



Saxton Avenue; Bessacarr; Doncaster; DN4 7AY

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## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Doncaster Lawn Tennis Club held on Wednesday 09 March 2016 - 7.30pm

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There were 39 members attending the meeting

### 1. Opening the meeting by the President – Dave Allen

“Good evening Ladies & Gentlemen. I would like to welcome you all to this Annual General meeting of The Doncaster Lawn tennis club for the 2015/16 season.

Thank you for making the effort to attend this meeting.

Firstly I regret to have to inform you of the resignation of our lady president Mrs June Rainey. She has had a very long association with the club having joined together with her family in the mid 1970's. She supported the men's teams in the early years by doing teas at home matches, soon took a position on the club committee, organising and supporting social events and together with her husband Maurice and others by being involved in the early years in organising and running of our club national junior tournament held at spring bank holiday half term. This club as you know has been a very large part of her life and continued to be so until fairly recently.

The club will be writing to express our thanks for her efforts over the many years, offering June an honorary membership and sending her a bouquet of flowers as a token of our appreciation.

Before we commence the business of the meeting, thanks are without doubt due to committee members who work voluntarily, particularly to those of the committee who have spent many long hours in their own time to get the new card system up and running for club membership identity, courts and clubhouse security access, and bar credit payments. The bar credit payment gives club members a small reduction in price paid for some purchases over the bar. Hopefully this will give our visiting clubhouse users an incentive to become social members. Included in these thanks are also the bar manager Janette and all her staff.

Similarly thanks are also due to all the unpaid members and friends who assist in helping to cater at events, run tournaments and generally help to keep the wheels turning throughout the year.

Particular mention should be made about the annual junior tournament and bonfire night with bonfire night continuing to be our best money spinner every year.



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Unfortunately we will not be hosting the national junior tournament this year which has been an attraction for juniors nationally for many years. A change in the L.T.A. strategy for junior rankings last year has resulted in a falloff in entries and thus income, which makes it not worthwhile the effort and dedication of our members in running this event. It is a pity but the L.T.A. strategy ranking system is out of our control and has had a same effect on other clubs like ours running similar events.

Thanks are also due to our coaches and their assistants for running a well subscribed and efficient coaching scheme which is producing young club players for the future and also helping some of our senior members to improve their game. The coaching programme continues to benefit the club financially, improving year on year, Friday nights in particular are a sell-out, but more details of this later.

Last spring we re-surfaced and re-lined courts 7, 8 and 9 but due to excessive windy and rainy weather during last summer and autumn we shall have to apply some more clay to all the clay courts. This is quite expensive as the clay only comes from the U.S.A. and is an annual cost of about £4,000 to £5,000.

We have now achieved a greater control of the moss which has plagued us for many years on these courts but whilst ever we have the clay it will be an ongoing problem.

Our groundsman Russ continues to work hard on the playing surfaces and around the premises generally and I know that the improvement is there to see. He has been complimented by many members on the tidiness of the courts and grounds, also the clubhouse cleanliness and the fact that he is always busy. Thanks are due to him as well.

The floodlights continue to cause intermittent technical problems for us which is costing the club financially and the committee have some proposals to put to the members to decide the way forward in relation to courts, their playing surfaces and lights.

We have done some extensive work on the fire safety system and also had a new gas central heating boiler installed both at quite a cost but necessary for members safety and comfort.

Before I finish I would like to make a couple of points which have niggled myself and others on the committee this year.

Whilst I know that we have had ongoing problems with the old coffee machine, some members have been in the habit of bringing flasks of hot drinks into the clubhouse to consume on the premises. That doesn't demonstrate support for the hard work put in by our committee, staff and volunteers, by members choosing not to purchase tea, coffee etc. and give the club a little revenue. The tea and coffee machine has recently been replaced so I hope that the product is now much improved and will prove satisfactory. Alternatively we could well expand this of course to allow members to bring their own alcohol and soft drinks into the bar for their own consumption.



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Similarly we had a issue where an adult and child membership was marginally cheaper than a single adult membership and taken advantage of when realistically the child nominated was too young to play.

This spoils that advantage for the people that it was intended to help because the committee then look to resolving the situation by increasing the sub for those who it was intended to benefit.

I find it disappointing.

Thank you, over to Tony”.

Tony thanked Dave and then continued to say that although Dave had retired a number of years ago he continues to devote a lot of his spare time into the club and would like to thank him for his time and efforts.

## **2. Apologies for absence**

Margaret Goodhead, Dorothy Ford, Emma Woodcock, Judy Helliwell, Caroline Appleyard, Martin & Helen Talbot, Sarah Bayliss, Lucy Wright, Rick Moglia

## **3. Minutes from Previous AGM December 2015**

The minutes from 2015 were accepted as a true copy and was proposed by Kevin Beaton and seconded by Kevin Waller.

## **4. Treasurers/ Accountants report for 2015/16**

Presented by treasurer – Kevin Beaton

This has now been my second year as treasurer and I am pleased to be able to present the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2015.

When Tony and I met with David Middlemass, from our accountants Smith Craven, to review the accounts it was very pleasing to note that the overall results were positive for the club and that will allow the committee to think about some major infrastructure developments that would improve the facilities for the members. I know that Tony will give further details regarding proposed developments in relation to the courts and the lighting.

Last year I detailed the work that Dave Penfold does for the club every week and he still continues this work. Once again, I would like to thank him very much for this work that he carries out.



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I know that you will have already looked at the financial statement and will have seen the close match in most of the items, which is to be expected. However, I would like to highlight some aspects of the financial statement for you all.

You will be aware that the member subscription rates have now been held for the fourth year running and that there is additionally a 25% reduction for new members.

Last year saw the introduction of new rates for families which led to a reduction in the cost for families joining the club. There was a 10% increase in club membership last year, which was the biggest increase for any club in the Sheffield and District area. As you will see, this initiative has contributed to the improvement in some of the figures in the accounts.

I will start by looking at the figures related to income.

Despite the membership increasing by 10% the income from membership was down slightly by just over £1,200 but I am confident this has helped to increase the overall club income in other areas.

The bar trading profit has increased significantly this year by just under £9,500. This is because the sales at the bar increased this year by over £14,000. I consider this can be clearly linked to four things: the increase in membership; the success of the coaching programme which has attracted an increased number of children and their parents to the club; the introduction of Prosecco to the wine list (wine sales increased by 107% last year whereas beer sales increased by 22%); and the reasonably good weather last year.

The floodlight money is down slightly this year but this can be explained by the ongoing situation with the lights which will be resolved this year as part of the infrastructure developments planned which Tony will detail later.

The social events surplus has increased by just over £1,300, which was a 25% increase, with the bonfire night providing the only income in this area.

There was a dramatic reduction in the money generated by the Junior LTA Tournament this year. This year the LTA allowed two other fairly local tournaments to run at the same time and consequently a number of competitors withdrew at the very last minute which meant the numbers entered were such that the tournament could not realistically hope to run at a similar profit to previous years. The committee has subsequently made a decision that the club will no longer host this tournament and instead it will now be held in Hull.

However, I know that Wayne Morris spent a significant amount of time both this year and in recent preceding years, when the tournament provided significantly more profit for the club, organising the tournament. In addition there were also a large number of club members who supported the tournament in a range of ways, either on the courts or in the kitchen. I would like to thank Wayne and all the other supporters of the tournament over these past years.

It was very pleasing to see that the Club coaching programme contributed around £1,200 more to the club this year. The income from the programme this year was increased by just over £2,640 which meant there were more children on the programme and consequently more parents and children contributing to the bar profits.

I will now look at the figures related to expenditure.



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The wages costs have increased by around 18% this year which reflect an increase in staff wages in line with the minimum wage and also that Russ Shelbourne is now working additional hours and undertaking additional tasks, one of which is cleaning that was previously outsourced.

The significant decrease in maintenance and running costs reflect the fact that there has only been annual maintenance completed on the courts this year as opposed to the major work that was completed in 2014. However, it is worth noting that money has been spent on decorating the club house including new curtains and introducing the new membership cards and associated till and security systems. There are currently plans to complete the refurbishment of the clubhouse by purchasing new furniture.

The increase in the rates and water payments can be explained by the replacement of the water tank and a malfunction of the sprinkler system on a single occasion. Both instances led to the club using significant amounts of water.

The advertising costs in 2014 related to the advertisement for the groundsman post. There have been no posts advertised this year.

The increase in subscriptions and licences was due to the club paying two subscriptions to the YLTA this year, but this will revert again to the payment of a single subscription from 2016 onwards.

Last year I noted that it had been pleasing to see that there were no penalty charges related to PAYE or VAT. Unfortunately, the mismanagement of the previous treasurer managed to land us in trouble once again with HMRC, this time related to underpayment of VAT over previous years during his reign. The club was issued a penalty notice of £3,118. I would hope that there would now be no further penalties imposed on the club.

The £400 increase in credit card charges reflect the increased use of cards at the bar.

In 2015, the club managed to increase the amount of money either in hand or in the three different accounts from £96,828 to £112,410, an increase of just over £15,500. There is no doubt that money is generated by the bar and it is important that the members do make use of the club facilities and support the club functions as much as possible. This usage contributes financially to the club and ultimately helps to keep down subscription costs as well as allowing the club to plan future projects to enhance the club facilities.

There have been changes related to Community Amateur Sports Clubs regulations and all clubs will have to be re-assessed by HMRC. The club has to show that spending in the club facilities is mostly by members with a current limit of £50,000 of expenditure in any one year by non-members at the club. If we cannot show this then the club will be liable to pay corporation tax on any profits.

Currently, the spending by non-members is very difficult to measure accurately. At the moment the accountants count all income at the bonfire event as being from non-members. This alone accounts for just over £9,000. The income from Pay and Play is around £1,700.

Last year the club could only estimate the amount spent by non-members at the club but you can see that the total spend must remain below £40,000 in order not to hit the £50,000 limit. It will help the club to accurately gauge the spending by members now that payment is starting to be made using the new member card. I am sure that it will take members time to adjust to the new system but using it in the clubhouse will ultimately benefit the club as it will help to ensure that the club does not have to pay corporation tax.



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I have recently transferred £11,259.12 into the Deposit Bank Account to make the total in that account £35,000. The intention from now would be to try and place £15,000 into this account every year in order to ensure there is sufficient funds to undertake major infrastructure developments in the next five to ten years.

I know that Tony will speak about succession planning at the club. I have agreed to remain as Treasurer for a further two years but would want someone else to assume this role in March 2018.

Tony thanked Kevin for his report.

## **5. Coaches Report 2015/16**

### **COACHES REPORT TO AGM - Head Coaches Liz Beaton & Mick Hague**

I have been looking back on the previous reports to the AGM, in particular in the areas of Junior Squad participation and profitability of the programme.

#### **JUNIOR PARTICIPATION**

Since 2011 the Saturday squads have increased by 25% and the weekday squads by 45%, but during the past few years the numbers have been fairly constant. We have been promoting the club through after school clubs, taster sessions and an annual schools open day, while unfortunately, but inevitably, losing some players due to the usual factors: moving house, going onto university, choosing alternative sports or just losing some interest in tennis training. However, we feel our retention is very good, even though it is a constant battle to retain and increase numbers when football, rugby, swimming, hockey dance etc. are all trying to do the same.

We currently have 60 squad places delivered during the week and 80 on Saturday. We feel this is running at near maximum capacity with the number of courts and coaching staff available.

Where our numbers have increased significantly is at the popular "Junior Night" on Fridays. January and March are traditionally the quietest times but each hourly session of 3 will attract

13 players on average. In June we peaked at 60 under 8s playing during the first session, with well over 100 children attending during the whole evening.

This has without a doubt contributed to the increase in profit of both the Programme and the bar takings.

#### **PROFITABILITY**

Since last year, the Coaching Programme turnover has increased from £25,805 to £28,337.5 and the profit from £15,245 to £16,351.



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## **COACHING STAFF**

Mick and Liz are both fully licensed coaches at level 4 and 3 respectively, but we could not offer such a wide programme without the support of a team of enthusiastic coaching staff and volunteers, to whom we thank for their hard work this year.

Toby Mettam is a level 2 coach, with Luis Sylvester currently completing his level 2 training. Ed Morris and Will Morley are both level 1 coaches. We also have some volunteer support from Jayne Hale and Laura Twidale, both also level 1s, which has been particularly helpful in our drive to recruit and retain more girls to the programme. Jacob Bennett will train as a level 1 in August 2016.

Assisting the team we have our Tennis Leaders who volunteer their time to help the programme run smoothly. We had an induction of another 8 Leaders last week who we specifically want to work on junior matches and competitions as part of their training.

## **SUMMARY OF INITIATIVES 2015**

- Taster sessions and an Open Day delivered for 6 schools
- Disability tennis introduced at the club
- Increase of Under 8 players joining the Programme
- Increase in number of girls attending the sessions at under 8 and 9 level
- A conscious decision was made in September 2015, in line with a Sheffield and District recommendation, to include more girls in club matches, even though this would inevitably perhaps reduce the chances of winning against boy only teams.
- The under 14 team has nevertheless just won the S & D Winter League.

## **AIMS 2016**

- Increase the Disability programme
- Increase the number of juniors competing in matches, at senior and junior level, for the club and playing in external and internal competitions.
- Continue to work with schools through an increase in the number of taster sessions offered, open days and ventures with Doncaster Active Fusion.

We hope to continue to work with and support the senior members of the club and welcome any questions and feedback from members, either now or at a later date, on any aspects of the programme.

Tony thanked Liz for the Report

Tony thanked both Mick & Liz and said it was brilliant that we have started a disability programme. It was also good to see that some of the juniors are now playing alongside senior members in the club's league teams.



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## 6. Chairman review of the year 2015/16

Presented by Tony Exley - Chairman

For a change this year it is nice to be able to follow the reports from Kev and Liz, especially when they have been both successful and positive and coming last means I can't steal any of their thunder!!

I would just like to reiterate how pleased we were on the Committee when the Accounts were presented. We are now three years into the new regime and our finances are at a position where we can now not only start to put plans in motion for changes this year but to also have an idea of how we will be spending money over the next few years.

As I have said previously, the healthy bank balances are as a result of not only existing members being happier to spend more time and money down here but as Liz mentioned, the levels of children regularly coming down for squads and training has attracted more parents who are also willing to stay at the Club waiting for their children and spending some money; this is a great testament to how well the coaching programme has been run by our two Coaches, Liz and Mick along with a healthy number of tennis leaders....well done and thank you.

Kev has highlighted the positives from the Accounts and just in case you are not fully aware I would like to show where your money was spent last year.

- New Till for Janette and her staff that has been a long time coming
- New Gate access system to help with security and make sure the Club facilities are used by people who should be using them
- Active Membership Cards that now mean we can actually have a benefit at the bar for being a member as different prices are now payable for members and non-members
- Full redecoration of the Club
- Repairs to the irrigation system for the clay courts
- The ageing boiler has now been replaced and so we have a far more efficient heating system

I know some of these items have meant a change for members and sometimes it takes a while to get used to them but everything now seems to be running well but it would be good to hear if anyone has any feedback on changes that are happening at your Club.

And so to future plans.....

You are aware that the floodlights have been a problem for the last year and I appreciate your patience whilst they have not been operating correctly. Over the year we have had a number





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of quotes from different companies to change the lights to a new LED system but as these have come out in the region of £85k to £100k it has been decided to stick with the existing lights for the time being but to make sure that we have electricians in place to fix any major problems like we had last year. It seems that LED is still in its infancy for Tennis Clubs and the hope is that in future years the installation costs may reduce when it comes a time that we have to change the lights.

So as a Committee we have started to put the wheels in motion to look at changing all 6 clay courts to all weather courts. We feel that this will greatly increase court playing time as we all but lose the clay courts for nearly 3-4 months a year and we also want to install lights on court 9 so that we will then have 9 courts available during the winter months.

We feel it is a good time to approach the Yorkshire LTA for grant money as they currently have a surplus that they are looking to spread around the region and we feel this is a deserving cause due to the increased playing time we will generate and as Liz mentioned, coaching is almost at a capacity for court availability and new courts would greatly help the coaching programme, with all the knock on effects that would have for the Club.

The cost is around £150,000 and we would be wanting to put up around £40,000 of our own money, borrow £35,000 and look for a grant for the remainder, its' the grant availability that will decide whether the project can go ahead and so until that is confirmed then we won't know timings for the project but I doesn't look as though it would go ahead before the summer so may be look towards September time.

The loan we feel could be easily repaid from the money that we would save on an annual basis for not having to buy tons of clay each year and the new courts would be more easily managed by Russ as he currently spends a disproportionate amount of time trying to maintain the clay courts.

As part of this project we would be putting in a new floodlight timing system but if the project does not go ahead we will still need to have that installed so we should have the lights working correctly one way or another for next winter.

Kev also mentioned that we are now physically putting money aside for future maintenance and there is £35,000 sat in the fund ready to look at replacing the surface on courts 1-3 for the 2018 season but if things go well this year it may even be considered for next year.

So this means that we need the membership to keep using the facilities and tell their friends so that we can at least maintain numbers and hopefully increase membership over the years. I think the atmosphere around the Club is very positive and the social side is building very nicely. We will be looking to some sort of Summer Social event to be held at the Club rather than a Christmas Do this year....unless someone also wants to organise something at



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Christmas and we still look to Bonfire night as our most successful fund raiser and there are plans to make this a better event this year.

So overall we are in a very healthy position and able to put proper plans in place to ensure the future of the Club and that future can only be made possible by the many people who have already been mentioned as helping to keep the Club running, our employees and the many volunteers, including your Committee, who give of their time and energy for the good of the Club....thank you one and all.

Isobel thanked Tony.

## **7. Election of club officials**

Tony mentioned that Sue Davies has decided not to put up for re-election this time and thanked her for the time she had served on the committee.

Nominations were received from:

Vice Chairman:	Dave Cole
Treasurer:	Kevin Beaton
Committee :	Gill Ross

The above were all accepted to serve a 2 year period before the positions are up for re-election

### **2016 Committee**

Chairman:	Tony Exley
Vice Chair:	Dave Cole
Secretary:	Isobel Hossack
Treasurer:	Kevin Beaton
Committee:	Kevin Waller Ged Salisbury Gill Ross

Tony mentioned that Isobel and he are up for re-election next year and that this would be the last year that they will be serving on the committee .... Therefore, a new Chairman & Secretary will be need to be elected at the 2017 AGM.

## **8. Open discussion**

Tony asked if there were any discussion point.

Steve Bisby – What plans do we have to improve social nights? Alan Warren mentioned that the arranged 4s were contributing to the problem of lack of attendees on a social night. Tony



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said we didn't have any plans at the moment but was happy to listen to any suggestions that were put forward.

Roger Hooper - mentioned that he had just come back from Australia where he plays for a club and would like to put forward some ideas that they adopt for social tennis nights. Tony said he was happy to discuss outside of the AGM meeting.

Steve Plaxton – advised that we need a defibrillator in the club and staff/volunteers made aware how to use. Tony said we would minute and discuss at the next committee meeting

Roger Hooper – A lot of positives coming out of the meeting but mentioned that we still had the drainage problem on courts 1, 2 and 3. Tony explained that the plans to change the clay courts playing surface should sort out some of the problems and in the long term, we are looking to re surfacing these courts once the clay court project was finished.

Tony mentioned that the best way of communicating to the members was by email and urged members to read their emails that are being circulated. He explained that the email system that we have adopted recently indicates that only 50% of the emails are being read. ... "Please open your emails to find out what is happening at the club".

There were no further questions from the floor, Tony thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 8.30 pm

Isobel Hossack  
Secretary DLTC