



THE GROVE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

East Street, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1NB T 01799 525573 W www.grovetennis.org.uk

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 22nd March 2023 **The Club House at 7.30pm**

Members present: Trisha Esplin, Helen Moriarty, Adrian Holley, Malcolm Bentley, Jacque Woolley, Kim Queree, Marc Squire, Callum Forsyth, Pete Cannon, James Marchant, Alyson Maskell, Jane Bowen, Alex Porter, Rowena Biddlecombe, Helen Elvidge, Clare Jackson, Becs Osman (plus Alison Bentley – Minute-taker)

Annual General Meeting

1. Apologies for Absence

Krystyna Windle, Tony Manion, Charles Arthur, Dave Sinnet, Kirsty Rowlandson, Patricia Heydon Smith, Callum Orsop, Sally Harris, Cecile DeGorcé, Penelope Maitland

2. Minutes from AGM 2022

The minutes were agreed and signed as a correct record.

3. Chairman's Report – Trisha Esplin

So, welcome everybody to the 2023 GROVE AGM.

Yet again, it has been my honour and privilege to serve the club as your chairperson, which I have now done since 2018.

...So, this will be my fifth (& certainly final) year of ensuring that the club maintains its respected position as a valuable community asset, providing us all with not only the various levels of tennis we so enjoy, but also those other social aspects we benefit from by being a Grove member!

As you will hear in the reports from your committee, the club is thriving on all fronts.

We are very well placed to face the challenges that the future holds, such as replacing our floodlights with the low energy consumption LED variety and installing solar panels to name but a few.

Most importantly though, the club is in this position because of the immense amount of hard work done by your committee and remember...all done on a voluntary basis.

I sincerely thank them personally, and on your behalf for their dedication, enthusiasm, and loyalty to the club.

Adrian Holley is stepping down from the position of Men's Captain. We thank you for your efforts, Adrian, and we warmly welcome Charles Arthur into this role.
(Trisha then presented Adrian with a token of appreciation).



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Another thank you must go to Marc Squire and his coaching team who continue to attract and inspire both adults & the next generation of young players. We look forward to seeing them thrive and prosper in the year ahead, especially participating in our adult teams.

So let me finish by thanking you for your support and wishing you all a happy and successful tennis season.

Trisha Esplin

4. Treasurer's Report – Lorraine Squire

Trisha Esplin gave the Treasurer's report in Lorraine Squire's absence.

I am pleased to present this report for the end of the financial year ended 31st December 2022. I would like to thank you all for your support to the club, which without you, would not be the success that it is.

Please find attached the accounts for the year ending December 2022. I am available for any questions on the accounts should you have any.

Membership income slightly decreased, but ladies and men's training, coach non-member's fee, floodlight fees and math fee's increased income from 2021.

We have been paying the LTA loan for the lights successfully and I am pleased to say that the loan for the lights is now fully paid.

For the year 2022, the main expense has been court cleaning, repairs to lights and general ground repairs. Extra new fencing will still be an ongoing project for the future. The grounds are maintained on a regular basis, which I am sure you have appreciated.

Overall, the overheads for the club in 2022, were lower than 2021. We do have the challenge of the electricity costs to the club going forward, which I hope through careful management will not be too costly.

We still have been able to put money aside in the sinking fund for when the courts, fencing or large expenses must be paid. This is due to your committee as always being diligent in their commitment to the club.

As we now enter the next financial year it is important for the club to keep the momentum of membership and fundraising and to build on the success of previous years.

Lorraine Squire

Clarification was then requested from the floor regarding the sinking fund. Trisha explained that the LTA recommended that between a quarter and a third of the membership fees should be put aside into a sinking fund to cover any major maintenance work required. i.e., the Committee looked at tarmacking the driveway into the club, but it would have cost ~£100K, so we didn't have enough to do that. We also have a rolling programme for courts etc and have only just finished paying the loan to renew the courts – but in 2-3 years, we will need to replace



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some of the courts again. There's also the fencing of the courts - the fencing of Court 2 cost us ~£8K.

At the 2nd committee meeting following the AGM, they will discuss and agree what maintenance needs doing going forward.

Accounts accepted and approved:

Proposed: Rowena Biddlecombe

Seconded: Malcolm Bentley

Auditors, Lanhams to be reappointed

Proposed: Trisha Esplin

Seconded: Rowena Biddlecombe

Trisha ended the Treasurers Report by thanking Lorraine for her hard work, which was much appreciated.

5. House and Grounds report

House report – Jacque Woolley

- Maintenance
 - Cleaning of the clubhouse started again on 16th March (after the new floor was laid) and will continue fortnightly.
- Recycling
 - This has also restarted. We are unable to have a recycling collection from Uttlesford District Council, so any efforts which members can make to take recycling home, is much appreciated.
- Awning
 - We investigated having an awning attached to the clubhouse to shade the benches on the patio. The cost is between £3700 and £4500, but it isn't clear how effective the awning would be, due to the combination of the height of the clubhouse and the direction of the sun.
- New chairs
 - It was agreed at the last Committee meeting that we would buy 8-10 folding chairs for match teas and other Clubhouse functions.

Any ideas that you may have to improve the clubhouse, please email me:

jacque.woolley@hotmail.com

Grounds report – James Marchant

To support Marc's team in their non-coaching hours, they have been running the day-to-day groundskeeping in 2021/2.

2022 Significant Activities:

- The clubhouse leak has been repaired
- 4 x lightbulbs have been replaced
- Re-tarmacking the drive (potholes to be filled in)
- Replacement of security lights which run alongside courts 1 & 2.



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2023 Planned Activities

- Tightening of fences

Ongoing maintenance:

- I have made sure that the club is maintained to its current standard. If there are any members who have a few hours a month to work on grounds improvement projects: I will accept any help – pls. contact me.
- The courts will be deep cleaned externally three times this year and we rely on the efforts of members to keep the courts clean and clear of any litter and fallen leaves and seeds.

Enjoy 2023 tennis.

Please email me with any issues/requested improvements with the grounds:
james@haverplastics.co.uk

Trisha thanked both Jacque and James for their exceptionally hard work this year.

6. Social Report – Kim Queree

- Social tennis on Tuesday evenings & Saturday afternoons are both thriving. Both sessions have been well attended & are friendly, fun & everyone mixes in.
- Marc organised a Christmas tournament for social players & will hold another social tournament on Saturday 22nd April 2023.
- We held a Wimbledon Opener on the Saturday before Wimbledon started. We had 5 courts playing social tennis & everyone enjoyed sandwiches, cakes, strawberries & cream with pimm's & lemonade. It was a great afternoon of tennis, thanks to everyone who made sandwiches & cakes, they were delicious! We will be holding another Wimbledon opener in July 2023.
- In August we held an English wine tasting at Saffron Grange, Little Walden where we got to have a tour of the vineyards & sample some of the English sparkling wines! The tour was very interesting & the sparkling wines very drinkable!
- The club finals were held in September & attended by a record number of 70 people. Gordon ran a hog roast for everyone & free wine & beer was supplied by the club. It was a great day & again thanks to members who made cakes for the finals day.
- The annual quiz has been put on hold until the clubhouse is ready to use again, so I'm now looking for a new date to hold the quiz & will let you know soon.
- I have enjoyed being social secretary this year & thanks to the social members who have made it fun, you are a great bunch!

Kim Queree

Trisha thanked Kim for her great work with social events this year.



7. Match and Tournaments secretary's report, in conjunction with Men's and Ladies Captains

Match secretary's report – Penelope Maitland

I'd like to thank William for all his work over the years, and for the assistance he has given me as I have taken over the role of Match Secretary.

The club has entered teams in the Cambridge League; the Essex Small Clubs League and the Essex Cups. We maintain our status as a strong club due to the hard work and organisation of the Captains Adrian Holley and Kirsty Rowlandson. I would highlight the Ladies 1 Team who retained the Ladies Senior Cup as part of the Essex Tennis Inter-club Summer competition.

The Club Finals took place on the 10th September and there were a record number of 65 entrants. The weather was good with over 50 people attending and an excellent hog roast. It was a very successful day thanks to Adrian Holley and Kim Queree.

The ladders continue to run, and hopefully will attract some new participants. There has been good and enthusiastic participation in our teams to be reported on by the Captains.

Finally, I would like to thank Clare Jackson who has input all the Cambridge League results while coping with the teething problems of the new computer system.

Men's Captain Report: Adrian Holley

The men's section run 4 teams in the Cambridgeshire Summer Leagues in the 2022 season

- Men's 1st came 5th in Div 2 - Captain Andy Rice
- Men's 2nd team came 4th in Div 4 - Captain Jason Rewe Davies
- Men's 3rd Team came 2nd in Div 8 and should get promotion – Captain Adrian Brown
- Men's 4th team came 2nd in Div 13 and should also be promoted – Captain Tony Hopwood

First 2 teams safe and the lower 2 promoted.....solid showing overall.

I think the positive aspect was the number of men playing in the leagues Over 30 different players participated with 8 being new members to the club.

A quick mention on the club tournament – a record 44 men participating which is very good to see.

In the winter league 2022/23 two teams were entered,

- Men's 1st team came 4th
- Men's 2nd team came 3rd

Both safe and live to see another day.

I will be stepping down as Men's team captain, and Charles Arthur will be taking over. I have enjoyed my time in office and wish the men's section all the best for the 2023 season.



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Ladies Captain Report: Kirsty Rowlandson

We have 4 ladies teams in the Cambs league. Thank you to all who have volunteered and have enjoyed competitive matches against our neighbouring clubs.

1st team, Division 1 won the league again this year! Captained by Jane Bowen.

2nd team, Division 2 came 3rd. Captained by Debbie Bowes.

3rd team, Division 2 came 7th. Captained by Clare Flynn.

4th team, Division 4 came 6th. Captained by Jacque Woolley.

We also entered 3 ladies teams in the winter league and 2 mixed teams. Lots of competitive tennis was enjoyed over the winter despite quite a few matches having to be rearranged due to the very cold spell!

Thank you also to Clare Jackson and Sally Harris for getting the Vets Leagues organised and to Helen Moriarty for captaining our team in the small clubs league.

We also appreciate Clare Jackson diligently submitting all our results to the Cambs league and keeping an eye on that side of things as well as Penelope for having had a successful first year as match secretary.

Thank you again to all involved and looking forward to a new season of tennis starting in May.

Trisha thanked William for his sterling efforts as Match and Tournaments Secretary and gave a vote of thanks to Penelope Maitland for taking on this role. Thanks also went to both Captains, Adrian and Kirsty.

8. Nominations and Election of Officers, Committee Members and Auditors

It was recorded that the Committee should start canvassing earlier (and stronger) for people to replace these important Committee roles and should also highlight what commitments the positions entail, i.e. attending 4 x committee meetings per year and then individual tasks related to each role.

- Members are reminded that Trisha will be standing down as Chair at next year's AGM.
- Members were also advised that both Krystina Windle and Jane Bowen would have liked to step down this year from their current roles of Secretary and Membership Secretary respectively. Jane confirmed that she would have happily taken on the position of Secretary had a replacement for her role been found and that she feels that the Membership Secretary should be someone who is at the Club more often than she is, and who is also computer literate. Everything is or can be automated, except for putting shoe tags into an envelope and getting these to the correct person. It was therefore agreed that if a replacement Membership Secretary can be found within the next month, then Jane would take over the role of Secretary.



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* Trisha to ensure that an email to members asking for volunteers to take on the role of Membership Secretary be circulated with immediate effect.

- It was also queried whether perhaps these roles should incur an incentive to the member for taking on these positions. Trisha explained that this had been suggested many times in the past, but that the Committee had voted against this suggestion as it was deemed unnecessary and could create an imbalance for all members and result in being divisive. It was also felt that it would undermine any previous committee member who had served the club for many years without recompense.

In light of the above, the Committee was unanimously proposed and seconded by the attending members as follows:

Committee:

Position: Chair

Name: Trisha Esplin

Position: Treasurer

Name: Lorraine Squire

Position: Secretary *

Name: Krystyna Windle

Position: Match & Tournaments

Name: Penelope Maitland

Position: House

Name: Jacque Woolley

Position: Grounds

Name: James Marchant

Position: Ladies Captain

Name: Kirsty Rowlandson

Position: Men's Captain

Name: Charles Arthur

Position: Public Relations

Name: Dave Sinnet

Position: Social Secretary

Name: Kim Queree



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Other positions:

Position: Membership Secretary *
Name: Jane Bowen

Position: Child Protection Officer
Name: Sally Harris

It was also agreed that the notice board should be updated with a photo and details of the Child Protection Officer before the first committee meeting.

9. Members Report – Jane Bowen

- The membership year runs from 1 April to 31 March.
- Autumn Membership runs from 1 September to 31 March
- Winter Membership runs from 1 January to 31 March

Membership category	Number of members 2022/23			Total		Proposed full year membership fee for 2023/24 with 10% increase	Proposed full year membership fee for 2023/24 with 5% increase
	Full year	Autumn	Winter	2021/22	2022/23		
Adult	85	8		98	93	£238	£228
Adult concession	21	1		24	22	£220	£210
Adult daytime	9	1		10	10	£184	£176
Adult daytime concession	14	1			15	£167	£160
Country	2			2	2	£122	£117
Family	38			21	38	£445	£260
Guardian Associate	4			16	4	£52	£30
Junior	39	6	1	43	46	£70	£67
Mini Junior	63	8	7	58	78	£38	£22
Student	10	1	3	3	14	£70	£67
Social						£10	
Life/Honorary							
Total membership				275	322		



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Membership categories

Membership category	Membership description	Proposed Change(s) for 2022/23
Adult	19 years and over on 1st April 2021. Unrestricted play Eligible to play in matches Vote at the AGM Book courts 7 days in advance Wimbledon draw Invite visitors	19 years and over on 1st April 2022.
Adult concession	65 years and over on 1st April 2021. Unrestricted play Eligible to play in matches Vote at the AGM Book courts 7 days in advance Wimbledon draw Invite visitors	65 years and over on 1st April 2022
Adult daytime	19 years and over on 1st April 2021. Weekdays until 18.00 Vote at the AGM Book courts 7 days in advance Wimbledon draw Invite visitors	19 years and over on 1st April 2022.
Country	19 and over on 1st April 2021 Living outside a 20-mile radius of the club. Eligible to play in matches Vote at the AGM Book courts 7 days in advance Wimbledon draw Invite visitors	19 years and over on 1st April 2022.
Family	2 adults and up to 4 children under 19 on 1st April 2021. Adults have unrestricted play and the same rights as an adult member. Restrictions on children are the same as for Junior and Mini-Junior membership. Book courts 7 days in advance Wimbledon draw Invite visitors	2 adults and up to 4 children under 19 on 1st April 2022.
Guardian Associate	Parent of a Junior or Mini-Junior member. May only play with the child at Sunday afternoon family sessions or when the child is being coached. Not eligible to vote at the AGM, play in teams, invite visitors or take part in Wimbledon draw.	Parent of a Junior or Mini-Junior member. May only play with the child at Sunday afternoon family sessions or with other members when the child is being coached. Not eligible to vote at the AGM, play in teams, invite visitors or take part in Wimbledon draw.
Junior	11-18 on 1st April 2021. during the current situation, has priority on court 2. may play on courts 1, 3-5 if not needed by adult members. children under 12 must be supervised by an adult from their household. Children of 12 and over may play singles with another member unaccompanied. also see guardian associate above for play with parents.	12-18 on 1 April 2022 Book courts 3 days in advance. Children of 12 and over may play singles with another member unaccompanied.
Mini-Junior	10 years and under on 1st April 2021. During the current situation, has priority on court 2. may play on courts 1, 3-5 if not needed by adult members. Children under 12 must be supervised by an adult from their household. Also see guardian associate above for play with parent non-members.	10 years and under on 1st April 2022. Children under 12 must be supervised by an adult from their household. Also see Guardian Associate above for play with parent non-members.
Student	In full-time tertiary education.	Book courts 3 days in advance

10. Subscriptions for the Year 2023/2024

2022 has been a special year in that the Clubhouse has been out of action for a fair while, therefore, it was proposed that the membership fees would remain the same as last year. However, expectations should be set that subscriptions would be increased next year and going forward.

Proposed: Clare Jackson

Seconded: Becs Osman



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Marc Squire then proposed a change to Guardian Membership:
Providing that ClubSpark can be set up for this, Guardian membership should now include the following:

- Being able to view Court Bookings on ClubSpark to see if courts are available.
- 24 hours in advance only to be able to book a court, if available, between 3.30pm and 5.30pm Monday to Friday
- Courts 3, 4 and 5 to be block booked between 2.30pm and 4.00pm every Sunday.

To be reviewed @ Committee Meeting in case in the Summer more courts are required for members. Matches can take precedence over the family session if need be.

Proposed: Jane Bowen
Seconded: Becs Osman

11. Coaches report – Marc Squire

The continuing focus of this year was to get more children playing outside of tennis lessons.

The structure for any junior should be:

1. Tennis lessons
2. Playing with friends and family outside of lessons
3. Playing in matches and tournaments
4. Playing in junior social
5. Playing in Adult social – Tuesday and Saturdays
6. Finally playing in adult matches representing the club

So far, we have achieved aims 1 to 5 but only with very few juniors the goal of 2023 to 24 will be to build on this.

Our coaching program runs in line with the school terms. Summer, Autumn and Spring program all courses are well subscribed.

We ran Road to Wimbledon in the Summer term for both boys and girls which is a tournament for U14. We also now run 3 junior tournaments per year for U8, U9 and U10. The French, Wimbledon and Us Open aim is to be an introduction to playing matches and tournaments. It has been a great success.

In the summer holidays we ran 4 weeks of camps and we try to run camps in most half terms.

All courses that are run at the Grove allow non-members to join in; this was a major change that came into effect when I first arrived at the club. This year it has raised approx. £2880 for the club.

We have also ran so far 6 adult clinics and we also ran a Christmas winter tournament with well over 20 players. Due to the success of this tournament the committee has agreed to 3 tournaments will be held throughout the year -Spring, Summer and Autumn.



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Goals for 2023/24

1. Continued support of Junior Social 1 to 2pm using all courts
2. Try and get more juniors playing in adult social
3. To try and develop the link between juniors and adults and to get at least 1 junior playing in an adult match.
4. 3 adult FUN tournaments as well and the junior tournaments

Marc Squire

Trisha thanked Marc and the Coaching Team for their efforts this year.

A member also raised an issue that her children (aged 6 and 9) had witnessed and learned some fruity language and bad behaviour whilst playing at the club - some men on another court were swearing and throwing racquets – they had also been rude to Marc. This behaviour is unacceptable, and all members should be reminded of this.

It was also noted that parents seemed to be unaware of tennis etiquette and were often walking across the back of the courts when play was in progress.

It was agreed that etiquette should be part of the coaching process and that new signage will be erected reminding members and guests of these and other expectations.

12. PR Report – Dave Sinnet

Trisha read out the report in Dave's absence.

It's widely viewed that the club does not need to increase its membership numbers due to court usage at optimum times being a delicate balance. Whilst the club welcomes new members there has been no need to promote the club. This has made the PR role very straight forward.

In terms of communications, various groups within the club rely on their respective WhatsApp groups to communicate, which is a great way to keep things relevant and targeted.

ClubSpark allows (those with access) to send simple Emails to members. Committee members and captains are encouraged to use this facility directly but if they are not comfortable, then I am happy to send on their behalf.

We encourage team captains to provide match reports or at least results so that we can share via Email with the members when appropriate.

Any notable results or club championship details are shared with the local press.

Other than that, there is very little PR activity required/requested.

If there is demand from the members for more communication, then very happy to review how this could be managed.



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All agreed that Dave's emails were excellent and very well received.

It was requested that the Club Website be kept updated – when new people come to the town and are searching for a tennis club, it would be useful for them to see both up to date and past information and events. Request for Dave to please look to do this.

13. AOB

- i. MS – Signs on courts and doors to remind members of current etiquette and expectations – and as previously mentioned, no swearing, court sweeping etc. (This will be overviewed by the committee before printing).
No need to wind down nets at the club – not required.

- ii. MS – Paddle Court.
Marc suggested that this could easily replace the hitting wall but would also take the 2 car park spaces beyond this area.
It was agreed that this would be a good update to the club – and could also be used for mini-tennis. MS to look into doing this and obtain prices and planning permission etc. Andy Rice is keen to take on this project.

- iii. MS – Link for Juniors and Adults.
Currently, Junior Social runs on a Saturday 1-2pm on all 5 courts.
In Summer, Adults arrive from 2pm, in Winter from 1pm.
MS suggests that adult members can come down during 1-2pm but are expected to join in with the juniors as it encourages integration.

MS also suggested that having a Coach on site to help integrate the juniors and adults would be beneficial, so he requested that Coaches should be paid for the extra hour they attend, and this payment should be added to their retainer.

Basically, Juniors would be in attendance 12-2pm, paying for 1 hour training, then the 2nd hour junior match practice/junior social where adult social players can attend and mix in, which would be subsidised by the Club.

For clarification, junior = yellow ball player and this would be in term times only.

It was agreed to trial this for the summer, however, the remuneration subsidy for Marc is to be discussed at a meeting with the coaching subcommittee before being sanctioned.

- iv. MS – John Stone had suggested that for the Summer Tournament, there should be trophies presented instead of certificates (one-off trophies for the winner to keep). This was declined, but it was agreed that the Boards in the Clubhouse would be brought up to date and Jacque has this in hand.
- v. MS - John Stone would like to run a Winter Tournament for members, with a handicap system. This was approved and agreed.
- vi. MS – Darren requested that a Dart Board be erected in the Club House. This was refused as it would create a safety issue.



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- vii. MS – Darren had suggested that the Winter League needed a sub-committee. There was strong disagreement with this suggestion, but it was agreed that recently certain teams had been putting out their top players in order to win and this is not what the Winter League was for. The Winter League was set up in place of Social tennis and is for everyone – the result is not important. Newer Captains need to be reminded of the spirit of the Winter League. Captains & anyone involved to discuss the Winter League before the next season.

There being no additional business, Trisha thanked everyone again for making the effort to come along, and Alison Bentley was thanked for taking the Minutes in Krystina's absence.

Trisha Esplin was also thanked for another great year as Chair.

Meeting finished @ 9.10pm.

A A Bentley