



ANNUAL REPORT 2025

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FOREWORD

by our Chairman, Nick Adams



It is my great pleasure to introduce the 2025 Annual Report as Chair of Sparta. Taking on this role at the end of last year has been both an honour and a privilege, and I am grateful for the support from so many members across the association and the exec.

I am also delighted to welcome Catherine Ryan as Sparta's deputy chair. Catherine works at MHCLG and will be an excellent link to balance the work of Sparta. In the six months since Catherine took on the role, her dedication, organisation and commitment have already made a huge difference. I'm really looking forward to working with her going forward.

This year has been marked by focus on the regional communities, with more non-London activities and new clubs starting. It has been inspiring to see colleagues in Leeds and Birmingham starting or expanding clubs. We have new members for our running groups, cycling clubs, and history societies. These initiatives reflect the spirit of making both Departments great places to work, no matter the office, and it is clear that members are embracing the opportunity to shape activities that work for them. Looking forward to 2026, I am keen to continue to build on the successes.

This year was also the first year that Sparta participated in a regional sports day in Sheffield. I said at the last AGM that the ability of members in the regional offices to participate was key to our long term success and the new clubs and ability for regional based staff to have the same opportunities is great to see.

Through the report you will read how our clubs have continued to thrive and our teams have had many successes. Our History Society and Choir have once again delivered a diverse programme of events and performances. Also, the Sparta delivered regular lunchtime and evening sessions (yoga, martial arts and circuits classes) have continued to be a success.

We have also welcomed a refreshed arts club into the Sparta family showing the wide breadth of activities that we support. If you have any suggestions for other sports, clubs or activities you would like to see being supported, the exec would like to hear from you.

The commitment and enthusiasm of our members, whether organising, participating, or supporting behind the scenes, remains the foundation of everything we achieve.

Turning to the highlight of the year, Sports and Wellbeing Day was again a great success even with the late notice withdrawal of CSSC funding and of Kings House as location. The new site of Imber Court worked very well and I'm grateful for their excellent partnership working with Jason to deliver a great day at short notice. The event brought together over 600 participants for a day of friendly competition, laughter, and teamwork. I can assure that fact that the very fiercely contested rounders title winners came from my team was a coincidence! It was also great to see many new members of staff attend building a future base of potential Sparta members. We have received some helpful feedback on how to maximise the potential of the site and how to improve the layout of the events which we will take forward for next year. My thanks go to all the volunteers and team members whose hard work made the day such a resounding success.

As we look ahead, I am keen to build on this momentum, increasing our visibility across the different communication channels, welcoming new members and encouraging even more regional engagement. Our association's strength lies in its people, and I am confident that together we will continue to grow, innovate, and support one another in the year to come.

Thank you to the committee, volunteers, and every member who has contributed to another outstanding year. I look forward to working with you all as we take the association forward.

Nick Adams

Chair, SPARTA

MHCLG and DfT Sports and Recreation Association

FINANCIAL REPORT

24/25 YEAR ENDING 30TH SEPTEMBER 2025

by our Honorary Treasurer, Paul Jones



The SPARTA bank account is in a reasonable condition at this time as we held a bank balance of £65,939 at the end of the financial year (2024/25).

SPARTA Income for the year was £28,912

This was made up of three main income streams, CSSC, Membership and Sports Day. Also, running 2 clubs through SPARTA, Yoga and Martial Arts plus one revenue stream trail T-Shirts (running T-Shirts).

CSSC provided their main grant of £11,067 (in two instalments). Increased from the previous year's grant of £8,350 (+£2,717). As in the previous year, we were refused our bid for the Choir as CSSC insisted they put in a bid directly to CSSC London.

Membership income was £4,952. This is up on 23/24 which had been £4,666. That is an increase of £286 which equates to 6.12%.

Sports Day generated income of £9,682 (gate money £1,682 and departmental contributions of £8,000).

Income Type	£
CSSC 24/25	11,067
Memberships	4,952
Yoga	1,591
Martial Arts	655
Personal Safety	910
Reimbursement of CSSA 5-10km run	25
Sports Day Income	9,682
T-Shirts	30.00
	28,912

Expenditure for the year was £29,203

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

Clubs Bids for 24/25 (calendar year 2025) totalling £15,563 was paid out to all the clubs apart from the Fitness and Table Tennis. Yoga and Martial Arts costs and income are going through SPARTA directly rather than via the clubs. We were refused funding from CSSC for the Choir as CSSC want the Choir to request funding directly, but we have continued to provide some funding.

Breakdown:

Expenditure Type	£
Club bids	
Clubs Bids - Cricket - 24/25	636
Club Bids - Golf - 24/25	4,210
Club - Northern Golf 24/25	79
Clubs Bids - Ten Pin Bowling 24/25	2,310
Club Bids - Etcetera Choir 24/24 Advance	1,750
Club Bids - Etcetera Choir 24/25	2,569
Club Bids - Tennis 24/25	246
Club Bids - History 24/25	3,200
Club - Drama	500
Club Art 24/25	50
Club Board Games 24/25	14
	15,563

Regional Bids (Rebates to Affiliated branches) totalled £710.

Currently only DVSA Nottingham has claimed for 24/25.

Breakdown of the Regional rebates:

Expenditure Type	£
Regional Bids	
DVSA Nottingham Rebate FY 23/24	710
Reversal of accruals	
Clear accrual DVSA Nottingham Rebate FY 23/24	(772)
Clear-TRL 21-22 as over 2 years £221.14	(221)
Clear DVLA Swansea Rebate 21-22	(3,733)
Re-accrued for 24-25	
DVSA Nottingham Rebate 24-25	710
	(3,307)

The “Rebates to Affiliated branches” is showing an expense figure of £3,307 as the accounts had to be adjusted to clear the over accrual for DVSA Nottingham 23/24 payment, TRL and DVLA Swansea write off for not claiming for over 2 years.

Accruals have been put on for DVSA Nottingham for 24/25.

I have not included any 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 between CSSC and DVSA. While I have been accruing as a matter of prudence since 2020/21, I’m now releasing these accruals as the 2 year limits expire. I don’t intent to continue to accrue going forward as believe we have given DVLA enough time to arrange their rebate directly from CSSC.

Sports & Wellbeing Day cost totalled £6,676

Expenditure Type	£
Sports & Wellbeing Day	
Medals for Sports Day 2024	506
Bouncy Castle Sports Day 2024	906
Sports Day Venue Cost	1,742
Sports Day First Aiders	750
Rigs & Gigs PA System Sports Day	614
Official Expenses	1,308
Sports Day Equip & misc	849
	6,676

Further categories of expenses for the year are shown below:

Breakdown:

Expenditure Type	£
Reimbursement of CSSA 5-10km run	195.00
	195.00

Expenditure Type	£
Yoga Costs	2,640
Yoga Reimbursement	1,591
	(1,049)

Expenditure Type	£
Martial Arts Costs	3,100
Martial Arts Reimbursement	1,565
	(1,535)

Expenditure Type	£
Miscellaneous	
Barclaycard Anywhere Card	
Transaction costs	49.98
Engraving	236.00
Parking Leeds	15.60
Membership Refund	18.00
	319.58

The next page contains a statement of SPARTA finances as at 30th September 2025.

Financial Statements**2025 2024 2023 2022**

FY 24/25 FY 23/24 FY 22/23 FY 21/22

INCOME STATEMENT	Year Ended	Year Ended	Year Ended	Year Ended
	30-Sep-25	30-Sep-24	30-Sep-23	30-Sep-22

Income

£

Sports day income	1,682	1,657	1,108	1,122
Department Contribution to Sports Day	8,000			
SPARTA Member subscriptions	4,952	4,666	4,885	4,901
CSSC Rebate	11,067	8,350	8,500	17,500
T-Shirts	30	210		
Martial Arts	1,565	1,685		
Yoga	1,591	1,730		
Other revenue	25	5	-	50

TOTAL INCOME

28,912	18,304	14,493	23,573
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Expenditure

Rebates to affiliated branches	3,307	3,014	(4,406)	(3,413)
Grants to clubs	(15,563)	(8,599)	(11,740)	(8,945)
T-Shirt Costs	-	(548)		
Martial Art Cost	(3,100)	(2,300)		
Yoga Cost	(2,640)	(2,510)		
Representative matches	-	-	-	(258)
Sports day cost	(6,676)	(3,256)	(5,293)	(9,680)
Entry fees	(195)	(420)	(300)	(477)
Miscellaneous	(52)	(460)	(1,463)	(2,674)

TOTAL EXPENDITURE

(24,919)	(15,080)	(23,203)	(25,447)
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NET SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)

3,993	3,224	(8,710)	(1,874)
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BALANCE SHEET	At	At	At	At
	30-Sep-25	30-Sep-24	30-Sep-23	30-Sep-22

Current Assets

Debtors	-	-	350	-
Petty cash	678	106	21	38
Cash at bank	65,939	66,804	67,729	73,113
Cash at building society	0	0	0	0
Unpresented cheques	-	-	-	-

TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS

66,617	66,911	68,100	73,152
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Current Liabilities

Creditors	(0)	(0)	(115)	(0)
Accruals & Provisions	(4,903)	(9,190)	(13,488)	(9,945)

TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES

(4,903)	(9,190)	(13,603)	(9,945)
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NET CURRENT ASSETS / (LIABILITIES)

61,714	57,720	54,497	63,206
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NET ASSETS

61,714	57,720	54,497	63,206
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Equity and Reserves

Equity at beginning of year	57,720	54,497	63,206	65,204
Movement in Reserves	-	-	-	(124)
Surplus/(deficit)	3,993	3,224	(8,710)	(1,874)

TOTAL SHAREHOLDER EQUITY

61,714	57,720	54,497	63,206
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MEMBERSHIP

Our finances show that membership income was up during the financial year 24/25 by 6.12%. Increase is due to new members during the year.

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 197 members who pay directly to SPARTA. That is a decrease of 3 members from the start of the year (200). Membership “churn” plus VES during the year

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

The 51st Annual General Meeting was held on 11th December 2024.

The meeting was held in Room 4.7, Great Minster House, 33 Horseferry Road, London, SW1P 4DR and was available virtually online using Microsoft Teams

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

SPARTA COMMITTEE MEETINGS (GMC AND FGPC)

The Officers of the Association meet as a committee on a weekly basis apart from that the General Management Committee and Finance and General Purposes Committee also meet during the year.

This year the General Management Committee met on 23 April 2025 in room 2.10, Great Minster House and online using Microsoft Teams.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee met this year on 2 April 2025 at 17:00 hours 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

Concerts

The choir will have given five concerts by the end of 2025. In March, the choir was joined by a professional ensemble, the Brandenburg Sinfonia, to perform Mozart's *Requiem* and *Vesperae solennes de confessore* to a full house at Smith Square Hall.



The Artistic Director of the Brandenburg Sinfonia said *"The Civil Service Choir may be underestimated by a few ignorant souls, but they do so at their peril! They perform with a genuine projection of enthusiasm combined with a respect for musical line and shaping. The meticulousness of their preparation is evident from the start, but what is most impressive is the power and emotion while maintaining the musical flow. Watch out for this group - they are going places!"*



The chamber choir sang at the Easter Festival in Smith Square, with a string ensemble, performing music by Gounod, Pergolesi, and Tuma. The concert raised £1,400 for charities.



In July, the full choir returned to Smith Square Hall with a professional jazz ensemble, the Tom Green Orchestra, to celebrate in swing the choir's 200th performance. This featured swing and jazz standards including *In the Mood* and *Summertime*. The concert raised £2,000 for charities.

In November, the choir collaborated with the Whitehall Orchestra to give a large-scale performance of Carl Orff's monumental *Carmina Burana* at Holy Trinity, Sloane Square. The concert sold out two weeks in advance, and the performance received a standing ovation. Claudio di Meo, the orchestra's professional conductor, conducted the main feature and

referred to the choir as “outstanding.” The choir’s conductor, Stephen Hall, was chorus master - training the choir for the performance. He conducted the choir and orchestra in the first half of the concert to perform Sir John Rutter’s *Feel the Spirit* - arrangements of seven spirituals.



In December, the chamber choir will be performing a Christmas charity concert at St Stephen’s, Rochester Row, with an orchestra ensemble, featuring music by Victoria, Charpentier, Poulenc and Ronald Corp.

Other Performances

At the time of drafting the report for 2024, the choir did not expect two more performances in December. The first was to sing at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for a gathering of the Civil Service Leadership Group. The second involved a

small, selected contingent of the choir singing at an interfaith event, hosted by the outgoing Cabinet Secretary at No. 10 Downing Street.



In February, a selected contingent of the choir sang at a Civil Service Reception hosted by His Majesty the King at Buckingham Palace. Members of the choir were delighted to meet the King.



In May, the choir sang for a meeting of G7 Country Heads of Export Credit Agencies at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The choir performed a specially curated programme of music from each of the countries.



In November, the choir sang for acts of remembrance at the Board of Trade Memorial and at the Civil Service Rifles Memorial at Somerset House.

At the time of drafting, the choir is expecting a busy December, which includes the Civil Service Awards, its own carol service, the Whitehall carol service, and various departmental events.

Promotion

The choir's profile is raised by concerts and events, coverage in the Civil Service Weekly News bulletin and through its own publicity efforts. It has received joining enquiries throughout the year. The choir promotes SPARTA in its publicity, printed programmes and on its website.

Raising money for charities

In its 16 years of charity performances, the choir has raised more than £55,000. Charities supported this year include the poverty charity the Cardinal Hume Centre on Horseferry Road (with which the choir is strongly associated), the Charity for Civil Servants, Sinfonia Smith Square, and St Stephen's Church.

YouTube recordings

At the time of drafting there had been more than 8,500 views of the choir's outputs on YouTube in 2025 - which is likely to increase significantly in December. Across the lifetime of all the choir's recordings on YouTube there have been over 88,000 views.

More information about the choir

For more information visit www.civilservicechoir.org.uk

Fitness Club

The Fitness club continues to operate on a hybrid basis taking place every Friday lunchtime beginning at 12.30. Attendees are able to join either in person or online via Microsoft Teams.

This year has seen a continued regular turnout by the regular strong core of people. We are pleased that several new members have joined during 2025 and are enjoying these free to attend classes.

The club is always actively seeking new members.

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



SPARTA Golf Society

As reported last year, there was a change of secretariat this year and the new secretary and his assistant have done a good job in the role but seem to have found it to be a more difficult task than anticipated. As such, the assistant secretary is unable to continue next year. It has been agreed that committee members will help the secretary during the course of the next year.

The membership of the society continues to be an issue and our efforts to attract more members do not seem to have had the desired effect. Those efforts included adopting 18-hole rather 36-hole events and we also have allowed members to play just in the morning or afternoon on full 36-hole days. The latter, however, resulted in the morning round at our President's Day being effectively cancelled as only 4 players took part.



Old Ford Manor Golf Club - Venue for the SPARTA Golf Society Summer Meeting

Despite the low numbers we were able to field a team in the CSSC Haddow Trophy, this time at the Belton Woods Golf & Country Club. Unfortunately, we could not repeat our efforts last year and finished 11th out of the 18 teams. We hope we can continue to compete in this competition.

Apart from our full day events, we also hold a matchplay competition through the year for the Mond Cup - one of many trophies we hold dating back to the origins of the society in 1921. As ever, the matches were keenly contested and it was one of our newest members who won the competition after a tight final that went on to the 20th hole.



Geese and Deer were hazards at Knole Park

The final meeting is always a challenge match against the Ashdown Golf Society which is always popular and a closely fought contest. This year it took place at The Darenth. Compared to the previous year, when rain had waterlogged the course picked for this match, The Darenth was bathed in glorious warm sunshine and many players ended up wearing short sleeve shirts for the match a very nice day for the 6th October.



Ray Owen tees off on the sixth hole at The Darent

At the end of the match the SPARTA golfers were able to say "It's come Home!" after they won back the Pauley/Richards Trophy by four matches to two. After a non-event last year, our team were magnificent in winning back the trophy and score between the two societies is now nine wins a piece. That just shows how close this contest has been over the past twenty years.

We are very grateful for the support given to our society by the Sparta General Secretary. Whilst his efforts in highlighting the society in monthly newsletters, and previously in 'Meet the Clubs' events, has generated interest, new members at meetings has either been rare or not at all. Unfortunately, it seems current work culture does not embrace the social side as much as it should. However, with the help of SPARTA to spread the word throughout the departments, we are hopeful to see new faces joining us in 2026.

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. Go to www.spartagolf.co.uk to find out more.

SPARTA North Golf Society



The newly formed Sparta North Golf Society hosted its inaugural event on April 17th at Silkstone Golf Club, Barnsley. The course was in excellent condition, offering a challenging yet enjoyable experience, featuring water hazards, raised greens, and dog-legged par fives. The weather was sunny and clear, providing ideal playing conditions.

The competition format was Stableford.

Following initial interest, four golfers formed a small but well-balanced group: Nick Lyell, Jordon Scott, Carl Davies, and Callum Mellor. Each player demonstrated moments of skill, alongside some more unconventional shots.



Event Winner & Scores

Callum Mellor emerged victorious with an impressive score of 35, showcasing two strong runs of pars mid-round that contributed to his success. He was a well-deserved recipient of the Wellington Cup, named after the Leeds Government Hub.

Final Scores:

- Callum Mellor (36 handicap) - 35
- Nick Lyell (21 handicap) - 34
- Carl Davies (28 handicap) - 31
- Jordon Scott (17 handicap) - 15



Post-Round & Future Events

Following the round, participants indulged in a local delicacy—pork baps with gravy—accompanied by a refreshing beverage in the sun. Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with strong enthusiasm for more regular events.

Since the event, additional interest has emerged from MHCLG golfers, which is highly encouraging. If you are keen to join, please feel free to reach out—we welcome new members and aim to foster a relaxed and sociable golfing environment.

History Society

2025 Report

During the year the History Society has organised 40 events (double last year) 37 virtual and hybrid talks (with many available to watch on YouTube) and three walks.



It has increased its membership and has undertaken a membership survey which had produced a 98% satisfaction rating with members praising the variety of talks.



It has helped the Department for Transport celebrate Railway 200, the 200th anniversary of the Stockton and Darlington Railway by organising 16 Railway 200 talks and 1 walk. Members have organised events in Leeds Office and in September put on a display of railway items, alongside archive images from Historic England in the reception of Great Minster House.



This is in addition to the History Society's regular programme of talks (21 in total). Covering various subjects. Highlights include learning about the work of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution this featured historian Helen Doe talking about it's history and RNLI crew members from Tower Lifeboat Station answered questions about their experience of working at the UK's busiest lifeboat station. Over £340 was raised for the RNLI. A (Short) History of Homelessness MHCLG policy official Troy Fores Masculet joined by Matt and Jess Turtle, co-founders of the first-of-its-kind Museum of Homelessness to offer perspectives and pinpoint key moments from the Georgian era through to the present day. The event was presented live from the museum, in north London.

Please contact Robert Baker if interested attending any of our 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



SPARTA started 2025 once again with the very popular Personal Safety course that was run over a period of 8 weeks by Stay Safe Global.

As in 2024 the course was a real success, covering everything to help equip individuals with the knowledge and skills needed for confident navigation through life's challenges. This comprehensive program is designed to ensure personal safety and the safety of your loved ones, bolstering your confidence in any situation.

Training also covered danger awareness, avoidance, physical escape, and defense skills and was delivered by Sifu Nick Martin

Following on from the course we continued with weekly classes teaching Wing Chun Kung Fu. A Martial Art that is designed to help a smaller opponent overcome a larger stronger opponent. A truly fascinating subject.

Attendance at the Martial Arts classes was not as high as we hoped but we have a dedicated core of participants and are hoping to recruit more pupils next year.

St James's and Westminster Players

St James's and Westminster players are a primarily London based, nonprofessional drama society made up of current and former civil servants and have been going for over 70 years. We cover classic and new plays as well as showcase pieces written by members of the society



In 2024/2025 we did a few productions. In early 2025 we took on Shakespeare's classic "Twelfth Night" which was recorded and is available to watch on our new YouTube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnC-9F1Dq6I&t=1028s>

Later in the year we put on our first, online production using our funding from SPARTA "Last Tango in Little Grimley", by David Tristram, a wonderful one act play about an amateur dramatic society putting on their farewell production. The funding enabled us to get the equipment to run the production that bought back members of the society who have moved out of London and reach a much bigger audience



In October 2025 we put on another, online production which was a piece of new writing, all penned by members of the society called "The Ink Runs Red", short monologues such as "The pumpkin whisperer", "the curs-ed lamp", "how I died" and the "Civil Service Interview - the Underworld edition". This was alongside a 5-part adapted for radio play version of "The Mezzotint" by M.R.James, again, being able to utilize the equipment provided by the SPARTA funding. The recording of this will be available on our you tube channel shortly

For 2026 we are planning more online productions such as "Sorry Wrong Number" by Lucille Fletcher in February, "Wicked Wedding" in August, a physical production of "Abigail's Party" by Mike Leigh in June/July and a physical production of "Educating Rita" by Willy Russell in October/November

For more information and to sign up to our monthly newsletter email sjwplayers@gmail.com

Superstars Cricket Club

Superstars Cricket Club enjoyed an improved season (admittedly from a low bar!) on the pitch and made many steps off the pitch in the 2025 season. We enjoyed a short pre-season of indoor nets in Battersea, as the indoor nets at the Oval (our venue in previous years) were



closed for refurbishment. The season began with a hugely successful tour to Oxfordshire, brilliantly organised by Dan Forman, where the team enjoyed beautiful surroundings, good company and two wins. The tour is a great way to integrate relatively new players into the club and the squad always feels closer after a tour.

The weather in the early season was excellent and we managed to raise a side in all bar one of our games. The amended fixture list helped and we played against more teams of our level, gaining more wins and (more importantly) plenty of tight games of cricket. We welcomed a slew of new players, making a real difference to both the quality and the enjoyment of our cricket and complementing the core of long-standing (if increasingly long-toothed) players - we're always looking for new players of all abilities.

Superstars continued its good recent record in 6-a-side cricket tournaments, winning the Caterham 6s and collecting a bronze at SPARTA Sports Day in July and the 6 wins in the season was our second best record of this decade - not exactly the West Indies team of the 1970s and 1980s but creditable nevertheless. So next year we'll carry on doing what we do best: enjoying each other's company, cheering our successes (however infrequent they may be), accepting that someone else may win most of the time, and looking forward to the next game!

Table Tennis

The weekly 2-hour lunchtime sessions held in GMH on Wednesdays continue to prove very popular, with numbers in attendance going into double figures. There are several players who would consider to play after work, but are worried about committing to regular weekly attendance.

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

Table Tennis at Sports Day 2025

The Table Tennis event took place again this year using an outside table tennis table. Winner was Ben Payne. We will look to hold the event again in 2026.

Tennis

SPARTA Tennis Report 2025

SPARTA Meet the Clubs events & London Tennis

Tennis put on a show at all of the events organised by Jason. We had hoped to get some Tennis or Padel Tennis going in London but court availability thwarted us. The idea of a Leeds event looked possible but numbers in the Leeds area scuppered that idea too. Our thanks go to the Jason and SPARTA Committee for supporting the Tennis Section.

Over 50's Tournament Bath on 7th & 8th April'25

We entered both a Ladies & Mens Team in this event's 2nd year.

Ladies

We finished Runners up of the 5-Team event, soundly beating the N^o1 seed and Trophy Holders HASSRA-1 by 3 rubbers to 1; we nearly completing a rout with Maggie & Allison just losing the 4th rubber by 6 game to 7, the format favouring the toss winners as they served out the 6-all game. 3-Teams finished on 3 wins and it took rubber countback to decide the standings. In the SPARTA v RCSL-1 match Maggie & Sue had a 6-7 loss again the format



Ruth, Maggie, Bridget, Allison & Sue

favouring the toss winners; a reverse score would have left both Teams on 12-4 Rubbers and we would have possibly finished as Winners! Our Squad of Maggie, Allison, Sue & Ruth 1st day with Ruth resting the 2nd day as Bridget came in had a fantastic time and brilliant results.

Name	HASSRA 2	HASSRA 1	RCSL 2	SPARTA	RCSL 1	Win/loss	Rubbers	Standings
HASSRA 2		0 - 4	3 - 1	0 - 4	1 - 3	1 / 3	4 - 12	4
HASSRA 1	4 - 0		3 - 1	1 - 3	2 - 2 W	3 / 1	10 - 6	3
RCSL 2	1 - 3	1 - 3		0 - 4	0 - 4	0 / 4	2 - 14	5
SPARTA	4 - 0	3 - 1	4 - 0		0 - 4	3 / 1	11 - 5	2
RCSL 1	3 - 1	2 - 2 L	4 - 0	4 - 0		3 / 1	13 - 3	1

Men

We came a credible 4th beating the might of RCSL-1 by 1-game the Rubbers being 2 all, a great result as RCSL-1 finished in 3rd, being one of the 3 Teams all having 3 wins to 2 the results being decided on rubber countback. In that match Colin & Mark were 1-5 down that would have resulted in us facing a losing Draw but pulled it back to 4-6 giving us the 1-game advantage and winning Draw. Brian, Mark, Colin & Dave competed the first day's 3-matches where we won 1 and lost 2 with Pete replacing Dave in day 2 where we won both against the aforementioned RCSL-1 and RCSL-2. An extra set from RCLS-1 would have had us tied on



Pete, Brian, Colin & Mark

10-Rubbers all and we could have easily finished 3rd, however it would have been a tall ask with RCSL's 1st pair being a strong combination. As with the Ladies the Men had a fantastic time, Mark & Colin playing as a pair throughout getting stronger as the tournament progressed and justified their switch up from 2nd pair to 1st pair standing on the 2nd day.

Name	RCSL 1	RCSL 2	BT 2	SPARTA	MOD	BT1	Win/Loss	Rubbers	Standing
RCSL 1		4 - 0	2 - 2 W	2 - 2 L	2 - 2 W	1 - 3	3 - 2	11 - 9	3
RCSL 2	0 - 4		2 - 2 W	1 - 3	0 - 4	0 - 4	1 - 4	3 - 17	6
BT 2	2 - 2 L	2 - 2 L		0 - 4	0 - 4	0 - 4	0 - 5	4 - 16	5
SPARTA	2 - 2 W	3 - 1	4 - 0		0 - 4	0 - 4	3 - 2	9 - 11	4
MOD	2 - 2 L	4 - 0	4 - 0	4 - 0		0 - 4	3 - 2	14 - 6	2
BT 1	3 - 1	4 - 0	4 - 0	4 - 0	4 - 0		5 - 0	19 - 1	1

Sports Day - 18th July 2025

Played as Singles, congratulations goes to the Winner Robert Green and Runner up Graham

Kinshott; often partners but this time rivals.

CSSC Team Doubles Tennis Tournament Nottingham on 1st - 3rd Oct'25

We entered Teams in the Ladies, Mens Division-2 and Mixed; slightly depleted in playing strength at the end as several player had to withdraw for personal reasons.

Mixed

With 6 Teams the 2 seeded Teams sat out the 1st round and our 2 Teams played HASSRA-2 and RCSL-2 respectively. Brian & Bob, Alli & Maggie made up the 1st Team with Greg, Mark, Kate & Clare in the 2nd.

Hard fought matches resulted in a 1-3 loss for our 1st Team with Bob and Maggie winning a



Championship Breaker 12-10, our 2nd Team going down with a 0-4 loss. That left us competing for the Plate Final where our 1st Team overcame the 2nd Team; Nigel came in for Brian in one Rubber to freshen up the squad. No trophy but we won Winners and Runners-up prize vouchers for our efforts.

Greg, Clare, Maggie, Bob, Brian, Allison & Nigel

Ladies

We had Maggie, Bridget, Allison with Kate playing Thursday and Melanie on the Friday. Our 1st 2 matches were against RCSL and HASSRA-1, both oppositions with County Standard and young players, we did well to get a Rubber off HASSRA-1. Our last match against HASSRA-2 was somewhat a disappointment as they pulled their 2nd pair leaving us with just 1 Rubber each against their single pair which we won handsomely. In compensation for reduced play our Ladies grabbed a couple of men and play Mixed showing us men how good they are.

No	Name	RCSL 1	SPARTA	HASSRA 1	HASSRA 2	Win/Loss	Standings
1	RCSL 1		4	4	3	3/0	1
2	SPARTA	0		1	4	1/2	3
3	HASSRA 1	0	3		4	2/1	2
4	HASSRA 2	1	0	0		0/3	4

Mens

We had 2 new players, Cai and Kourosh joining Graham, Mark & Brian. The standard was variable across the Tournament with the 1st Division depleted leaving several players competing in our 2nd Division and most Teams rotating players. We started well with a 3-1 win v HASSRA-2, Graham & Cai winning both, one in a 12-10 Championship Breaker. Kourosh & Mark had two Championship Breakers winning one 10-8 and losing one 7-10. Next up BT we lost 1-3 with a County standard player coming in, Cai & Kourosh picking up our single Rubber. Finishing the Day we had a great winning Draw again with Championship Breakers against MoD. Friday had us playing two matches which we lost, 0-4 to RCSL-2 the eventual undefeated winners then 1-3 Hybrids a team of individual entries and spare



departmental players, Kourosh & Mark losing their Rubber before Brian replaced Mark to win the reverse Rubber with Kourosh and Cai & Graham winning their and a default win as the Hybrids withdrew.

Cai, Kourosh, Brian & Graham

No	Name	RCSL 2	HYBRIDS	BT 1	SPARTA	HASSRA 2	MOD	Win/Loss	Standing
1	RCSL 2		2W	4	4	4	2W	5/0	1
2	HYBRIDS	2L		2L	2W	3	2W	3/2	3
3	BT 1	0	2W		3	2W	3	4/1	2
1	SPARTA	0	2L	1		3	2W	2/3	4
2	HASSRA 2	0	1	2L	1		4	1/4	5
3	MOD	2L	2L	1	2L	0		0/5	6

Brian Oliver

SPARTA Tennis Organiser

Board Games Club

The SPARTA board games club continues to have a regular attendance and is well supported. The club meets regularly every two weeks on Wednesday after work.

The DfT 5th floor canteen in Great Minster House is the preferred venue and perfect for gaming. There are even a few games stored for anyone to use in the lawyer's library.

If you have a Common Civil Service Pass then

you have access to GMH and can just rock up, but it is always best to let Ben Payne (Ben.Payne@communities.gov.uk) or David Misell (David.misell@df.gov.uk) know if you are coming so that he can let the reception know; friends are also welcome but you will need to be escorted.

Snacks and drinks are available in the canteen area thanks to new arrangements and have continued to help grow the number of average users and the club even has spare DfT stewards.

With Board Games Clubs also set up in Leeds and Birmingham, this is a really popular pastime that is growing and growing.



Tenpin Bowling Club

The club continues to Bowl on Wednesday nights at Lewisham Lanes starting at 7:30pm, playing three games finishing around 9pm (we have negotiated a reduced league rate to make the evening less expensive).

We are currently running a combined singles and doubles league and are always ready to



welcome new members. First and foremost, we are a social league, the competitions provide a welcome focus but the main aim is to enjoy the bowling.

Our season runs from September to July and we have also started running a shorter Summer competition from July to September. You are welcome to come along and have a go at bowling without

committing to join. If you are interested please contact either the club Chairman Andrew Price (ADFPPrice@gmail.com) or club secretary Mark Leigh (Mark_a_leigh@yahoo.com).

The 24/25 season provided plenty of entertainment with some tense battles in both the singles and doubles formats (which we run concurrently).



Sugar & Spice (Gwendolyn Morgan, Fiona O'Neill) won the doubles with G & T (Gillian Allchurch, Tom Thompson) second and the Scotias (Alan and Jan McCulloch) coming third.

Sandy Kirk triumphed in the Singles with Gillian Allchurch in second place and third place going to Conrad Simpson.

At our AGM in September we elected Andrew Price as Chairman, Mark Leigh as Club Secretary, Alan McCulloch as Fixture Secretary and Fiona O'Neill as Assistant Finance Secretary.

We welcomed some new players at the start of this season (25/26); James Grant, Graham Camplin, Dan Meaton, John Wyatt and Ray Ball. We hope to continue to grow the league as the season continues

Yoga Club



The yoga club continues to attract new students. Over the last year 28 different students have attended the classes, although the general turnout for an individual class varies between 6 to 10 students.

The classes are hybrid for students to join online or in person. We have a very experienced and knowledgeable teacher who is keen to advise and help students improve their practice and understanding of yoga.

A new payment system that was introduced in September 2024 has proved to work well and offers a discount for SPARTA members and block booking of classes. We will be continuing this system and look at rolling it out for other SPARTA events.

The yoga classes have built up a small core number of regular students which is great, but we really do need more students attending to enable us to continue on a viable basis as is reflected in the earlier financial statements.



SPARTA Yoga Club

SPARTA NEW CLUBS

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

It is important that SPARTA develops new clubs to meet the needs and wants of our members. 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. 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 Astronomy Club and a new Golf Society based in the North of England (report for this is in Regional Activities).

SPARTA Astronomy Club

A new SPARTA Astronomy Club was set up this year. Set up by Neil Nevill (DfT) who is a keen amateur Astronomer.

He is hoping to build a club that not only meets up to view that stars and planets but also holds lectures and talks about all subjects relating to the skies and rocketry along with visits to some exciting venues.

The club is still in the early stages of development but there has been keen interest and things are looking to take off fully in 2026.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Apart from the new SPARTA clubs SPARTA has been working to help the regional offices start up new activities.

This year we are very happy to report that we have been able to recruit the help of Nick Lyell (DfT) in the Leeds office who set up a New Golf Society based in the North.

SPARTA Golf North



The newly formed Sparta Golf (North) Society hosted its inaugural event on April 17th at Silkstone Golf Club, Barnsley. The course was in excellent condition, offering a challenging yet enjoyable experience, featuring water hazards, raised greens, and dog-legged par fives. The weather was sunny and clear, providing ideal playing conditions.

Following initial interest, four golfers formed a small but well-balanced group: Nick Lyell, Jordon Scott, Carl Davies, and Callum Mellor. Each player demonstrated moments of skill, alongside some more unconventional shots.



The day was such a success that a second meeting took place later in the summer. Equally good plans for next year are being formulated.

CIVIL SERVICE EVENTS

SPARTA always encourages participation in Civil Service events.

The Tennis club has sent teams to the Civil Service championships for a number of years and in the last couple of years our runners have been very successful.

Running has become really popular recently particularly with thousands of people across the UK taking part in Parkrun events every weekend. This success has flowed over into the SPARTA teams in the Civil Service running events. Here are the details of our successes in the Civil Service 10km and 5km races and the Civil Service Cross Country Championships.

CS 10km and 5km

The Civil Service 10km and 5km races took place on 16th April 2025 in Battersea Park. There was a good turnout from the SPARTA runners from both DfT and MHCLG.

I am pleased to report that the 10km race was won once again by Jack Millar (below receives his winners medal) in a time of 30 minutes and 56 seconds. He has won the race for the last



few years and says that this is an event that he loves to run in each year. A few days later Jack competed in the London Marathon running an excellent time of 2 hours 24 minutes and 6 seconds finishing in an incredible 54th place out of 56,640 finishers! I hope that he was equally pleased with that result.

With Jack winning the 10km race that gave the other SPARTA runners a great start in the team event and with Luke Watson (33m 43s) finishing in 4th place, Matthew Herbert (36m 34s) finishing in 9th place, and Louis Cowling (38m 16s) finishing in 15th place, SPARTA managed to win the mens team event for the second year on the trot.



Left: Jack Millar and Luke Watson receive the teams gold medals. SPARTA the Men's team champions for the second year on the trot.

Our remaining competitors were:

27	Sunny Gidda	0:40:02
41	James Nichols	0:41:42
43	Connor Roberts	0:42:05
45	Alex Holmes	0:42:15
48	Alexander Grant	0:42:42
63	Neil Quinlan	0:44:53
72	Ben Toogood	0:45:29
76	Jac Williams	0:45:47
78	Danton Bounds	0:46:02
79	Stanley Rudkin	0:46:02
86	Sion Pithouse	0:46:34
90	Davis Drew	0:47:07
100	Julia Niagulova	0:47:53
108	Matthew Eglinton	0:48:20
114	Daniel Rowan	0:48:38
125	Pippa Savill	0:49:28
134	Jake Pitchers	0:49:52
146	James Pritchard	0:51:04
149	Jack Rampling	0:51:20

155	Kane De Antonis	0:52:05
160	Catherine Barham	0:52:37
167	Jade Berry	0:54:03
178	Lawrence Green	0:56:19
187	Peter Brohan	0:57:12
201	Georgina Wilkie	1:01:21
204	Nilesh Tailor	1:03:09*
207	Sally Parker	1:04:10

Nilesh Tailor admitted after the event that he was enjoying the run so much that he forgot to count the laps and accidentally ran an extra lap so ended up running 12.5km!!!

The 5km race is a non championship race so is counted as a fun run by the Civil Service Athletics Association but even so it is a fun event to take part in and challenge yourself. SPARTA a number of competitors. They were:

Place	Name	Time
8	William Turner	21.33
9	Miles Knight	22.02
10	Felix Ivers	22.21
15	Fanus Weldensae	25.17
22	Megan Gunter	27.51
26	Tim Roast	29.17
27	Emily Kenning	30.41
34	Catherine Turner	31.50
37	Ollie Jacob	33.06
38	Emily Dumont	33.06
46	Sophie Jones	35.27
59	Martha Vaughan	61.14
61	Evelyn Goodall	61.14
62	Meher Iqbal	61.14
63	Lucy Britton	61.14
64	Luke Rogers	61.14

65 Gemma Matthews 61.14

As it is a non championship race there are no team prizes for the 5km which is a shame as our runners love to do this event too.

Keep up this wonderful effort.

CS Cross Country Championship

SPARTA had a total of 16 people from across DfT and MHCLG entered in the Civil Service Cross Country Championship at Parliament Hill Fields on 15th October 2025 This was slightly down on last year's entries but then entries in the event from across the whole Civil Service were down this year leading to a much smaller field than usual, only 77 runners. This could well have been due to the late announcement of the event taking place giving the runners only a short period to enter for the event.

The late announcement also meant that several of our better competitors were unable to rearrange their commitments to be able to take part, which was a shame as our men's team, who have medaled in the last couple of years events, were only able to manage fifth place this year.

As you can imagine from the name the course at "Parliament Hill Fields" is undulating and a good challenge to anyone who takes it on. The venue is regularly used for the National Cross Country Championships which attracts thousands of runners from across the country for one day a year. There have been some quite famous races and faces that have run across these rolling hills so it is always a good venue to visit and the views of London are quite spectacular.



The day was slightly misty and damp, which is great running weather. The start location had to be moved at the last moment due to an over running schools event that was also taking

place over part of the course. This did lead to some confusion and had a lot of the marshals suddenly having to change the route of the course just before the race started.



We were really pleased to have some women competing for us this year with Lottie Newman (left No. 64) having an excellent run to finish fifth and followed up by Clare Watson in 14th. Frustratingly we didn't have a third woman to complete the team, if we had then they were sure to have taken the silver medal behind HMRC but in front of DWP. Hopefully next year.

In the Men's event Luke Watson (below left) was our top competitor finishing in an excellent 6th place. Next home was Leon Clement in 15th place; he was also the 3rd placed in the over 40's category. Zak El-Hoss 41st and Charlie Averde 42nd made up the remainder of the SPARTA team.



The SPARTA team finished fifth behind HMRC, the Home Office, DEFRA and NCA. A great achievement considering the amount of competitors that were unable to take part on the day.

Our remaining finishers were:

John Williamson	45th
Sam Butler	46th
Felix Ivers	47th
Jake Pitchers	49th
Peter Brohan	51st
Tim Roast	58 th

I was particularly pleased to see Tim Roast (below) doing so well this year. His determination to finish and his improvement since last year were evident and he was really pleased with his progress.



Taking part in these events can, in itself, be so rewarding. I would strongly recommend taking part in this event to anyone who fancies a run in the park once a year.

I look forward to seeing him and many more of you at this event next year.

SPARTA SPORT AND WELLBEING DAY 2025

The SPARTA Sport and Wellbeing Day 2025 took place on 18th July 2025. Teams and participants from locations across the country from both the DfT and MHCLG attended the event which, for the first time, was held at Imber Court Sports Club near Hampton Court. The change of venue was necessitated after the previous venue cancelled all Government Sports Day bookings at very short notice leaving the holding of the event this year in great doubt. It was only due to the hard work of the SPARTA team and all the volunteers on the day that the event was able to go ahead.

Despite all the troubles leading up to the day it turned out to be a glorious day (probably a little too hot for some) but filled with incredible teambuilding, wellbeing and most importantly fun.



SPARTA was pleased to welcome the Swinging Mandarins band to the event to provide live music. The band is made up of civil servants and they performed all afternoon with some wonderful jazz music.

Despite this year's change of venue, we were still able to hold the four main team competitions - Football, Netball, Cricket and Rounders - and there were still lots that could be entered on the day including tennis, pétanque, wanging the wellie, the sack race, table tennis, darts, the ever-popular quiz and a couple of running races. We will explore what else can be brought back for

next year's event. The results of the events can be found on the SPARTA website at <https://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/sparta-sports-day-results>



We were really pleased that Nick Joyce, the Director of the DfT Corporate Delivery Group, was able to join us again and present the medals at the end of the day. We thank him for all his help.



Above, A rare occurrence in the rounders, Joint Winners. The teams of MAJOR ROUNDERS PROJECTS and THE THROWBACK TO PHASE 2B who could not be separated despite playing a tiebreaker.

Our official photographer, Paul Weekes (DfT), has provided us with a selection of superb pictures which are available on our website at <https://www.spartarecreation.co.uk/sparta-sports-day-gallery> Feel free to take a look and see if you feature in any of them.

2026 AND BEYOND

2026 should be another great year for SPARTA. Our new Chairman, Nick Adams, is now fully up to speed and has some excellent ideas for driving SPARTA forward. A few new clubs have just started and will bring new opportunities and experiences for our members.

We will be looking to further expand our regional activities and will be working closer with staff in the Regional Offices to help them expand the opportunities for staff to get more involved. We really want to expand the SPARTA family and ensure that all our activities are as inclusive as possible for all staff across the country.

Although our funding has been cut in real terms SPARTA finances are still relatively stable, so we can still offer good monetary support to the clubs and regional associations over the next year.

If you would like to help in SPARTA activities, then please do get in touch with us at SPARTA@dft.gov.uk

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***

