

Good morning and it's great to see so many people here this morning, for the Official Club Launch, of the Phoenix Lacrosse Club.

And may I also welcome our MP Laura Farris, I do not know if Laura played Lacrosse at her school, but I will ask her later.

St Bart's has a long history, and tradition of competitive lacrosse (more than 50 years)

Which I understand is sadly being phased out over the next 15 months and the Phoenix Lacrosse Club has been set up to provide continuation of competitive Lacrosse for around 100 girls that actively practice the sport in the School.

This club is fortunate to have a wonderful coaching team with former pupils, those connected to the school and also former US Semi-Pro Player.

The Club is open to others and has already seen pupils from as far away as Winchester coming to train.

The Club is further working on its outreach Program and has already started to engage with other State Schools who have an interest in Lacrosse locally.

I could just finish off with a personal story.

My Two daughters Holly and Beth Drummond both attended St Bart's and both played Lacrosse here and I

do remember standing in this field with my wife and on many away matches on a cold, windy and wet mornings.

Beth was the better player, and went on to play in USA in 2005, with about 35 others from St Bart's

They went for 10 days, where they started in Washington DC and ended up in New York City, via Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Philadelphia.

They were kindly put up by host families from all the high schools they played at, and Beth still talks highly about the kind hospitality they received.

And all this could not have been achieved, if it had not been for two teachers, Miss Annie Hutchins (who sadly passed away far far too young and Miss Ann Parker, who both done wonders for the highly held reputation St Bart's is held the Lacrosse community.

So I wish the newly formed Phoenix Lacrosse Club a long and prosperous future.

Thank you.