



AGM Minutes

19 November 2019

Present: Hugo Maule, Adrian Ford, Ben Durman, Gary Buchanan, Jason Allen, Carole Jethwa, Jill Maule, Anna Keele, Margaret Beech, Stuart Mattin, Chris Francis, Julia Hitchcock, Nick Langston-Able, Claire Chisholm, Gavin Reid

Apologies: Ian & Lesley, Glynis, Huw, Ollie, Brian

Matters arising from 2018 AGM

Visitors fees

- Committee subsequently discontinued visitors fees. Potential new members encouraged to try out our facilities for free for a few occasions with view to then joining and becoming a member.

Continue to provide balls for social tennis

- Match balls being fed back to club for use in social tennis sessions. Worked well through spring and summer but over last couple of months supply has diminished as number of matches have reduced. More balls need to be provided for social tennis now.

Increase in membership fees for 2018 / 2019 membership year

- Increase in fees approved at 2018 AGM and implemented.

Increase profile of our Tennis Club in community

- A number of initiatives undertaken which I will detail later in my report

4 Committee vacancies at end of 2018 AGM

- Huw Ellis became Membership Secretary
- Lesley Russell became Ladies Captain
- Gavin Reid became Tennis Representative on Chepstow Athletic Club Committee
- Ben Durman took on responsibility for Facilities (in addition to Communications)

Chairman's report for 2019

Club Tennis

Tuesday club tennis sessions continued to be well attended in Spring and Summer with all 3 courts regularly in use. Numbers have fallen in the past few weeks as the weather has been so wet. New family club tennis session was introduced on Sunday afternoons at 2pm. This needs to be better promoted for next year.

Ladies club mornings on Tuesdays and Fridays continue to be very well attended. New mixed club session recently launched at 10am on Wednesdays and new Men's club session launched at 9.30am on Thursdays. Both these 2 new sessions need to be better publicised to try and make as successful over time as the more established ladies club sessions.

The Wimbledon ticket draw was again arranged by Claire.

Thanks to Caroline Harvey and ticket sellers for a very successful quiz and presentation evening which was once again sold out.

The adult club tournament was again arranged by Jason and took place over the summer with finals taking place in September. Very well supported with 30 players taking part. Thanks to Jason for running the tournament.

We held a very successful Open Day in May which attracted a large number of youngsters in the morning and potential new adult members in the afternoon. An excellent team effort with most committee members supporting on the day with full engagement from our coaches, with Ollie and Ross providing free coaching to the kids in the morning. The Open Day was timed to coincide with a new schools initiative where we funded our coaches to provide coaching to local primary schools.

We also invested in 6 benches for our 3 courts. These have been well received by members with a lot of positive feedback. Thanks to Ben Durman whose idea it was and who then made the purchase and assembled the benches.

Team Tennis

Ladies Team Tennis

Successful season for our ladies teams. Finished 4th in Division 3 of the South Wales League winning 5 matches and losing 7 matches during the season. In the Cymru Kitchens Gwent League our Ladies finished as runners up in the Premier League and also finished runners up in the Cup. Thanks to Lesley Russell for captaining the ladies teams.

Men's Team Tennis

Also a successful season for our Men's teams. The Men's 1sts Finished 4th in Division 1 of the South Wales League winning 5 matches and losing 7 matches during the season. We also fielded a 2nd team in the South Wales Men's Leagues for the first time for a long time. This gave a number of members their first opportunity to represent Chepstow Tennis club in team tennis. In the Cymru Kitchens Gwent League our Men's 1st team won the Premier League (we think for the first ever time) and also finished runners up in the Cup. Our Men's 2nd team were relegated from Division 1. Thanks to Adrian Ford, Julian Ebbutt and Pat Wilson for captaining our various Men's teams.

Mixed Team Tennis

In the summer we were in the Premier League where we finished 3rd out of 6 teams. I think this is a great result especially as people often play with someone they haven't played with before (due to there being more ladies than men that want to play mixed). So very well done everyone who played in the mixed!

In the winter we play in the Avon league which is a different format of one round of men's and ladies doubles followed by one round of mixed doubles. It's good fun.

We've had a lot rained off so have only played 2 away matches which we've narrowly lost, but we're planning to beat them on home territory. Thanks to Anna Keele who has captained our Mixed Teams.

Facilities

Many thanks to Ben Durman who has worked tirelessly throughout the year, regularly brushing and sweeping our courts. Ben has taken responsibility for Facilities despite already holding another position on our Committee.

Most pressing issue on our facilities has been recurrent problems with our floodlights on Courts 2 & 3. Despite having them repaired in late 2018 the problems reoccurred during the summer. Ben has spent many hours liaising with electricians, trying to fix the problem. We are still waiting for bulbs to arrive to fix the single lights that remain not working on each of Courts 2 & 3.

Having now had 2 hefty repair bills for the floodlights in the past financial year we are concerned that the costs of constantly repairing the floodlights will only increase over the coming years. Finding a longer term solution is now a top priority for the club. At our most recent Committee Meeting in October Jason Allan gave a presentation that set out 5 possible courses of action the club could take in respect of our floodlight problem. These ranged from:

- Option 1, in which case we simply tried to repair the lights every time they failed.
- Option 3, represented the course of action which the club has been contemplating for the past couple of years. That is to replace the existing floodlights with new LED floodlights. The cost of this is estimated to be in the range of £30k - £35k. Having carried out research Jason established that grant funding would not be available from the LTA as this work would be considered a “like –for –like” replacement.
- Option 5, the most exciting and ambitious possibility, set out the vision of creating a junior court 4 on the grass beside court 3, together with new hitting wall on that new court. New LED floodlights to be installed on all courts with our outer fencing being replaced at the same time. This option also saw our current cabin (which itself is in need of repair) being replaced with a much larger clubhouse with toilets / changing rooms / showers / kitchen and seating area with windows facing onto our courts. This option is by far the most expensive but would potentially open up material levels of grant funding from LTA and elsewhere which could make this option viable.

We are looking as matter of priority to set up a working party of Committee and Non-Committee members to explore this feasibility of this exciting option. If anyone here has skills or experience that would be useful to this working party please contact me or Jason. Thanks to Jason for his work in opening our eyes to what might be possible for the club moving forward.

Membership

Categories	2016/2017	2016/2017	2017/2018	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2019/2020
	(AS at Nov AGM)	(AS at Nov AGM)	(AS at Nov AGM)	(AS at Nov AGM)	(AS at Nov AGM)	(As at Nov AGM)	(As at Nov AGM)
Adult	31	32	32	32	36	33	36
Coach/Adult	3	3	2	2	3	3	3
Family/Adult	12	12	20	20	19	20	20
Family/Primary/Junior	10	10	13	13	9	14	12
Family/Student	6	6	11	11	7	6	8
Primary/Junior	54	54	41	42	35	38	40
Life Member	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
OAP/Senior	22	22	25	26	29	34	34
Restricted Adult	5	5	5	5	4	5	5
Student	9	10	5	5	4	3	6
Concession	2	2	1	1	0	0	0
Totals	155	157	156	158	147	157	165
Summary	2016/2017	2016/2017	2017/2018	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2019/2020
	(AS at Nov AGM)	(AS at Nov AGM)	(AS at Nov AGM)	(AS at Nov AGM)	(AS at Nov AGM)	(As at Sep 19)	(As at Sep 19)
Adults	76	77	86	87	92	96	99
Student/Concession	15	16	16	16	11	9	14
Junior	64	64	54	55	44	52	52
Totals	155	157	156	158	147	157	165

Membership observations

- Overall membership is up by 18 over the corresponding period last year and at 165 total members is a record number. Thanks to everyone for their support.
 - o Adults up by +7 which builds off the +5 from the previous year
 - o Juniors up +8 over last year's AGM which is an improvement but is still down on 17/18 figures.
 - o Up on student members, several of these have come from running a summer student membership for those players at university.
- Membership income has again exceeded £10k and at £11.4k is now at a record level.
- Club spark has reached a good level of maturity exemplified by most members being automatically renewed for this season. Most members paying either direct debit or bank transfer.
- More work still needs to be done, with regards to junior memberships. Although we have replaced 8 of the 11 juniors we lost in 2018 we still don't have the level of junior members we would like or have had in the past.
- Overall a very positive picture achieved in no small part to the very successful open day.
- It is worth noting that 10-years ago in 2009 our total membership was 99 which puts in perspective the progress the club has made over this 10-year period with membership numbers up 66% over that period.

Membership Fees

These strong membership numbers have meant that the Committee has recommended that there be no increase in membership fees for the coming year with fee levels for all categories remaining unchanged.

(This was put to a vote and agreed)

Coaching & Junior Development

Coaching

Very positive year for coaching in 2019.

Coaching team led by Head Coach, Ollie Bendall with Pat Wilson and Ross Eddy remains unchanged. The club and our coaching team have formed a much closer working relationship over the past 12 months and Ollie and Ross's involvement in the Open Day in May was crucial to the success of the day overall.

The club supported the coaching programme in the spring by funding Ollie to provide 8 hours of free coaching at Pembroke Primary School and Ross to provide 8 hours of free coaching at The Dell at a total cost to the Club of £320. In addition Ollie started to provide coaching at St Johns which was funded separately by the school. This has proved successful with Ollie still providing coaching at Pembroke and St Johns, with both schools now funding this themselves.

The coaching team now provides 13 hours of group coaching at the club each week. Jason Allen submitted a Grant Application on behalf of the club to Monmouthshire Community Chest Panel. We heard last Friday that the club had been awarded a grant of £1,100 to be used to buy additional coaching equipment but also to fund 20 hours of free coaching sessions at local schools. This award will enable us to expand and accelerate our links with more local schools over the upcoming year which will hopefully result in a further increase in new junior members.

Juniors

Following a very successful club open day, numbers have increased significantly from 44 to 52. As a result an additional 'orange' group has been created on both Monday and Wednesday's. Sunday morning Junior coaching, run by Pat, continues to remain

popular.

The older male juniors have been welcomed in to the men's team; Luke Reid, Fred Conridge, Lloyd Bartlett , James Ogborne all represented the club in Men's matches this year.

The girls also have a group of young rising stars. Emma Cole, Emily Alcock, Chloe Bridson-Dommett all played brilliantly in the Ladies Singles club tournament and have since joined the Ladies Team Coaching sessions with Ollie. A junior tournament is proposed for the new year.

Our 3 coaches are providing good cover across the age ranges.

As the club Welfare (& Safeguarding) officer, Julia has recently attended a refresher safeguarding course. She has had many years of working with children, as a long standing Scout Leader and school voluntary support helper. In addition she works for a food bank and housing charity and is keen to offer support where needed in the tennis community. If anyone has any concerns regarding any welfare issues, she would welcome being contacted at any time and she will provide the appropriate response as a safeguarding officer.

Julia has also raised the issue of the club maintaining an emergency contact list, providing telephone numbers for next of kin for all members, as it is a welfare requirement. We need to look to provide this, with anyone not willing provide an emergency next of kin number being asked to sign a waiver to opt out.

Chepstow Athletic Club

Following Shirley and Tony's retirement we now have Sue and Richie running the bar. They have introduced car payments at the bar and Athletic Club income has increased since they have arrived.

External refurbishment was carried out on the Athletic Club building during the summer. Internal improvements and modernisation will start shortly in the bar area of the Club.

Sue is not happy with the amount of sand we are bringing into the club on our tennis shoes so a brush will be purchased which should resolve this issue

The finances of Chepstow Athletic Club remain fairly healthy.

Ian's Walk

As most of you will know our long-standing member and former Chairman, Ian Russell celebrated retirement by walking round all of Wales. During his epic journey Ian covered 1,186 miles over 80 days. He took 2.7 million steps. Thanks to everyone who sponsored Ian who was raising funds for Children's Hospice South Wales and Chepstow Tennis Club with funds being split 50:50. Ian raised over £2,000 altogether and he will present the Tennis Club with a cheque for just over £1,000 at our Quiz Night / Presentation evening in the New Year.

Communication

A schedule of key event dates for 2020 has been prepared and will be circulated to all members in early 2020.

Re: Open Day

We promoted the event with Printed posters that Ben designed which were distributed around town inside council advertising boards as well as shops/cafes/leisure centres etc. Flyers were also given to the coaches to distribute at

the school tasters. We also paid to boost our event on Facebook by spending £25 on 10 days targeted advertising. This resulted in a reach of 1427 people. We followed up the success of the day by adding a 'Take advantage of our discounted 'Open Day' membership prices' Facebook post. Jason created a paid ad of £5 for this to target junior users <18 which reached 1,992 people with 327 engagements.

General communications

From now on all newsletter/Mailchimp communication is to be emailed to Ben so that he can design and send out. That way, all club communication should be more structured and consistent.

Re: Twitter updates for last minute coaching cancellations

Users don't need to be signed up to Twitter to be able to quickly look at the page. The latest tweet is right at the top - much easier to find on the twitter page than they are hidden under events and pinned posts on Facebook which is pretty cluttered. The plan is for us to send out a newsletter email to all members/parents letting them know that the best place to check for last minute updates to coaching sessions will be on <https://twitter.com/chepstowtennis>. Ollie can hopefully let people know when they sign up / renew for coaching.

Press coverage

Over the past 12 months we built up a good new relationship with Bob Cypher who is the sports journalist for the Free Press and the Chepstow Beacon. This has led to tennis match reports being covered in both local newspapers in most publications throughout the summer. This relationship will also be useful as they will likely cover any forthcoming club events in the New Year free of charge.

Treasurers Report

- The club remains on a sound financial footing aided in the main by the strong membership numbers.
- Total income increased by 5% to £11.8k in 2019 with membership fee income up £820 to £11.4k, a record level.
- Expenditure was kept under tight control. Coaching costs were up by £440, mainly due to the £320 the club contributed towards the schools programme. The main increase in costs were in court maintenance where we had 2 hefty bills for repairs / parts relating to our floodlight problems. This cost for the year of £2,700 is up £1,800 on prior year and is not sustainable.
- Despite these costs the club generated a surplus of £4,228 in the year with cash reserves increasing to £26,019. Roughly we feel we need to generate a surplus of c£5k per annum to build up a sufficient reserve to deal with major future capex projects.

New Committee for 2020

	2019	2020
Chairman	Gavin Reid	Gavin Reid
Secretary	Claire Chisholm	Claire Chisholm
Treasurer	Brian Lewin	Brian Lewin
Men's captain	Adrian Ford	Adrian Ford
Ladies captain	Lesley Russell	Lesley Russell
Mixed captain	Anna Keele	Roger Bazely (subsequent to

		meeting)
Membership Secretary	Huw Ellis	Huw Ellis
Junior Development & Welfare & Safeguarding Officer	Julia Hitchcock	Julia Hitchcock
Club Tennis organiser	Jason Allen	Carole Jethwa (subsequent to meeting)
Communications	Ben Durman	Ben Durman
Social	Gary Buchanan	Gary Buchanan
Club Coach	Ollie Bendall	Ollie Bendall
CAC Representative	Gavin Reid	Gavin Reid
Facilities	Ben Durman	Jason Allen

Closing remarks

This has been my first year as Chairman and I would like to thank all Committee Members for their support and commitment over the past 12 months, particularly Anna who is leaving the committee after many years of service.

There key priorities for 2020, as I see them are:-

1. Better communication by committee to membership. We have not been good enough at communicating what the committee has been doing. A questionnaire seeking feedback on a number of issues will be emailed to all members shortly. Really important that as many people as possible respond so we can address members concerns / issues.
2. Continue efforts to increase membership numbers particularly in the junior section.
3. Move forward plans to replace our floodlights with working party looking into feasibility of making significant clubhouse improvements and additional junior court.

AOB

There will be a TW Safeguarding audit in the new year, to check policies are in place. (Action Claire)

Carole – key to hut has gone missing and a new key is needed. Gavin said we need to give more people keys. (Gavin)

There was a question regarding the timescale of the club development plan: Jason has done a lot of background research on getting funding and summarised the options. The aim is to get a plan put together in next 6 months.

Nick suggested having a documented pack for new members with details like - key to cabinet, Access to balls, Lights etc.

Action: Flag up on FB there's social tennis – welcome pack

Could we think about a be a buddy system? Gary happy to be a buddy ,taking up Nick's point – Gary happy to be around on Tuesdays, to welcome people to club night

Ben suggested we could add a marker in the club spark record, to get a comms sent when a new member joins (for consideration)

Margaret Beech enquired about a schedule of events - (Gary has produced this – circulate again)

Julia commented that regarding Wimbledon tickets, it wasn't very clear to members what process is . (Claire to clarify)

Julia suggested Pat should get access to new tennis balls.

Action – communication with coaches regarding balls: Gavin to speak to Ollie

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The meeting closed at 21.25