

WHITGIFTIAN ASSOCIATION



Chairman's Statement issued in advance of the AGM on 15 December 2022

Dear Friends

May I begin by wishing all members and their loved ones the very best of the season, however you mark it.

Given the high stakes, it is, I think, regrettable that dealings with John Whitgift Foundation (JWF) in respect of Croham Road have seemingly come to nought. Nevertheless, I made it clear last year that the sports clubs had a perfect right to determine their own response to JWF's proposals and to reject them if they did not feel they were in their interests. This, it appears, was indeed the case, for reasons I and the members of my committee understand and respect. I wholeheartedly commend the effort and time invested in that process by the WSC working party and the WSC Club Chairman: a welcome example of the sports clubs acting in concert which offers a blueprint for the future.

We earnestly hope that a long-term solution which secures the future of the sports clubs at Croham Road presents itself in the not-too-distant future.

In the interim, WA moves inexorably towards its dissolution. Some will bemoan this but, as I again stated last year, a membership organisation whose only purpose is to hold assets is not really worthy of the name. For others, WA's dissolution is overdue. However, the Committee are resolved that WA's demise be an orderly one and the simple fact of the matter is that, as things stand, WA's General Fund is in deficit. As will be apparent from examination of successive financial statements – approved, incidentally, in general meeting – this deficit is coming down, but it will take time. In addition, the AMS run-off must be carefully handled. On this basis, the Committee do not believe the case for an immediate dissolution of WA to be made.

The above being said, the Committee are more than happy to play a full and constructive role in discussions pertaining to a post-WA future.

While WA remains 'active' it will continue to collect subscriptions. Some members may choose to discontinue their membership on the basis that it offers them little, if anything. This is perfectly understandable.

Finally, I extend my thanks to my colleagues on the WA Committee, who have all worked extremely hard over the past year and for whose support I'm exceptionally grateful.

**John Etheridge
(1981-1988)**