



## THE GROVE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

East Street, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1NB T 01799 525573 W [www.grovetennis.org.uk](http://www.grovetennis.org.uk)

### **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017** **The Club House at 7pm**

Members present: Simon Howell, James Marchant, Alison Peters, Martin Cash, William Freeman, Simon McInnes, Paul Kent, Charles Hassell, Trisha Esplin, Jane Paterson, Marcus Forgham, Janet Mutimer, Liz Stott, Val Forbes, Malcolm Bentley, Andy Rice, Clare Jackson, Tony Hopwood, Alyson Maskell, Dorothy Smith, Sally Lewis.

### **Annual General Meeting**

#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Simon Beckwith, Natalie Howell, Val Forbes, Judith Forgham, Rosemary Gorman, Stuart Gorman, Beth Will, Debbie Bowes, Tony Mannion, Moira Robertson, Maddy Marley, Racheal Sullivan, Peter Matthewson, Tricia Hayden-Smith, Ashley Morrison.

#### **2. Minutes from AGM 2016**

The minutes were agreed and signed as a correct record.

Proposed by: Trisha Esplin

Seconded by: Tony Hopwood

#### **3. Chairman's Report**

Firstly, Simon Howell thanked everyone for making the effort to come to the AGM.

Unfortunately, it had been a sad year with two members passing away; Phillippa Francis and Linda Brisbane, and one of our members, Rachael Sullivan, had lost her husband this year too. So, we have lost some really good friends to the club.

Phillippa was a great supporter of The Grove and Castle Hill Tennis Clubs, and there will be an Annual Tournament together with Castle Hill around the time of her birthday – and this year it will be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2017 @ Castle Hill (next year will be held @ The Grove). It will be a mixed tournament, with 12 representatives from each club. A Cup has been purchased and will be presented to the winners by Phillippa's sister. It will be free to enter - with any donations going towards raising funds for her chosen charity.

Linda Brisbane was a great social tennis supporter here at The Grove, and we will be purchasing a new Bench with an engraved plaque in her memory, as she was a key part of this Club.

Simon continued that he had been Chair for the past three years and each year he thanks the committee for their help and support. As a committee we all operate together to support the running of the club and represent everyone. We are not experts, but we try to put forward the right things. Three years ago it was proposed that someone should only stand on the Committee for three years and should be replaced on a rotation basis. Members voted on this and I had assumed more people would come forward to offer to stand on the Committee. We meet every other month. Less than 7% of the membership is involved to help their Club run smoothly.



## THE GROVE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

East Street, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1NB T 01799 525573 W [www.grovetennis.org.uk](http://www.grovetennis.org.uk)

He added that it was great to see new people tonight.

Last year he had complained about the Wimbledon Draw and that not many members had opted in – this year we increased our “opted in members” by 1 member. So, we will have the same problem this year with The Grove being allocated only a small quantity of tickets. It is proposed to hold the Wimbledon Draw on the same day as the Open Day – Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

Simon then continued to summarise his three years as Chair and that there had been a lot of turmoil in the last year, but that issues had been resolved. Coaching issues at that time were not good for the Club. Happy to say that feedback since Marc Squire took over as Coach has been very positive – he’s bringing a lot of structure back to the club.

We have had a huge amount of work done on the courts this year – Pete Sharpe was massively involved in this, as were Malcolm Bentley and Martin Cash who secured grants to enable us to do this – again, not experts in this field. Courts are looking good and were professionally cleaned the other week.

Simon also thanked Simon McInnes for his hard work in creating an online court booking system and membership system, which roles out in time for the new financial year in April.

Simon signed off by saying that the 3 years as Chair has been harder work than he was lead to believe, but he has enjoyed it. Feedback re coaching and the resurfacing of the courts has been both positive and negative – and that’s good as it means you care. It’s important that you engage at all levels.

Andy Rice added that it is recognised that Simon has stepped up to the mark to overcome some of these issues – it was necessary and we all appreciate it.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report**

Martin Cash gave the Treasurer's report – his third and final one.

He mentioned that the committee has achieved a lot during his three years as Treasurer: sorting out the Coaching, resurfacing of courts, refurbishing inside the Club House.

We have also signed up to the Sports Injury Clinic @ Lord Butler Leisure Centre – an email will be sent to members regarding where and when we would like to hold our “Club Night” – here or at the Leisure Centre.

He spoke about our plans for 2017: car parking improvements, clubhouse outside redecoration which should be completed before Easter and a new bench in Linda’s memory.

Onto the Accounts:

Bad news is that income is down £7K mainly due to subscriptions.

Expenditure is also down by £3.5K.

Mark and Tom instigating Open Day on March 18<sup>th</sup> to encourage new members.



## THE GROVE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

East Street, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1NB T 01799 525573 W [www.grovetennis.org.uk](http://www.grovetennis.org.uk)

He added that the Match Fees were overstated 2013/14 and that the difference between 2015 and 2016 was not true as 13/14 fees were collected last year.

2015 – match fees were overstated by £750 which were winter league fees. Still pursuing collection of outstanding fees.

Social committee - detrimental reduction in income as no raffle, dinner was cancelled and we had to pay for venue.

Social figure of £46 slightly understated as £275 paid in afterwards.

Floodlights – money still to be collected.

Coaching and Visitors fees up £100 which is all down to Marc.

Upkeep of the Grounds has been the main cost.

Upkeep of grounds next year – car parking.

We have 270 Members. William Freeman checked with LTA and the ratio of number of members to number of courts is 60 members per court – so increasing membership to 300 is our aim.

LTA fees – payment is correct as we paid an invoice twice in August, so received a refund.

Members were asked to email Martin if you have any questions relating to the accounts.

Accounts accepted and approved

Proposed: Simon Howell

Seconded: Trisha Esplin

Auditors, Lanhams reappointed

Proposed: Marcus Forgham

Seconded: Liz Stott

### 5. House and Grounds report

This report was given by James Marchant.

James reviewed the work had been undertaken during the year:

Work on Shed, repaired lights, new benches, score cards.

We have a budget of £3K for scheduled maintenance on the courts. We had 1 major clean recently where they swept the courts for 2 days and charged £1000.00 for doing this.

The Committee will be looking at whether to continue this going forward, or if other options might be looked at.

It was felt that we have spent £70K on renewing our Courts, that we should certainly be prepared to pay for them to be serviced efficiently and properly to extend the life of the courts – which should last for 15 years.

**It is therefore very important that members drag the courts regularly.**

Clubhouse will be repainted externally around Easter time – Wimbledon green with maybe some purple as well.



## THE GROVE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

East Street, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1NB T 01799 525573 W [www.grovetennis.org.uk](http://www.grovetennis.org.uk)

A proposal for a possible plan to refurbish the kitchen has been received.  
Car park – to be discussed later in the meeting.

**Clean up day = Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April.** All help gratefully received please.

If anyone has any spare flower pots/time/flowers/equipment that you wish to donate to the clubhouse, please feel free.

It was suggested that maybe some pots should be sponsored by a local landscape gardener / nursery – very happy to have a sign on a planter – we should definitely consider this.

Charles Hassell added that he would like to encourage people to wash their own cups and saucers please.

He also commented that we have a new cleaner who is proving to be very good.

### 6. Social Report

This report was given by Jane Paterson.

Jane reviewed the fewer than usual social occasions that were held during the year:

Annual strawberry tea, winter Christmas jumper day where we had mince pies and mulled wine. Quiz was packed out and was a fun evening. £275 raised.

Rosemary helped to run a ladies tournament.

Finals Day – we had a BBQ but ran at a loss as unless people advise they are coming, we have to guess how many to cater for so we had to throw food away. To be fair, the weather was poor.

Malcolm organised a Winter League Social party.

Last year at the AGM it was voted not to hold an annual dinner dance, so this was cancelled.

We did have a live music get together, which was self-funding.

We realise that lots of members socialise outside of the club, but it would be nice to bring this back into the club.

We have lots of tournaments next year – even if you do not play it would be good if you could come along.

Social – lots of ladies playing but hardly any men.

Tom and Marc organising the Open Day on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March. We will have a BBQ/Pizzas so come along and enjoy even if you are not playing.

Raffle last year was for an adult membership – this was cancelled as we had no major social events during which to sell tickets, so any that were sold have been refunded. If you are still waiting for a refund, please see Jane Paterson.

Liz Stott thanked Jane for the great job she has done.

Simon McInnes will circulate a list of juniors who can now play at Saturday social – Marc added that we were hoping to set a date when they can first come along and meet everyone.

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

This report given by William Freeman.



## THE GROVE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

East Street, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1NB T 01799 525573 W [www.grovetennis.org.uk](http://www.grovetennis.org.uk)

Summer Tournament, Blue ribbon event – William thanked the Captains for their support.

We had 15 teams: 5 Men, 5 Ladies and 5 Mixed.

Ladies: 4 teams remained the same but 1 team was relegated.

Mens: 4 teams promoted including M3 Champions. 1 team remained the same.

Mixed: 2 teams promoted, Mixed 5 were champions, 3 teams remaining the same,

So, to summarise: from a total of 15 teams, we had 6 teams promoted, 2 of which were Champions and 1 relegation.

We made a change to the Men's teams for this year – the 5<sup>th</sup> team have been entered into the Essex Small League to reduce travelling time and hopefully allow more people to get the chance to play.

Phillippa Francis inaugural cup – 3<sup>rd</sup> June @ Castle Hill.

Charles Hassell inaugural cup – 9<sup>th</sup> April (Ladies Doubles).

Briscoe Cup – 20<sup>th</sup> May (Mixed Doubles).

Wallis Cup – 19<sup>th</sup> March (Mens Doubles). Castle Hill and Thaxted will also compete.

Club Championship – discussed and agreed to start games earlier in the year - June 1<sup>st</sup> and finish mid-September. Imperative that all entrants are available to play on Finals Day. William to send dates.

Super Seniors (over 60's) Cambridge LTA.

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

#### ***Committee:***

Chairman: Simon Howell

The committee felt that having the Chair and the Treasurer changing at the same time would be to the detriment of the Club, so it was agreed that Simon would stay on in this role for another year, in the hope that Trisha Esplin would take over from next year.

Proposed: Andy Rice

Seconded: Paul Kent

Treasurer: No volunteers.

Martin Cash therefore agreed to carry on with signing of cheques, paying bills etc, but will not attend Committee Meetings or carry out additional tasks. Agreed to fill this position if/when we find a suitable person. Anyone wishing to fulfil this position, please speak to Simon Howell or Martin Cash.

Secretary: Alison Peters

Proposed: Simon Howell

Seconded: Trisha Esplin





## THE GROVE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

East Street, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1NB T 01799 525573 W [www.grovetennis.org.uk](http://www.grovetennis.org.uk)

Matches and Tournaments: William Freeman  
Proposed: Malcolm Bentley  
Seconded: Martin Cash

House and Grounds: James Marchant  
Proposed: Jane Paterson  
Seconded: Liz Stott

Ladies Captain: Trisha Esplin  
Proposed: Simon Howell  
Seconded: Clare Jackson

Men's Captain: Paul Kent  
Proposed: Simon Howell  
Seconded: Malcolm Bentley

PR: Andy Rice  
Proposed: Simon McInnes  
Seconded: Val Forbes

Social Secretary: Malcolm Bentley  
Proposed: Marcus Forgham  
Seconded: Jane Paterson

House: Charles Hassell  
Proposed: Simon McInnes  
Seconded: William Freeman

### ***Other positions:***

Membership Secretary: Lynne Rushton  
Proposed: Simon Howell  
Seconded: Tony Hopwood

Child Protection Officer: Charlotte Harrington  
Proposed: Simon Howell  
Seconded: Paul Kent

## **9. Subscriptions for the Year 2016/2017**

As no membership increase was proposed last year, and no increase to Junior membership fee for last 2 years, it was proposed to increase all fees this year by 2.5%.

Proposed: Tony Hopwood  
Seconded: Trisha Esplin

Clarity for what age constitutes a "Senior Citizen" was clarified as **65 years of age** for Men and Women.



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### 10. Types of memberships amendments

Membership Fees 2017/18	
Adult full – 19 years and over on the 1 April	£195
Adult daytime – Mon–Fri until 6pm	£150
One-off adult joining fee for new members only (inc playing introduction with Coach)	£30
Student – In full time education	£60 – reduced this year to encourage more students to join
Junior – Under 19 years on the 1 April	£60
Mini Junior – 9yrs and under 1 April	£33
Family – Includes two adults and all children	£400
Country – Live outside 20 mile radius of club	£102
Social – No access to play on the courts	£20
Concession of £15 for unemployed/senior citizens	-£15

(Students will have to show a valid student card to secure reduced rate).

Proposed: Tom Bowers

Seconded: Andy Rice

### 11. Coaches report

This report given by Marc Squire.

Easter camps and Summer Schools have gone down well. Road to Wimbledon competition - 10 competitors and went through to county event. Currently running 15 junior groups and 5 adult groups.

Need new adult members.

Rusty Racket group.

Held 2 x fun adult tournaments in the year (day-time events). 15 competed at Easter and 10 in the summer.

Last September, Matt Hill left to become a personal trainer.

Replaced with Tom Bowers on a 1 year contract. Unfortunately, Tom will be moving on at the end of August.

We are struggling to get into schools/after school clubs, but have some electives from SWCHS coming on Wednesday.

Ran Finals Day on 4<sup>th</sup> September – 25 competitors.

Junior U18 team Halcyon & District League.

Debate whether to continue that for next year.



## THE GROVE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

East Street, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1NB T 01799 525573 W [www.grovetennis.org.uk](http://www.grovetennis.org.uk)

Adult training: Ladies going well.  
3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> teams Thursday night training.

Mens Singles during winter. Had an issue with Mens training with only 3, 4 or 5 men turning up on a Sunday morning as they had a match later in the day. We sent out a surveymonkey asking when they would prefer training to take place and received 24 replies. Have tried to cater for all requirements and since Christmas have run men's coaching every Sunday – and last week we had 12 attendees.

### **Non-members**

Last year at AGM it was agreed that non-member-juniors were allowed to participate in group coaching sessions. Numbers are building and generating income for the Club. Have managed to convert a few of those to become new members.

### **Open Day – 18<sup>th</sup> March 2017.** Report from Tom Bowers.

Danny Sapsford and 1 other ex-Davis Club/Wimbledon player will be coming to The Grove. There will be a number of different coaching sessions:

- Juniors
- Teens
- Social
- Team players

8 non-members so far have signed up to attend the day.

If people sign up for membership on the day, the joining fee is waived.

There will be a short break during which a raffle will be drawn. There will be a BBQ as well.

An exhibition match will be played for 1 hour at the end.

£10 per person inc food. All money will go to the Club.

### **Coaching Proposal – Marc Squire.**

Non-member juniors have already been given permission to take part in coaching sessions. Marc was now proposing that Adult non-members should be permitted to join coaching sessions (either private or group sessions) and explained that a percentage of the fee will be added and passed onto the Club.

It was also proposed that they should be allowed to continue as non-members after the current 5 coaching sessions allowed – as he felt that after 5 lessons, if they were not up to standard, they would more than likely join a cheaper club and we would lose out on the membership.

A lot of discussion followed with the following outcomes/agreements reached:

1. Adult Non-members to be allowed to join group coaching sessions, but definitely not team training.  
For: 14  
Against: 0  
Motion passed\*  
\*However, the above to be reviewed in **September at Committee Meeting** level to review how many we have had attend the sessions so far and what impact it has had, if any, on the Club.





## THE GROVE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

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

2. Adult non-members to be allowed to have over 5 individual lessons during the day and evenings @ £5 uplift.  
For: 10  
Against: 10.  
Not carried.
  
3. Adult non-members to be allowed to attend private coaching during daytime only @ £5 uplift.  
For: 18  
Motion carried.

### 12. Parking

James Marchant & Martin Cash briefed the meeting about the proposals to increase the parking facility and improve parking @ The Club. Martin explained that it would be too costly to do everything in one go and showed the different stages that could be addressed at different times.

It was agreed that refurbishment of the outer perimeter curb-line with parking in a herringbone fashion could be carried out – proposed cost of £10-£15K. Other sections would be reviewed. James/Martin to obtain 2 x bids:

1. Outside
2. Outside and gravelling
3. Also to establish just how many spaces we can fit in.

*Update at next committee meeting.*

### 13. Online membership and court booking

Simon McInnis reported on the new on-line systems.

#### **Membership**

He explained that the processes were all manual currently and this would reduce the burden for all concerned.

From the New financial year on 1<sup>st</sup> April, we will bring in a new on-line payment system for membership.

Members will have a choice this year – online payment (one off Direct Debit), which would incur low admin input. Or you can still pay by cheque (transition period for this year) – Lynne Rushton will still hand out the membership tags etc once membership payments have gone through. For those members who do not have on-line access, they can still use a manual system.

Agreed that if you are already a member, you have 1 month to renew your membership. If you do not pay until after the one month deadline, you will incur a surcharge of £30.00.

Pro-rata rates agreed @ 6 month interval from 1<sup>st</sup> October.

Simon will email a link to all members but there is also a link on the website.



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### ***Court Booking***

This will also be an on-line system. Anyone who joins the club will have a login. Rules will be set up regarding how far in advance people can book courts.

- Members will be able to book 1 week in advance.
- Certain people (e.g. M&T and Coaches) can have an extended booking timescale as they have to pre-book courts for matches, social and coaching etc.

Simon Howell thanked Simon McInnes for this major piece of work he had done on behalf of the Club – it was very much appreciated.

### **14. AOB**

There was no other business.

SH thanked everyone for making the effort to come along.

Thanks was also given to Simon Howell for a great year.

Meeting finished @ 2215hrs.

*A A Peters - Secretary*