

## MEDIA RELEASE

# MANNUM TENNIS BOUNCES BACK WITH COUNCIL PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT

The Mannum Tennis Club has turned its fortunes around and bounced back stronger this season, with help from a partnership with the Mid Murray Council.

An approach by the Club to Council in March served up the perfect opportunity for collaboration. The Council agreed to freeze the Club's loan repayments on an outstanding \$5,000 Community Loan for two years, while a plan was developed to rebuild the Club's membership and finances.

Council worked closely with the Club committee, along with representatives from Tennis SA and STARclub Murraylands, to identify initiatives to attract new members and funding, starting with an information night, *come 'n' try* night, annual general meeting and Hot Shot parent coaching sessions.

Their efforts have resulted in a 230% increase in participation already this season compared to 2019/20.

Club President Chloe Schellen said the partnership was instrumental in revitalising the Club.

"A year ago the Mannum Tennis Club was at risk of folding due to declining membership and participation," Ms Schellen says.

"We really didn't want to see that happen. Sports clubs are an essential part of our community because of the opportunities they provide for recreation, fun and connecting people of all ages, but especially for our children and young people.

"When the club came to Council we were hopeful of some financial support to help us get back on our feet again. The support we ended up getting was so much more. With Council's help – and with the significant assistance we've received from Tennis SA and STARclub Murraylands – along with the work of our new, passionate committee members, and incredible coach Peter Eckert - we've revitalised the Club.

"Although COVID-19 interrupted the early part of our season, we're excited to get back on the court over summer and continue to build a strong, competitive Club here in Mannum."

Council staff provided ongoing advice to the Club, helped the committee to connect with supporting bodies in Tennis SA and STARclub, helped host the *come 'n' try* night and promoted the Club to the Mannum community.

Over the past six months, the Club has worked with STARclub Murraylands towards gaining STARclub accreditation and for help to access grant funding – resulting in a recent \$1,020 grant for program development and equipment upgrades through the SA Government's Active Club Program.

It also worked with Tennis SA to develop a new website that enables online membership registration, and to run a *come 'n' try* night that attracted about 50 children and families. Through its participation in the Hot Shots training program, the tennis club can now welcome junior players, meaning children no longer have to travel outside the town to play tennis.

Club members have also worked hard behind the scenes fundraising to support the club's sustainability.

Mid Murray Mayor Dave Burgess said community sport played a valuable role in keeping rural communities connected and healthy.

“Our local sports clubs not only keep our communities active, they are also places of connection, social interaction and inclusion,” Mayor Burgess says.

“The Mannum Tennis Club Committee should be commended for its proactive approach to rebuilding the Club and its membership base.

“Council is proud to have assisted the club in these efforts, along with Tennis SA and STARclub Murraylands. It’s a great example of what we can achieve when we all work together and I encourage other sport and recreation organisations who may need extra support to get in touch with our staff and STARclub Murraylands.”

For more information about the Mannum Tennis Club, or to find out more about playing with the club, visit <https://play.tennis.com.au/mannumtennisclub>.

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