



## **HILL & VALLEY LAWN TENNIS CLUB**

Ashley House, Cheap Street, Chedworth, Cheltenham, GL54 4AB  
Company Number 07245681

### **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM DUE TO COVID-19**

**WEDNESDAY 2ND DECEMBER 2020**

**PRESENT:** Rosemary Scott-Smith(RSS), Robert Baker (RB), Caroline Baker (CB), Leila Lodwick (LL), Trish King (TK), Ian Taylor (IT), Chrissie Kenning (CK), Hilary Swan (HS), James Sleightholme (JS), Yvonne Winward (YW), Bella Amory (BA), Helen Owen (HO), Linda Seaton (LS), Dee Greatorex (DG)

#### **1. APOLOGIES**

Robert and Julie Young, Carol Bailey, Richard Isaac, Anne Williams, Heather Robson, Jerome Wirth, Dominic Nixon, Daphne Lewis

#### **2. MINUTES OF AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST AGM AND APPROVAL OF THE 2019 MINUTES**

There were no matters arising and the meeting approved the 2019 Minutes.  
Proposed by Dee Greatorex, Seconded by Hilary Swan.

#### **3. CHAIR'S REPORT (RS-S)**

Rosemary welcomed everyone to the first ever Zoom meeting commenting that it was not our usual social event at the pub but at least we could enjoy the comfort of our homes on a cold evening.

She introduced the Committee and offered a tremendous vote of thanks to Membership Secretary, Caroline Baker for all her hard work on the new website. She said that at this time last year, she could never have imagined how much lives were going to change and that only the weather might stop play after all the recent refurbishment work. The Club had found a new coach, James Morris and plans were in place for raising money for the Allison Stock Fund, the Coln Valley Tournament and summer league matches. Despite the imposed lockdown causing many cancellations and disruption and above all, planning to keep members safe, the club has increased its membership this year as people have found time to benefit from our wonderful sport and one that lends itself to social distancing.

Rosemary thanked the committee, praised their competence and dedication and said it had been an honour to lead them through such difficult times.

As it was agreed that she would serve for a year, she said that she will be stepping down from the committee, handing over to Vice-Chair, Robert Baker. Robert Young and Ian Taylor are also stepping down but will continue to support the club behind the scenes - Ian is invaluable with practical projects and maintenance and Robert will chair a sub-committee to look into best ways to use the very generous bequest of our much-missed former member, Allison Stock.

She thanked the committee for all their hard work in ensuring the club continued to thrive under such difficult circumstances.

#### **4. SECRETARY'S REPORT (TK)**

Trish reported that despite the pandemic, the club is thriving and it had been a busy year for the committee despite so much being cancelled. In May, the annual company registration was completed online to ensure that information held about the club at Companies House is up to date.

In July TK wrote to both the CDC and Chedworth PC to object to a proposed development for three new dwellings close to the tennis courts. This will have a detrimental effect on the club and affect every member, whether they live in Chedworth or not, as it will completely change and spoil the lovely recreational aspect currently enjoyed. CDC has now granted Planning in Principle to Centaur Homes, the developers and they are pursuing this. They have now put together their preliminary scheme and want to know what everyone thinks about it, before submitting a full application to Cotswold District Council. The Parish Council had agreed to publicise the plans to give villagers an opportunity to have their say and tell the developers what they like and don't like. There is an opportunity for everyone to comment to CPC. It would be helpful if you send your email to the parish clerk ([chedworthpc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:chedworthpc@hotmail.co.uk)) so the parish council can take your views into account when it considers the proposals. The tennis club is going to write to Chedworth Parish Council.

Village Hall Sign: Following complaints to CDC about this new sign, CDC have asked the Village Hall committee to apply for advertising consent. As the Tennis Club has its name on the sign, the VHC wanted us to support the application but as some key members of our committee had individually complained to CDC, it was decided, after some discussion, to reply and explain that we had to declare a conflict of interest.

Recently I had further correspondence with Chedworth PC over increasing maintenance costs for our upkeep of the grass around the fitness equipment. We took this on initially as a bargaining ploy - to prevent the Parish Council siting the equipment by the trees where it would be visible from the courts and could be a distraction to tennis players; if the equipment was sited on the playing field instead, the tennis club offered to maintain the surrounding grass area. We have now undertaken this informal arrangement for four years and as costs are rising, we wanted to hand back responsibility to the PC. The correspondence revealed an apparent misunderstanding between us and the Parish Council over time constraints. Hopefully, we have reached parity by agreeing that we would continue to pay for the upkeep and we will trim less frequently if possible, to keep the area tidy but reduce our costs. As this is done with goodwill and the land belongs to the council, we feel a more formal arrangement would be better, with regular reviews to prevent further misunderstanding. The committee has agreed with CPC to look at this again in 2022 along with our rent review. We paid £200 in rent this year and a recent review has increased this by £50.

TK said that personally, it had been a difficult year and thanked the committee for their kind support and hard work to manage the Coronavirus impact and oversee the emergence of some terrific new ideas.

There were no questions.

## **5. TREASURER'S REPORT (LL) PDF FILE**

Leila presented the financial statement on screen.

She explained the club's use of the £10,000 support grant we received as a result of Coronavirus, where a large proportion has been donated to the community. Membership fees generate the largest income; cancelling the Coln Valley Tournament reduced income and interest rates have dropped. Recycling tennis balls generated £60

so worth a reminder to members. Expenses: costs down this year; less maintenance; new website fees for GoCardless but this is a very useful facility; extra costs from Covid-19 with hand sanitisers and solution.

Sinking Fund has £20,000 and this is added to every year under LTA guidelines Current Acc: £13,808; allocation of £10,000 Grant: £4000 to Allison Stock Fund; £1600 to St. Andrew's School; £500 allocation for Covid-19 restrictions on members and this still ongoing and under review; £2,500 to sinking fund. With the generous legacy from Allison, it has been a strong year for the club.

As no questions were forthcoming the accounts were proposed to be accepted by Robert Baker and seconded by Linda Seaton. All attendees in favour, the accounts were adopted. RS-S thanked Leila for her hard work.

## **6. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT (CB)**

Caroline felt it fair to say she had underestimated her new role as Membership Secretary, plus the combined effects of dealing with a pandemic. She expressed the benefits of tennis as a sport that can tolerate social distancing, where other sport cannot and that there has been a 23% increase in membership from 135 at this time last year to 177 today. The last time there were this many members was in 2011. Adult/Student members: 143 with exact split of 59 ladies and 59 men! Children make up 44 including Youth and Junior. Temporary membership was introduced for those staying with full members with an uptake of 6 and a winter membership for the first time which has had good response.

On March 1st the new website launched using the LTA platform, Clubspark. The online aspect has huge advantages and the court booker works well. It has enabled easier membership management with online payment. It is free to use and assists with GDPR rules. There is a small cost for payment with Stripe. Functionality is being improved through Clubspark constantly reviewing and improving the system. It is not possible at this time to take payment for guest fees through the app or website therefore the honesty of members is still relied on for paying guest fees.

A survey was sent to members in early November with the aim of gathering feedback and ideas for what members would like from the club. Responses were 39, approximately 1/3 of adult members - mainly from those who played regularly and were therefore probably more engaged with the club. This could be a useful device when planning future activities.

Going forward, Caroline reported that it would be good to bring back the club mixed doubles sessions and introduce something for newer members and those a bit out of practice and would like to improve. Singles will be another area for consideration for more competitive players and better ways for members to contact each other to arrange a game.

We hope to look at organising some friendly matches with other local clubs as well as our local Coln Valley Tournament in June - all of which is dependant on what the Covid restrictions will allow.

RS-S thanked Caroline for all her hard work.

## **7/8. COACHING/SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE REPORT (CK)**

**SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE** The Club had its safeguarding audit with the LTA at the beginning of the year, which we passed with no issues. I am pleased to say I have had no safeguarding/welfare issues to deal with in the last 12 months. Due to a conflict of interest as my son Joe is now coaching at the club, I will be eventually standing down as welfare officer. This also allows me to coach if required as I am a level 1 coach. Thank you to Graham Stock who has kindly agreed to take on the role.

**YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND COACHING** Despite the challenges this year, James has successfully provided Junior and Adult coaching sessions.

**JUNIOR COACHING** Wednesdays and Fridays as follows:

3.15 – 4.00pm BLUE – Reception and year 1 (6 – 8 attending)

4.05 – 5.00pm RED – school year 2 & 3 (4 – 6 attending)

5.05 – 6.00pm ORANGE – school year 4 & 5 (4 – 6 attending)

6.05 – 7.00pm GREEN – school year 6 & 7 (2 – 4 attending)

Fridays 6.00 – 7.00pm – school year 8 -13 (1 – 2 attending)

Joe Kenning and Harry Baker and Harry Stewart have all taken a turn in helping James with the Blue group, thank you to them all.

**ADULT COACHING** Tuesday and Fridays

Tuesday Beginners/Improvers 12 – 1.30 (cancelled as hardly attended)

Wednesday Intermediate 2 – 3.30 (2 - 4 attended)

Friday Intermediate 4.30 – 6.00 (2 – 8 attended)

**ONE TO ONE COACHING** James continues to be popular with members booking one to ones Wednesday and Friday between the group sessions and often for much of Saturday.

**HALF TERM/SUMMER CAMPS** Have been well attended with the children really enjoying themselves. Camps are for all juniors and we have had numbers up to 20 attend.

**BOOKING SYSTEM** Numerous issues with booking app so we are launching a new booking app called Activity Pro. Thanks to Caroline for this.

**COACHING TEAM DEVELOPMENT** We had a visiting level 3 coach join us for one day of junior camps which was very beneficial not only for the children attending, but also for James who found his knowledge hugely motivational. I hope to increase these days in order to continue to develop our young coaching team.

**COACHING QUALIFICATIONS** Joe has passed level 1 and is booked to do level 2 starting December 13th through to end of Feb.

**St ANDREWS SCHOOL** – Nothing running due to Covid

**HILARY SWAN** Hilary's surgery has gone well she and hopes to be back coaching on Friday and Wednesday mornings by March, James will continue to caretake Hilary's Wednesday group until her return.

**OBJECTIVES FOR 2021**

To further build our junior and adult coaching sessions.

To start our link with the village school providing curriculum and after-school club tennis within the school grounds.

Further develop our coaching team through mentoring and further training courses eg Cardio tennis. Competition, League and Ladder Reports

## 8. COMPETITION REPORTS: LEAGUES (HO) AND LADDER (YW)

### LEAGUE REPORTS

Over 60s League (Helen Owen) The Hill & Valley Ladies Over 60's ladies felt inspired last year to enter the doubles league for the very first time. It was difficult to know exactly what to expect. On the one hand... we did appreciate that at least we wouldn't encounter any hard hitting, topspin whacking teenagers and as newcomers we would start in the bottom group: Division 3 along with 6 other opposition clubs. Our group of 10 sprightly ladies completely outperformed themselves to win the Division with a very creditable 77% sets won ratio. (No 2 was Bredon on 66%).

Unfortunately Covid's arrival prevented us playing our last two matches but we nevertheless successfully gained promotion to Division 2. Congratulations to all the ladies who played, in a variety of partner combinations and most importantly it was a great to see how much enjoyment, fun and laughter was had by all. There were 65 players in division 3 last season and we had 6 girls in the top 15 with 4 of those not dropping a set! What a fantastic effort. Now of course we face the challenges of Division 2, which is already looking like a whole new ball game. We have only played once (against current division leaders Cerney Lakes A) and there is no denying that this was a tough one. All being well the next match is scheduled for tomorrow morning against Glos. Wooton. Good luck girls.

### STROUD SUNDAY MIXED WINTER LEAGUES 2019-20 & 2020-21 (Claire Watson)

Sadly a halt had to be called on the 2019-20 Stroud Sunday Mixed Winter League matches in March as the nation locked down, but fortunately Hill & Valley had been quick off the mark and already played 9 out of our 10 matches. This bumped up our total score so we finished second in Division Two, with 7 wins and 2 losses. Although technically that gained us promotion to Division One for 2020-21, there was some doubt as to whether we would have enough players this season (due to injury and availability issues), so we elected to remain in Division Two. Not many leagues give you the choice but this is a very friendly and relaxed league as well as being competitive! In fact, we had an enthusiastic response with more members signing up than expected and the squad currently numbers 10 men and 10 ladies. With only five teams in each division (rather than the usual six or seven) there are fewer matches to play overall, so the challenge now is to ensure everyone gets a chance to take part in at least one or two of the eight fixtures.

We kicked off the 2020-21 League in October, only to be halted by Lockdown 2. Fortunately we had got in three of our eight matches, all at home, and what matches they were! We expected stiff competition from Painswick B (and we got it) emerging with a draw, so an excellent start. This was consolidated by wins against Cirencester C (8:0) and Cirencester D (7:1), so we were riding high by the beginning of November. Well done and thank you to all those who have played so far. Fingers crossed we will all be back on court soon to play the fixtures missed in November. If you haven't done so already do let me know if you'd like to play in this enjoyable and sociable league. Matches are on Sunday mornings and it runs through until the end of March 2021.

LADDER (Yvonne Winward) At the end of August, we set up a doubles ladder whereby essentially teams can challenge each other with the goal to get to the top of the ladder but also just to meet others. Thanks go to everyone for participating in this experiment; a total of 16 people (8 pairs) signed up; 4 mixed doubles and 4 women's doubles. About half of the teams were relatively new to the club or didn't know as many of the other club members. A total of 19 matches were played throughout the 10 weeks; lots of movement on rankings throughout and reflected in the very close scores. We got some feedback mid-way through the ladder. This was positive and along the lines of: "motivating, fun, improves tennis, nice to play with other people". There could only be one winner - Leila and Hisae, who had a clean sweep of 5-0 (beautiful silver cup and H&V Ladder Winner water bottles); congratulations also to runners up Chrissie and Claire (set of tennis balls each). Well done to everyone else who managed to stay friends or married after some very heated matches. Certainly, one could say that Charlie and I as a couple greatly improved on our "communications" through this experience. I hope to pick up on doing another one when we have definitive "un-lock" and will likely do another doubles one and in parallel a singles.

## 9. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Rosemary Scott-Smith is standing down and Robert Baker is stepping into her shoes. Robert Young and Ian Taylor are also leaving the committee. The Coronavirus rule of six means it is sensible to keep the committee to a smaller number for now, plus those who have volunteered to assist at events.

Ian Taylor proposed that the following are elected 'en bloc'; seconded by Rosemary Scott-Smith. All in agreement.

Chair: Robert Baker

Treasurer: Leila Lodwick

Secretary: Trish King

Membership Secretary & Website: Caroline Baker

Coaching Co-ordinator: Chrissie Kenning

Facilities Maintenance & Welfare Officer: Graham Stock

Chrissie has agreed to continue until Graham has updated his DBS. The club needs an accredited Welfare Officer in place for LTA registration compliance, due to be completed online in December.

## 10. AOB

### LIGHTING

IT had received a couple of quotes to replace the halogen floodlights with LED. DG confirmed that LED lights really make a difference as she had played under them at Cirencester TC, they had kept their existing poles and new arms had been added. This would be a project for our sinking fund as Allison's legacy is in a dedicated bank account and a sub-committee will be carefully researching a suitable, significant project for this. It was agreed that new lights would be a benefit and the committee will continue to discuss this at the next meeting.

### HOUSING APPLICATION

Considerable concern was expressed following the news that CDC had granted PiP to the developers. RB reported there could be a question mark about the way PiP was approved as the development boundary of the village has been changed. CK raised the point that a Case Officer, not a Planning Officer was involved with PiP. CB said she thought it was important for the club to concentrate on the adverse effect this development will have on the club rather than how many houses will be built. The Village Hall facility and tennis courts were deliberately sited to not interfere with existing housing. Concerns were raised that Jenny Forde from the CDC has not done enough to oppose the proposal and without a Neighbourhood Plan it is hard to prevent this kind of development. RB said there is no need for this type of housing and the CPC has not challenged CDC's decision to grant PiP. There was suggestion of requesting funding from the developers to facilitate moving the tennis club to another site or seeking help from the LTA. If the houses are built, a major concern for the club will be future complaints from the new householders about light and noise interference. LS said she had experienced this problem at previous clubs where complaints had to be fought. Other points raised related to road safety and pedestrian impact in relation to the school; a noise, nuisance survey conducted during the pandemic should be invalid; CPC purchasing more land adjacent to the courts to protect privacy of the screening hedge - BA who is also on the CPC suggested purchasing more land was put to the CPC and that it was important to let them know our objections. RB and CB to contact Martin Harrison of the Chedworth Society to discuss issues to assist the tennis club's further objection.

### NEW CHAIR

Robert concluded that as incoming Chair, he had a hard act to follow. Rosemary has taken the club forward with new purpose. He expressed huge thanks on behalf of us all for her long service on the committee. Stephen Scott-Smith retrieved a carefully hidden gift, a garden trug full of bulbs which he presented to Rosemary on behalf of the club as a thank you for her all her hard work as Chair her six years on the committee.

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm

