert, *First Flight*, had taken place in November 2009.



Feedback after the concert included:

- *“How absolutely amazing the choir sounded!”*
- *“I was both uplifted and moved.”*
- *“An incredible experience.”*
- *“I thoroughly enjoyed the excellent, special concert.”*
- *“The ‘surround sound’ was quite mind blowing! Fantastic.”*

In November the choir gave a concert, Celebrating Will Todd Choral Jazz, at St John’s Smith Square which was extremely ambitious on several fronts: musically, it featured challenging jazz choral works, including Will Todd’s Mass in Blue; financially, following a successful trial a year earlier it was a self-promoted commercial evening concert; and logistically, in featuring a professional jazz orchestra, soloist, sound technicians, and a talk by the composer.



The concert was an incredible success with tickets selling out in the main hall and overall sales surpassing expectations.

Feedback following the concert included:

- *“Fabulous concert of Will Todd’s music last night. So much energy in the Mass in Blue that I thought St John’s Smith Square would lift off.”*
- *“I loved this concert. Thanks so much to all the musicians.”*
- *“A fantastic concert. Such a dedicated group of voices.”*
- *“A superb concert on Sunday. We were quite frankly blown away by the professionalism and quality of the choir and the ambition you all had to take on and deliver such a complex evening. Such a wonderful night.”*
- *“A massive well done for Sunday - a brilliant concert.”*
- *“The choir sounded strong, tight, groovy and gave everyone so much energy to the front of the stage.”*
- *“Congratulations on delivering another superb jazz concert.”*
- *“It was an outstanding concert at St John’s this evening. I am so pleased I attended.”*
- *“It was a tremendously enjoyable evening - ‘a triumph!’”*
- *“I have had a warm glow all day from the memory of such an excellent evening.”*
- *“I am continually amazed at what you get that choir to do, and so successfully.”*
- *“It was a truly memorable concert with wonderful performances.”*



Plans for 2024

In March, the choir will be performing Brahms’ Ein Deutes Requiem (German Requiem) at St John’s Smith Square in a new collaboration with the Kensington Philharmonic Orchestra. The choir will also perform in the St John’s Smith Square Easter Festival. In September, the choir will have a concert tour to Normandy - a long awaited second trip after a hugely successful tour to Belgium in 2018.

Promotion

The choir's profile has been raised by concerts and events, coverage in the Civil Service Weekly News bulletin and through its own publicity efforts. It has received many joining enquiries and membership now exceeds pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels. The choir promotes SPARTA in its publicity, printed programmes and on its website.

Raising money for charities

The choir regularly raises money for charities through donations at the end of concerts. Up to the end of November, almost £2,500 had been raised in 2023. Charities benefiting include the poverty charity The Cardinal Hume Centre on Horseferry Road (with which the choir is strongly associated), and the Charity for Civil Servants. In total the choir has raised almost £45,500.

YouTube recordings

Up to the end of November, there had been over 9,000 views of the choir's outputs on YouTube in 2023 and across the lifetime of all the choir's recordings on YouTube there had been over 65,000 views.

More information about the choir

There is an extensive website that offers information about the choir, what is involved in joining, past performances, and links to recordings.

For more information visit www.civilservicechoir.org.uk

Fitness Club

The Fitness club continues to operate on a hybrid basis with attendees being able to join either in person or online via Microsoft Teams.

The club has a strong core of people who attend on a regular basis and is actively seeking new members.

The club has been operating in Room LG1 in Great Minster House every Friday Lunchtime.

SPARTA Golf Society

The golf society have had a reasonable year although numbers at meetings have not been excessive. Membership of the society has however been boosted through the 'Meet the Clubs' events which has raised awareness of the society to staff. It is hoped that further members may be attracted via future events or simply by word of mouth.

In another bid to attract players, we have offered the chance to play just 18 holes at all events this year and that has proved popular. As such, next year's calendar has two events that are solely 18 holes which have allowed us to select more exclusive venues.

Even with low numbers, members continue to be generous and the society raised over £300 for the Stroke Association in memory of Rose D'Costa. We have nominated Cancer UK as our charity for 2024.

Our annual challenge match against colleagues from Ashdown House, Hastings continues and whilst we had a winning 2022, this year we narrowly lost. Nonetheless it is always great to meet up with our friends from the south coast and we have recently set the venue for the 2024 challenge match. Here's hoping for a better result this time.

Our website continues to be updated with all the results, reports and pictures of our activities. On it you can also find our full calendar for 2024 can be found. Go to www.spartagolf.co.uk to find out more.

History Society

2022-2023 Report

During the year the History Society has organised 14 virtual and hybrid talks with a number available to watch on YouTube, the talks are attended from staff from across the UK. The talks have covered various historical subjects from the Anglo-Saxons to modern China.



During 2023, the Society has worked with staff networks recent examples include working with the LGBTQ+ Network on the Covent Garden and Soho history walk led by Andy Kirby and the Black Staff and Allies Network for the Black Victorians talk.

The society has supported two walks in Leeds organised by Ben and Katy in the DfT office.



Our stall has been used to promote the society at SPARTA Clubs event and the DfT Staff Network Fayre which has led to people joining SPARTA. The Society has encountered problems publicising events such as events not being listed on My DfT.



In the summer the society organised a survey of staff on the mailing list findings highlighted that the majority of staff prefer to attend online due rather than in person and that staff enjoy the wide variety of historical periods covered. The Society will continue to hold talks in person and will look to encourage staff to attend in person. Planning for next year has already started with a number of high-profile speakers invited including: Malcolm Gaskell author of 'Ruin of all witches', John Dickie author of 'Cosa Nostra' and Miranda Kaufman author of 'Black Tudors' the aim will be to undertake a variety of events.

Details of our talks can be found on the SPARTA website: <https://www.spartarecreation.co.uk>

Robert Baker
History Society Secretary

Martial Arts Club

This year SPARTA has undertaken work to procure a new Martial Arts teacher. We have now found someone suitable for the post.

Current plans are for the Martial Arts Club to resume activities in January 2024 with a Personal Safety/Self Defence/Kung Fu class over an initial trial period.

We hope that there will be sufficient interest and attendance to resume the full activities of the club.

Softball

The softball club was planning to rejoin the Civil Service Softball league in 2023 but the league did not restart.

This left the club in a difficult situation as it was becoming more difficult for the club to organise fixtures and also the club's main organiser, Charlie Sunderland, had also retired.

The inclusion of the SPARTA Sport and Wellbeing Day in the CSSC Sports Day pilot scheme also led to the necessity of Softball disappointingly being replaced by Rounders at this event.

The decision was taken in the late summer to suspend the activities of the softball club until such time as someone was able to come in to take the club forward. We hope that the club can gain some momentum in 2024 and start up activities again.

Superstars Cricket Club

Superstars CC had a mixed season in 2023.

Winter net sessions were held in 1 Victoria Street this year after the net facilities at the Oval Cricket Ground were halved in amount, making booking slots almost impossible.

This obviously had some effect as whilst the team were competitive in most games, we only managed to win two of the fifteen matches played. Seven other fixtures were cancelled for various reasons.

Superstars did however win the Sports day six-a-side tournament.



Hopefully with the addition of a few more players we can look forward to a better 2024 season.

The club has always had a strong social side and we'll be meeting for our AGM, awards night and hopefully arranging more pre-season nets over the winter.

Barry Gigg

barrygigg@yahoo.co.uk

Table Tennis

The Sparta Table Tennis Club did not enter the team into the London Banks and Civil Service Table Tennis League this year.

To boost support for the club SPARTA took the initiative to arrange open table tennis sessions every Wednesday lunchtime in GMH. These have proved very popular, and the two table tennis tables are getting plenty of use every Wednesday.

It is possible that there may be some players from these open sessions who are interested in taking part in the league matches should they rejoin the league.

Tennis

SPARTA Tennis Report 2023

Sports Day

Tennis was organised as singles play for the first time this year, was well attended and congratulations to Rob Green upon his success in winning it.

CSSC Team Doubles Tennis Tournament Nottingham on 11th -13th Oct 2023

We entered 4 Teams this year, 1-Ladies, 1-Mens in Division-2 and 2 Mixed (1 under the name of SPARTA and 1 under the name of Athenians).

MIXED

With 7 Teams in the Draw it was organised as a KO with last year's best placed team (RCSL-1) receiving a bye. Play was a new format of 1st to 8-games single set against each opposing pair. Our SPARTA team comprised Brian & Allison (a new recruit) with Phil & Maggie and 1st round match against HASSRA-2. Brian & Allison managed to win both 8-4 followed by an 8-7 having been behind most of the set. Unfortunately Maggie & Phil lost both 5-8 and 3-8 despite some great tennis from both so it came down to game countback being 2-sets all; unfortunately we lost 27-24 and went into the Plate. Our ATHENIANS team comprised Nick, Gul, Ruth and Linda playing against MoD Hybrids and we fared much better winning the match (captured as 4 Rubbers 8-5, 8-4, 8-3 & 8-2).

The format now reverted to 3 sets best of 4 tiebreaks with a Championship Breaker 3rd set. ATHENIANS were into the Cup Semi verses RCSL-1, a tough Draw and as it proved an insurmountable mountain to climb losing in straight sets to the team that ended up Cup Champions. A switch of partners was made to try and help our cause but we would have lost no matter what pairings we had adopted. SPARTA went into the Plate against RCSL-2, Maggie & Phil losing 0-4, 2-4 but winning the 2nd rubber 4-2 & 4-1. Brian & Allison lost their 1st Rubber 5-7 (both pairs understanding that it was the same format as the previous round) &

3-5. The match thus hinged on their reverse rubber result, a good 2 set win would it to us an game countback; as it turned out they lost 0-4, 4-2 & 7-10 in the Championship Breaker to lose the match 1-3.

By quirk of the Draw having 7-Teams the Plate Semi was essentially the Plate Final as there was no losing team from the other half so SPARTA (despite losing both matches) finished as Plate runners-up for which they were rewarded with a memento. ATHENIANS on the other hand by losing their Semi left empty handed but did have bragging rights having won one and lost one!

LADIES

Ruth felt unable to play the Ladies on Thursday so we drafted in a spare player Alison to complete our Team of Maggie, Linda & Allison. The format was a Round-Robin event, 3 sets best of 4 tiebreak with a Championship Breaker 3rd set. 1st match Maggie



paired with Allison and Linda pairing Alison against RCSL-1. They proved too strong for us as we lost by 4 rubbers to 0 (0-4, 2-4, 0-4, 1-4 and 0-4, 2-4 and 2-4, 1-4 respectively. Later in the day with Ruth still unavailable we played the same parings against HASSRA-1 and came up with virtually the same result.

The 2nd day Ruth was fit to come in and took over from Alison with the event moving to 1st to 8-games format. We took the court looking at the opposition MINERVA and adding the ages of 3 of their players together came to less than any single one of our Team, their 4th player was about ½ the age of ours too. Undaunted we played at our top level but came out losers having given them a tough time. Our final match was against HASSRA-2 who were weakened slightly due to availability; we produced a strong performance again which gave us a straight sets win. 4th place was obviously disappointing but given the youth and strength of the opposition was actually a more than credible performance.

Name	RCSL 1	SPARTA	HASSRA 1	HASSRA 2	MINERVA	Win/Loss	Standings
RCSL 1		4	1	4	1	2/2	3
SPARTA	0		0	4	4	2/2	4
HASSRA 1	3	4		4	2W	4/0	1
HASSRA 2	0	0	0		1	0/4	5
MINERVA	3	4	2L	3		3/1	2

MENS

Our Team was in Division-2 which had 8-teams split into 2 pools playing Round-Robin 3 sets best of 4 tiebreak with a Championship Breaker 3rd set; Cup and Plate Semi and Finals were subsequently played between the Pools. Our Team comprised Brian & Nick as a pair and Graham & Rob the other. 1st match was against HASSRA-3 which we won 3-1 Rubbers; Rob & Graham winning 2 Championship Breakers both 10-5 and Brian & Nick their Championship Breaker 12-10.

2nd match was against MINERVA-2, several of their players having been 1st division last year. Although we lost 4-0, Rob & Graham played great tennis only losing in Championship Breakers both 8-10, Brian & Nick however failed to pick up a game though despite holding several game points.

3rd match was against MoD Hybrids with Rob & Graham winning easily in straight sets, Brian & Nick winning one and losing the other Championship Breaker 10-8 & 8-10 to give us a 3-1 win. We thus had a place in the Semi-final against RC SL-2 from the other pool and the 1st to 8-games single set format was adopted. Rob & Graham had tough matches winning 8-6 and losing 7-8 in a Tie-Break putting things in the balance. However Brian fell away a little after 3 days of full on tennis & with Nick lost both Rubbers (2-8 & 3-8) to give us a 1-3 loss and miss out on a place in the final.



Name	MINERVA 2	HASSRA 3	RCSL HYB	SPARTA	Win/Loss	Standing
MINERVA 2		4	4	4	4/0	1
HASSRA 3	0		3	1	1/2	3
RCSL HYBRID	0	1		1	0/3	4
SPARTA 1	0	3	3		2/1	2

The playing standard was very high throughout this year with many new, young & fit player appearing. SPARTA again performed well justifying their entry. The players recorded their appreciation of the support of SPARTA and the support of CSLTA who run the event; personal thanks were given both to Nigel Daniels the event organiser and to Gul Rashid the Tournament Referee in making it such a success.

CSLTA plan to hold a “Seniors” event for Team Mens and Ladies Doubles in Bath in April’24 and with all our players eligible by age, it is planned enter Teams. We also hope to continue to run SPARTA Teams in next season’s “Open” competition which will again be in Nottingham in October as the CSLTA and organisers appreciate SPARTA’s entry being one of just a few Departmental Associations to enter.

SPARTA Meet the Clubs events

Tennis put on a show at all of the events organised by Jason. We gathered a good list of people interested in tennis and sent out a questionnaire with a view to organising something to fulfil their aspirations. Rob organised a late winter evening indoor session that had 8 players and was a great success, all expressing a desire to keep things going. However we found an insurmountable “availability” hurdle in trying to book suitable outside courts in the summer evenings and nothing took place; surprisingly it’s easier to get indoor courts booked in the winter than outdoor ones in the summer! We will try and resurrect the sessions going this coming winter and hope to find courts in the summer to keep it going.

Brian Oliver

SPARTA Tennis Organiser

Tenpin Bowling Club

The SPARTA Ten pin bowling club suspended activities at the start of the year 2022/2023 season following the sudden unexpected passing of Rose D'Costa, a founder member and chair of the club. She is greatly missed.

Following the refurbishment of the Lewisham Bowl the club resumed activities in the October 2022. The Club elected new Officials, Andrew Price is the new Chair and Mark Leigh the League Secretary.

The Bowling Season started in November with a singles league running to July 2023. The league winner was Gwendolyn Morgan, Peter D'Costa came second and Gillian Allchurch third. Patrick Allchurch won the Handicap High Series award with 711 (over three games) and Andrew Price won the High Handicap game with 274. Tom Thompson and Andrew Price shared the '200 Club award' scoring three scratch games over 200 during the season.

The 2023/2024 season started in November 2023. We have reverted to Team format (doubles) and are running a singles tournament in Parallel. We are trying to keep the format as flexible as possible to encourage participation of new members.

Peter D'Costa stepped down from active participation in the league, as one of the founding members of the league he will be greatly missed. Both Rose and Peter were active participants in a number of Sparta clubs and devoted much time over the years to promote SPARTA and to raise significant sums of money for charity. The club will be looking at a fitting memorial to their sterling work.

Yoga Club

I am very pleased to report the Tuesday lunchtime yoga classes have started up again after three years of closure due to Covid. The classes began again in June 2023 and are now hybrid enabling students to join either in person in Great Minster House or online via Teams for those working from home.

A new teacher joined us in June, however, due to family commitments she had to step down. Another experienced Iyengar yoga teacher joined us in October and classes are up and running on a regular basis.

Despite some positive interest from people at the last two 'Meet the club' events attendance at classes has been disappointingly low although numbers picked up a little during October with some regular students attending in person but very few joining online.

SPARTA has been widely publicising the yoga classes through leaflets and posters across both departments to encourage more people to participate.

Hopefully, numbers will continue to increase over the coming months to secure the running of the classes for the future, but it is great news that we are up and running again after such a long time.

Susan Johnson MBE
SPARTA Yoga

SPARTA NEW CLUBS AND LOCATIONS

SPARTA has started to expand this year and offer new clubs to staff in London and around the country.

We recognise that without adapting to the needs and wants of our members SPARTA will become stale and stagnate. This is something that we must avoid at all costs. It is imperative that we develop new clubs to meet the needs and wants of our members. To do this we need willing volunteers to take forward the establishment of new clubs.

This year we have been happy to welcome a new Netball Club.

SPARTA Netball Club

A new SPARTA Netball Club was formed this year. Some of you will remember that we had a very active club quite some time ago that unfortunately folded. This new club was set up by Roxanne Appleyard. She has brought together staff from across the DfT and DLUHC and introduced them to this fun competitive sport. Roxanne has received so much interest in the club that she has a long list of members already.

The club took part in the SPARTA Sport and Wellbeing Day tournament and won the competition.



SPARTA SPORT AND WELLBEING DAY 2023

We were really pleased to be able to hold the SPARTA Sports and Wellbeing Day on 21st July 2023. This year the event was part of a CSSC Sports Days pilot project. There were eight Government Departments involved in the project. SPARTA was happy to be one of them. As part of the project, we were required to swap Softball for Rounders which was disappointing but did allow us to accept more teams into the competition. Also, the Pool competition had to be cancelled at the last moment when we realised that the pool table had been removed from the site.

The day was a huge success with a fairly full programme of sports and recreations available to all those attending along with musical entertainment and a bouncy castle attraction. Events included were:

- Cricket
- Football
- Netball
- Tennis
- Rounders
- Touch Rugby
- Petanque
- Table Tennis
- Athletics
- Novelty Events such as Wanging the Wellie
- Tug of War
- A Quiz
- Yoga



Thanks to the help of all our volunteers the day was a huge success and we received some excellent feedback.

Here is a list of just some of the wonderful volunteers who helped to make Sports and Wellbeing Day such a fantastic day.



David Stowe	Paul Shepperson
Darren Cooper	Silvester Aina
Gareth May	Gordon Manning
Martin Coughlan	Kevin Murphy
Steve Hattrill	Mark Leigh
Michael Oliver	Emily Kenning
Amanda John	Judith Skipper
John Hall	Roger Fitzgerald
Steve Norris	Coreen Beckford
Carl Lawton	Malcolm French
Rob Bush	David Gott
Felicity Drown	Beverly Bramwell
Pam Hurlock	Sheron Gurley
Val Fitzpatrick	Peter D'Costa
David Misell	Lauren D'Costa
Max D'Costa	Doug Hyam
Paul Weekes	Adrian Redfern
Matthew Eglinton	Jason Marchant
Sue Johnson	Rod Paterson

We would also like to thank the Sports Society, Touch England, Rounders England, CSSC and all those that helped who are not included in this list.

2024 AND BEYOND

2024 looks to be another exciting year for SPARTA. Our new clubs are building their membership and new members are joining SPARTA on a fairly regular basis from across both Departments and their Agencies.

We will be looking to expand our activities into the Regional Offices. It is important that they have equal opportunities to be part of the SPARTA family and can join in to all our activities.

SPARTA finances are still relatively stable, so we can still offer good monetary support to the clubs and regional associations going forward over the next year.

We hope, with your support, we can ensure that SPARTA remains a valuable asset in the health and wellbeing of all staff across both departments.

*SPARTA - Your Sports and
Recreation Association*

