



# HIGH WYCOMBE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

## Annual General Meeting

25 November 2020 at 7:30 pm

### Minutes

**The meeting was held via Zoom due to Covid-19 restrictions.**

32 people joined the meeting via Zoom.

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

Maggi Newcombe, Lucy Duncan.

#### **2. Review of Last Year's Minutes**

Last year's minutes have been posted on the noticeboard for 30 days and as no comments or objections have been raised it was proposed that they be accepted. They were approved by a show of hands.

#### **3. Acceptance of the Audited Accounts for the Year**

Alan Gates presented the breakdown of expenditure / income and balance sheets for the club accounts and this is summarised as follows:

- The club's accounts this year have been impacted by Covid-19 restrictions. All club activity ceased on 21/03/2020 and has been slowly opening in a controlled manner since 16/05/2020. Nevertheless, thanks to the continuing support of members and the LTA, the effect on the club's accounts has been significant but not dire.
- The club continues to be in a stable state financially. In accumulating cash primarily for future court upgrades, we have £53,894 as at September the 30<sup>th</sup> (our financial year end).
- Being closed or only partially opened for a number of months over the summer, the club offered reduced membership rates. This, combined with some members deferring their renewal, lead to a reduced income from adult membership fees of £20,105, compared to £23,250 last year.
- Nevertheless, the club maintained an excess of income over expenditure of £6,161, which although less than normally budgeted for (was £12,353 last year, for example) is encouraging in the circumstances of 2020.
- The adult membership numbers have reduced from 143 to 133 this year. In part, the deficit reflects some members deferring re-joining during Covid-19. Junior membership has decreased from 69 to 54.

- This year we have invested £5,345 in repairs to courts and surrounds. This includes five visits from Nigel Godwin for court surface maintenance (clay and astro), plus £840 for the purchase of new sand, £655 for new benches and £949 for new court drags. The maintenance costs were relatively high this year due to an issue we had with heavy rain over the winter bringing up mud on courts 1 to 3.
- £4,918 was spent on repairs/renewals, including £2,230 for supply and fitting of a new boiler in the clubhouse and £2,400 for car park surface repairs.
- As a gesture to financially support clubs through Covid-19, the LTA refunded our annual membership fee of £660 for 2020.
- The club have now started taking payments for small items such as bar takings, match fees and floodlight tokens using the iZettle contactless payment system. iZettle initially provided this service at no charge, but started charging us 1.75% of each transaction from 01/10/2020.
- With the bar being closed from March to September, bar profits were only £178, compared to £769 the previous year.
- Despite reduced income this year, we expect to be in a position to consider another major capital expenditure (i.e. court resurfacing) within about the next three or four years, should the committee decide to do so.
- Cashflow for the year 2020-2021 will depend very much on whether we experience any further Covid-19 restrictions, but at the moment most income streams are near normal and the club has weathered 2020 restrictions so far well.

The 2019 / 2020 accounts were accepted and adopted by a show of hands.

We thank Alan for all of his hard work in producing these accounts.

#### **4. Election of Committee Members**

There are no contested Committee positions and the following Committee members are standing for re-election:

Andy Gibbs	Chairman and Equipment
Sue Chapman	Secretary
Alan Gates	Treasurer, Website and Communications
Nikki Formby	Membership Secretary
Carolyn Nye	Social Secretary, Tournament Secretary and Welfare Officer
Guy Britton	Head Coach
Maggie Newcombe	Midweek Representative
Adam Smith	Junior Representative
Philippa Worley	Ladies Captain
Josh Blattner	Men's Captain
Mike Nye	Committee Assistant

The Chairman proposed that these Committee members be elected en bloc and a show of hands confirmed the election.

The Chairman thanked all the Committee members for their hard work and support to date but made a special mention for Alan Gates whose work load has been even bigger this year with fee rebates, pro-rating and IT support relating to the booking system. The Chairman thanked the Secretary, Sue Chapman, who has also been challenged by the need to organise and support the committee in the new Zoom era. Also, extra busy has been Membership Secretary Nikki Formby, who dealt brilliantly with an influx of enquiries following the announcement that golf and tennis would be allowed to resume after the first lockdown ended. Many of these enquiries were converted into coaching clients and/or new members. She also found time to organise a membership survey, the results of which will be shared soon.

A club like ours relies on the support of its members and in that we are lucky indeed.

The Chairman also thanked Barry Aldous, Penny Halliday and Maggi Newcombe for keeping the social sessions Covid-19 compliant and helping to integrate new members; Lucy Duncan and Maria Lawton for managing fixtures in a particularly difficult period; Veterans Captain Sue Chapman, who is standing down and will be handing over to Mia Lake, and all the other captains who have had to deal with much disappointment over the last 8 months and, last but by no means least, Rod Kettle for keeping the grounds tidy and the bar well stocked!

## **5. Reports**

### **Guy Britton - Head Coach - Coaching Report**

The report was not read out at the meeting as it has been available for review on the website, but it is included as part of these minutes.

#### **Summary**

This report covers the period to 2 November 2020.

This year has been a very challenging year for all of us.

#### **Juniors**

- The junior year started September 2020.
- Saturdays is still building to 30+ children.
- A feeder community project with a local councillor at Ash Hill School has paused.
- Schools tennis has paused in 2020.
- We ran summer camps over a 3-week period on most days. Very well received by members and non-members.
- Mondays and Fridays have 26 children participating.
- Crown House is on hold
- No team tennis took place.
- We had the Tennis4kids programme this year with 8 children. We will be running more T4K courses in 2021.
- In total, about 54+juniors are on the programmes. 10 individuals and 13 non-programme juniors.
- Josh Blattner is running a performance group for Juniors.
- We have match-plays, fun tournaments, family doubles tournaments planned for 2021.

We are now going into another lockdown for November.

## **Adults**

We have cardio tennis singles nights and doubles coaching planned for 2021.

### **Sunday Adult Coaching Sessions 9:30–12 noon**

- David Burwood has been having 7-10 people most weeks. Most of the clients are now members.
- Josh Blattner has had several new people on Thursday nights. The adults playing on Thursday nights can vary from week to week, but usually about 6-8 players.

A big thanks to the coaching team in 2020. Guy Britton

## **Andy Gibbs - Chairman's Report**

### **2020 Membership Fees**

Each year at the Club's AGM it's the Chairman's task to announce the following year's membership subscriptions. The fees are set to reflect the running costs of the club.

Before I do, I would like to highlight the decision to pro-rate membership fees to reflect the club closure in the Spring. Many clubs have continued to ask for full fees this year. This involved our treasurer in a lot of extra work but we feel it was the right thing to do.

For the forthcoming year we have decided that as the club is in a good financial position, in spite of Covid-19 fee reductions, the fees will be frozen for a second year to reflect some of the lack of utility members experienced due to various closures and restrictions such as bar closure.

We will however, have to review this next year to ensure the club has sufficient funds for future large expenditure such as court resurfacing.

1. Full membership £195
2. Off-Peak membership £135
3. Junior membership up to 8yrs old, will be free of charge.
4. Juniors from 9 -11 £20.
5. Juniors from 12-16 £40.
6. Juniors 16 up to 21 (or under 25's in Full Time Education) £66
7. Parent hitting with child £20.

I can also confirm that we will continue to give free floodlight use for social play. Tokens will still be required for all other arranged play.

It was with some relief that we were able to resume social play for few months at least.

### **Club Membership**

As Alan mentioned in his report, there has been a small decrease in membership this year with 137 adult members, including some very recent joiners. We are aware of a number of 2019 members who have indicated they will rejoin once the pandemic is past.

Junior numbers have also fallen slightly since last year and the membership subcommittee is looking at ways to reverse this as well as driving adult recruitment.

It's very encouraging to see a good turn-out for social play at all the sessions, I look forward to a resumption of play from 2<sup>nd</sup> December and hope that any tiering system will have our area as low risk and enable play to continue without too many restrictions.

## **Courts**

We have now had the new Astro courts down for 3 years, and with some additional sand and maintenance earlier this year they continue to play well. Wear is less than expected and we expect to meet or exceed our expectations for the life of the surface

The clay courts have also had regular maintenance over the year particularly to reduce compaction, which has been successful. However, I am sure everyone will remember periods of exceptionally heavy rain early in the year led to flooding, and muddy patches appearing.

To resolve this a lot of hard work was put in by members to scrape the mud away and dispose of it. Once dried out we had the courts brushed and the sand topped up. Feedback from members about the playing surface is very positive.

The base carpet on the clay courts still shows very little sign of wear, which is good, as our original financial forecast when the courts were laid in 2012, was based upon retaining these courts for at least twelve years.

The clay courts are being dragged and lines brushed more frequently which has helped to reduce the problem of compaction.

## **Social Events**

Looking back at 2020 our Social & Tournament Secretary, Carolyn, organised a number of events but due to the pandemic only the Xmas party went ahead with our popular quiz nights being cancelled due to club house closure.

## **Summer Tournament and Bucks Shield**

These were cancelled along with various smaller internal tournaments due to restrictions in force.

## **Booking system**

The ban on social play and a requirement to keep Covid compliant records put the spotlight on the court booking system the first time. After a few early learning opportunities members have used the system actively and this has helped to keep court use high over the period of restricted play. The increase in singles play certainly drove court utilisation as well as fitness levels.

## **Bar**

Although the club house remains closed, we managed to keep the bar going as an outdoors "table service". The introduction of contactless payments has been a real boon for this and other small payments such as tokens, match fees and ball sales.

## **Maintenance around the club**

As usual there is always maintenance to be done around the club.

## **External Work**

We had three visits this year for maintaining and cleaning the courts, plus cutting back the hedge on court 6. There is always on-going gardening, grass cutting, leaf collection etc.

We have recently installed a smoking point at the North West corner of the clubhouse in response to members complaints about smoking near the courts and the resultant smoking related litter.

The driveway into the club had numerous pot-holes. We managed to agree with our neighbours (thanks to Mike Nye and Nikki Formby) a shared cost resurfacing which should solve the problem for the foreseeable future.

### **Internal Work**

Not much to report here as clubhouse has been closed for most of the year. However, Mike Nye is currently carrying out a small project to refresh the changing rooms in response to member feedback.

### **Coaching**

It has been encouraging to see how busy the coaches have been since the first lockdown ended with lots of 1-1 lessons as well as the popular Thursday and Sunday group sessions which should produce a steady flow of new members.

### **Safeguarding**

Just to update everyone about safeguarding.

All clubs that register with the LTA have to meet their strict guidelines for the safety and welfare of child and adult members. Christophe Malan replaced Carolyn but due to a house and job move to Gerrards Cross he stepped down. I am pleased to announce that Ginny Eastwood is in the process of passing the LTA formalities and will soon be our new welfare officer. Thanks to Nikki Formby for facilitating this.

### **Resumption of tennis 2/12/20**

I am delighted that we will be able to resume our tennis from the 2<sup>nd</sup> with our first social session on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December. As we are in tier 2, the rule of 6 outside applies and the bar will not be able to open until further notice.

### **In conclusion**

I would just like to say that my first period as Chairman has certainly been eventful with all the Covid-19 related closures and restrictions following re-opening. I must thank Mike Nye for handing the club over in such a good position making it relatively easy to focus on and manage the unexpected pandemic!

That concludes the AGM business.

Thank you all for attending tonight.

I close the meeting at 7.55 pm.