



AGM Minutes

17 March 2022

Present: Brian Lewin, Tim Lewin, Lesley Russell, Andrew Myers, Roger Bazley, Jane Jones, Julia Hitchcock, Gavin Reid, Carole Jewtha, Ben Durman, Claire Chisholm, Hugo Maule, Jill Maule, Huw Ellis, Margaret Beech, George Lammie, Greg Mothersdale, Shaun Hartley

Apologies: Jane Leney, James Leney, Marilyn Bishop, Marc Wachter, Truda Money, Adrian Ford, Jonathan Brasher, Karen Ford, Caroline Harvey, Becky Alcock, James Alcock, Angela Seymour, Ben Waters

Matters arising – previous AGM

- Change of the Financial Year-end from 30th September to 31st March, to bring it in line with the membership year which runs from 1st April - 31st March – agreed.
- Move the date of the AGM from November to the end of the membership year - agreed

Minutes were proposed by Tim and seconded by Roger.

Chairman's report – March 2022

Thank you all for attending the Chepstow Tennis Club AGM

I want to spend a few minutes giving you all an update on what has been going on at the tennis club since our last AGM in February last year. It's fair to say it has been quite a year.

Over the past year COVID has not impacted the tennis club as much as in the prior year and the tennis courts have remained open throughout the period albeit that the Athletic Club has had to close at certain times over the past year. COVID had have some impact on our club however as we unable to hold our popular annual quiz / presentation evening. We were also not able to hold other social events we were considering. Team tennis was affected last summer with all leagues being played on a friendly rather than competitive basis which was disappointing and resulted in far fewer matches being played than normal.

Social tennis

Our social tennis on Tuesday evenings remain very popular, as does the ladies mornings on Tuesdays and Fridays. Also a number of WhatsApp groups have been formed over the past year which have led to members booking regular slots as groups which is great. The Sunday Family social session from 2pm - 4pm however is not working and we will need to do something with this session as we are blocking off courts, at prime time that are not being used. In general however, with our increased membership and improved coaching provision, the courts are being well used and there is a buzz about the club.

Facilities

In preparing for tonight I looked back at what I said at the February 2021 AGM last year. At that time I presented the Committee's aim of trying to get planning permission from Monmouthshire County Council to replace our old failing floodlights with new LED floodlights, planning permission to build a Junior Court 4 with a hitting "wall" and planning permission to build a clubhouse specifically for our tennis club which would be big enough to have changing rooms and toilets, a lounge / kitchen area and a viewing area looking on to the courts. At last year's AGM I also said that we were on the verge of making a grant application to Sport Wales, which if successful would provide a significant element of the amount required to carry out Phase1 of our improvement plans which was the LED floodlights and building Court4 with a hitting wall.

13 months on, we have had our planning approved and we have also been awarded a grant for £48,500 from Sport Wales (80% which we have already received already with the remaining 20% available for drawdown when we settle our final invoice for Phase 1). We also have received a £5,000 grant from Chepstow Athletic Club to help us towards the cost of Phase 1. The first stage of Phase 1 was installing our LED floodlights which are now up and working very well. These were installed in late September and were delivered on time and on budget. We are now in a position to commence with the remaining elements of Phase 1, being the Junior Court 4 and hitting "wall". Work on this commences on the 15th August and should be complete and ready to use by the end of September this year.

It has taken a lot of hard work to get to this point and there are people I need to thank. Firstly I need to thank Roger Bazley who has led this project and who was responsible for us winning the £48,500 Grant from Sport Wales, without which we would not have been to do what we have done so far. Roger spent hours completing the Grant Application and then spent days liaising with Sport Wales and gaining support from Tennis Wales and Monmouthshire Council who due to his hard work became strong supporters of our Grant Application. Thank you to Roger. I also need to thank the members of the Development Sub-Committee who we formed at the beginning of this project to help guide the club through the many stages of this complicated process. The members of this Sub-Committee are Ben Durman, Chris Francis, Ian Russell and Roger Bazley and without their hard work and good advice throughout the process, the club would not be in the strong position it is now.

Phase 2 of our development plans is our planned new clubhouse, which is an even larger, more expensive project and fundraising to try and make this happen will be a priority over the coming year.

Membership

Chepstow tennis club membership summary

| Summary | As at Nov 19 AGM | As at Feb 21 AGM | As at Mar 22 AGM |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Adult members | 65 | 84 | 112 |
| Senior adult members | 34 | 42 | 49 |
| Young adult / student | 14 | 24 | 11 |
| Total adult members | 113 | 150 | 172 |

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|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Total junior members | 52 | 39 | 94 |
| Totals | <u>165</u> | <u>189</u> | <u>266</u> |

Membership observations

- Overall membership numbers have increased by 77, compared to the position at our February 2021 AGM and now at 266 total members the club has significantly more members than we have ever had before. Thanks to everyone for joining the club.
- Our junior membership numbers have increased dramatically over the past 12 months having increased from just 39 in February last year to 94 currently. This increase has of course been driven by the excellent junior coaching programme we now have with Jane and Ross. This is also due to the hard work Jane has put in developing relationships with our local schools. It's brilliant to see so many youngsters playing tennis at our club now.
- The increasing membership numbers in our various >18 years of age categories is also very pleasing. In the past 12 months our overall adult membership has increased by 22 from 150 to 172. In fact, since our November 2019 AGM our total adult members have increased by 59 which is really encouraging. Our coaching programme has again been key in this membership increase with Jane & Ross's beginner's classes and cardio classes attracting new adults to the club to try tennis for the first time.
- The focus for the coming year is to try to retain our increased membership numbers by increasing the number of social activities at the club and by trying to meet the needs of our members, either via coaching or by making court time available for all our members to play and make full use of their membership
- Finally, in this section I would like to thank Adrian Ford for carrying out the Membership Secretary role last year, in addition to his duties as Men's Captain. Adrian has said he will carry on doing the Membership Secretary role if required, but he would prefer for someone else to take on the Membership Secretary role if possible. This is a really important role in the club and if anyone is interested in carrying out the Membership Secretary role it would be really appreciated.

Coaching & Junior Development

Since Jane took over as Head Coach 18 months ago the coaching provision has improved dramatically. Jane and Ross are both excellent coaches and their energy and hard work to make the coaching programme a success at Chepstow Tennis Club is clear to see. It is brilliant to have 2 great people who are focussing their efforts on improving our club.

They are both very visible at the club and the number of coaching led group sessions has increased from 11 per week, prior to Jane becoming Head Coach, to 23 sessions per week currently, including beginners and cardio sessions which our club previously did not offer. As well as group lessons they both are busy providing individual lessons to our members.

As well as the visible on-court stuff there is a crucial element to being a successful Head Coach that is not so visible. This behind the scenes off-court work is an area where Chepstow Tennis Club has been lacking in the past and is an area that Jane is

particularly good at, which is clearly benefitting our tennis club. Jane has proactively developed close links with our local schools, particularly Pembroke, St Mary's, The Dell, Shirenewton and Thornwell Primary Schools and Chepstow Comprehensive. This is having an obvious effect of increasing the profile of our club and has directly resulted in the increase in kids who are interested in playing tennis and who are now junior members at our club.

The increased number of junior members we have no means we can field more junior teams and this summer we will have U8's, U9's, U10's and U14 teams representing Chepstow Tennis Club in the South Wales league. These kids are the future of our club. In conclusion, I want to thank Jane and Ross for their hard work. They are both real assets to our club. I also want to make a special thank you to Margaret Beech. Margaret is a long-standing member of our club, and she gives up her time voluntarily each week to support Jane and Ross run their junior coaching sessions. I know Jane, Ross and the kids really value Margaret's support and we are really lucky to have people like Margaret at our club.

Club Tournament

The annual club tournament took place again. We are grateful for the hard work of Lesley Russell for arranging and managing the tournament which was much more complicated and ran for much longer than normal due mainly to COVID. The tournament was a resounding success with 45 adult members taking part which is brilliant.

Congratulations to the winners who were:

- Becky Allcock - Ladies Singles
- Mark Wachter – Men's singles
- Lesley & Georgina Russell – Ladies Doubles
- Ben Durman & Adrian Ford – Men's Doubles
- Sally Bethell & Gavin Reid - Mixed Doubles

We also held a successful junior tournament in the autumn which was run by Julia Hitchcock & Jane Jones. The prizegiving for this tournament was held at a Halloween fancy dress event for our juniors which was again organised by Julia & Jane.

Team tennis

I asked our Ladies, Men's and Mixed captains to submit a review of the year for their teams so I could share them with you.

Ladies team report from Lesley Russell – Ladies team captain

After all the restrictions of Covid it was nice to get back to some normality.

In Summer 21, the league matches were for fun only, no relegation/promotion so a bit more relaxed and thank you to 16 ladies who played to make up the teams including 3 who had not played in leagues for us before and 3 of our young ladies who were with us from university & are getting much stronger. We won 6 out of 16 matches which I was really pleased with.

This Winter I have been pleased to see the return of 3 ladies who took a break in the summer, so we now have 15 team members, having lost some to Uni and other things. Thank you to you all for playing with great enthusiasm and responding promptly to my emails. We have won 7 out of 19 matches so far, hopefully securing our place in the

South Wales league division 5 but we might be better off down a division to 3 in the vets.

Thankyou also to the coaching team Jane and Ross. We now have 2 ladies group coaching sessions. They are thoroughly appreciated by the ladies who are obviously benefitting from them.

We have been missing our socials, but we did manage a Christmas tennis tournament and have a good chat on court.

Club Tournament

The Club tournament started late this year due to the summer match season being delayed due to Covid restrictions. It has now been successfully concluded. Thank you to all those who played and to those who conceded due to illness/injury which allowed the tournament to be completed in a sensible time frame. We dispensed with a Tournament finals day due to the late start and to keep arrangements simple and in case covid restrictions returned. We will be discussing as a committee if we should aim for a final's day in 2022, so any of your opinions would be appreciated.

Men's team report from Adrian Ford – Men's team captain

I'm glad to report that this last 12 months has, once again, been a success for Men's team tennis.

The South Wales summer league was slightly unusual as the Welsh LTA announced that there would be no promotion or relegation, so some clubs understandably took the decision not to play due to Covid. This impacted the 1st team to a greater extent, with only 2 of 10 matches being played whereas the South Wales 2nd team played 8 out of 10 matches and came a creditable 3rd in the division.

The men's midweek county league was similarly impacted by the Welsh LTA decision, but we were already in the top division so unsurprisingly we are still there and looking forward to the coming year.

In the winter league the Men's 1st team won South Wales Division 3, of 10 divisions, gaining promotion to Division 2 and it looks likely that the 2nd team will retain their place in Division 6. Thanks to Julian Ebbutt who once again captained the summer Men's midweek team and our Men's 2nd winter league team.

What I'm most pleased with is the number of men that have participated in competitive league tennis, with many doing so for the first time. A total of 23 players were involved over the year and I'd like to thank every one of them for their efforts in representing the club. These numbers suggest that we are giving those that want to play competitive tennis an opportunity to do so and also confirms my thoughts that the future of the club is looking rosy. Let's strive to make this coming season as good as last, if not better.

Mixed team report from Roger Bazley – Mixed team captain

Thanks to all who have played in the mixed teams this Winter. We have played 15 games with 2 more to go by the end of March.

Teams have played in the Avon League and for the first time also the South Wales League. With mixed results in the Avon League, we have shone through in the South Wales League, currently leading our division, a great effort from all concerned.

In all, we have around 40 players signed up to play mixed tennis, which is great fun and extremely varied between the two leagues. If anyone is interested in being included, please contact Roger Bazley.

I would like to put on record my thanks to Lesley, Adrian, Julian and Roger for their hard work in running our adult teams.

Treasurer's report

Thank you to our Treasurer, Brian Lewin, for his hard work throughout the year and for producing our annual accounts.

I want to talk you through some of the key information on these accounts:-

- Firstly, I want to remind you that at last February's AGM we voted in favour of Brian's proposal to change our financial year-end from 30th September to 31st March to bring our accounting period in line with our historic membership year which commences on the 1st April each year.
- On the right-hand column of the sheet is the 6-month period from 1st October 2020 to 31st March 2021 which is the interim period from our last September 30th financial year-end in 2020. This 6-month period shows the club making a £4,568 deficit due to 2 main reasons. Firstly, the club generates the majority of its membership income in April / May which is when most members subscriptions are paid. Secondly, we incurred some one-off costs in the period, being professional and planning costs related to our club improvements of £3,100 and £1,098 relating to the installation of CCTV cameras. This deficit reduced our bank balance from £29,518 as at 30th September 2020 to £24,950 as at 31st March 2021.
- On the column on the left shows our income & expenditure for the 11-month period to 28th February 2021. Obviously, we haven't got to the end of March yet so Brian will complete our annual accounts to 31st March 2022, once the financial year actually ends.
- There are 2 key large items that need to be explained to understand these accounts. Firstly, our income for this year to date has been boosted by the receipt of 80% of our grant from Sports Wales which was £38,867 + receipt of the £5,000 from Chepstow Athletic Club giving us the total for grants and sponsorship of £43,867. On the cost side, £22,075 of the £23,347 spent on tennis court equipment and maintenance relates to the cost of our new LED floodlighting.
- If we exclude the grant receipts and the cost of the LED floodlights, we are left with our real underlying performance which shows annual income of £16,210 and costs of £6,708 giving us an underlying surplus of £9,502. This is a satisfactory performance given we haven't been able to generate funds from social events such, as our quiz night, due to COVID. The club really needs to generate a minimum surplus of £10,000 per year to build up a sinking fund to cover the costs of ultimately replacing our courts when we need to.
- The current bank balance at £56,244 is healthy, but this is sadly a bit misleading. The cost of completing Phase 1 of our development (Court 4 + hitting wall) is about £45,000 which we still must pay and towards that we will receive the remaining 20% of our Sport Wales Grant which amounts to just over £9,700 which means we will have a net outlay of just over £35,000 by the end of September. After expected

membership fee income in the period I would expect our bank balance to be sitting at about £30,000 by the 30th of September 2022 which remains healthy but is where we need it to be given that our courts are nearly 10-years old and will ultimately need to be replaced.

- Membership fee income is by far our club's largest and most important income stream. Despite the club keeping its membership fees as low as possible and well below those of many other nearby clubs, the increased membership numbers has meant that our annual membership fees collected, year to date of £15,761 has exceeded our previous record for annual membership fee income which was £11,376 back in the 2018-2019 financial year pre-COVID. Almost £4,500 higher therefore this year than any previous year.

Closing remarks

This has been a particularly busy and at times challenging year and I would really like to thank all committee members for their support during some hard times and for their hard work which has got the club into the strong position it is right now.

Finally, there are 3 key priorities for the coming year, as I see them.

1. **Retain our healthy membership levels** - The ambitious plans we have for the club will only be possible if we can retain the membership levels we currently have. We will only do that if we can continue to make Chepstow Tennis Club a friendly welcoming club and if members enjoy their tennis at our club and feel they are getting value for money.
2. **We need to complete Phase 1 of our development plans**
3. **We need to start working on fundraising for Phase 2, our proposed new clubhouse which would be transformational for our tennis club if we could deliver it.**

Membership subscriptions for the 2022-2023 season

The committee proposed the following membership fees for the 2022-2023 season:

| | 2021 / 2022 | | 2022 / 2023 | |
|--|-------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | Annual | Monthly | Annual | Monthly |
| Full adult | £120.00 | £10.50 | £135.00 | £12.00 |
| Couple | £216.00 | £18.50 | £240.00 | £20.00 |
| Fitness | £30.00 | £3.00 | £35.00 | £3.50 |
| Full family - Junior | £244.00 | £21.00 | £270.00 | £23.50 |
| Full family - Young Adult / Student | £252.00 | £21.50 | £280.00 | £24.00 |
| Mini | £18.00 | £1.50 | £22.00 | £2.00 |
| Senior | £80.00 | £7.00 | £90.00 | £8.00 |
| Restricted | £80.00 | £7.00 | £90.00 | £8.00 |
| Student / Young adult | £48.00 | £4.00 | £55.00 | £5.00 |
| Youth | £30.00 | £2.50 | £35.00 | £3.00 |
| Trial | £20.00 | | £20.00 | |

The membership fees were agreed by members, by 31 votes for and 1 against.

The adoption of a new club constitution was deferred to a later meeting

Election of 2022 committee

All committee positions have been filled - subsequent to meeting, Ben Waters volunteered to take the membership secretary role.

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Chairman & CAC representative | Gavin Reid |
| Secretary | Claire Chisholm |
| Treasurer | Brian Lewin |
| Men's captain | Adrian Ford |
| Ladies captain | Lesley Russell |
| Mixed captain | Roger Bazley |
| Membership Secretary | Ben Waters |
| Junior Development & Welfare & Safeguarding Officer | Julia Hitchcock |
| Daytime tennis organiser | Carole Jethwa |
| Communications | Ben Durman |
| Facilities | Tim Lewin |

AOB

Suggestions to be considered:

- Adoption of singles ladders.
- Try to make tennis accessible to low-income families
- Run a handicapped tournament, akin to golf

Action : New Committee to consider feasibility.

The meeting closed at 9pm