



**MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: 26th FEBRUARY 2020 IN THE PAVILLION 7.45pm**

42 members present in total.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Serena Sparks, Gill de Berry, Myffy Sampson, Susan McDonnell, Nick Olsberg, Mark Noble, Paula Tailby, Kate Way, Peter Deck, Matthew Popham, Gill Tatum, Paul Coxon, Mary Guthrie, Mary Connorton.

**MINUTES OF 2019 AGM**

These have been available to view over the last 12 months, and were signed by the Chairman as a true record.

**MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

**2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – COLIN GRATTON (as presented)**

'TENNIS OPENED UP' IS THE LTA'S MANTRA AND HERE AT PEWSEY OUR MANTRA HAS ALWAYS BEEN 'TENNIS FOR ALL', SO LET ME TELL YOU WHY!!

PEWSEY TENNIS CLUB is unique and has achieved so much over the past 20 years that it has won the admiration of other tennis clubs throughout Wiltshire and the LTA. Our facilities are first class and our membership is probably the highest in Wiltshire and yet your coaches, Martin & Jon supported admirably by your hard-working Committee, have to really strive to maintain the status quo.

Our Club is situated in the Pewsey Vale, an area of outstanding natural beauty but which lacks adequate transport facilities and new housing is patchy and not numerous. Your club has to compete with many other sports for new members and often or not the new members we are seeking are time poor and prefer the gym, aerobics and 'doorstep' activities such as running and cycling.

However, we compete well and offer a very welcoming environment to play tennis, we offer a mixture of tennis programmes to suit all abilities and ensure beginners can progress at their own pace through our Beginners to Players (B2P) programme and club sessions.

Local schools are our key to getting young people started on tennis and we have forged strong links with most of the junior schools locally and provide regular after school coaching sessions at Burbage Primary and St Francis's.

At long last I am able to report that our partnership with Pewsey Vale School to provide up to 12 students Tennis Xpress coaching sessions commenced in January and has been well received by

students, the school and its Governors – perseverance by Martin and myself has at long last paid off as the ‘teen market’ in tennis is very weak. One of the key factors to overcome was Safeguarding. However, we were able to satisfy the school that all the requisite safeguarding plans/checks were in place.

Safeguarding has been a major issue in our sport and I am pleased that at PTC all the safeguarding standards are met and we all appreciate the input from our Safeguarding/Welfare Officer Debbie Crapper. The onus is now on both children and vulnerable adults. We have to be ever mindful and vigilant.

Competitive tennis is thriving at PTC and last summer we won 5 league titles across the Mens/Ladies and Mixed leagues including the coveted Mens Division 1 title. There has been great success in the Ladies teams and progress up the leagues is gathering momentum. Mixed tennis both in the summer and winter leagues has also brought success. All this success energises more participation and at times ‘we have to manage court space’ efficiently to the benefit of all members –however it is a nice problem to have.

Our thanks go to all Club Captains and team Captains for their hard work in ensuring everyone wanting to play competitive tennis gets an opportunity!

To complement playing tennis we also provide an active and varied social programme and my thanks go to Mike Hutchinson and his team for ensuring we all have a great time and often raise considerable funds for deserving charities. Many members enjoy the annual sporting weekend in Okehampton, courtesy of Mike and Keith Hampson’s organization, plus last year’s club tour was to Sundays Well Tennis Club in Cork organised by Mike Cox. We are hoping to reciprocate this year so watch out for email notification.

If you link welcoming environment, many benefits, wonderful facilities, tennis for all and a great social club I think you will all agree the end result is a truly great tennis Club. However, we are not complacent and in 2020 we will improve our marketing of identified target markets.

Inclusivity is a vital ingredient and at club sessions we all need to be aware to help people progress, be understanding if they are not as good as you and help everyone enjoy the sessions – for new members and those trying to improve attending a clubnight session can still be very daunting so please be considerate and make the experience enjoyable.

Let me now turn to financial stability, without which we could not have the facilities we have now. The Club has financial strength and this enables it to consider energy saving schemes with the eye on improving our green credentials. We do recycle as much as we can and also send ‘old tennis balls’ to a national charity.

We have looked at solar panels, heat exchange pumps and LED floodlights during the last year but all of these potential energy saving schemes give us very little benefit and the capital cost is huge. We will continue to monitor these areas as time moves on and hopefully capital costs will come down.

You have often heard me refer to your tennis club as a ‘business in sport’ and I have already mentioned we have to market our Club well and compete for new members. First point of call might for new members be our website. However it is frequently a telephone call to Cathy Temple-Brown

or Pauline Archer, our Membership team, who always promote the club so well, ensure anyone new to clubnight is welcomed by a Committee member or member on that night and we also like new members 'to try before they buy', they nearly always do!!

Please forgive a moment of personal indulgence but It often reminds me on how I came to join this fantastic club, 20 years ago. Following voluntary redundancy from a job/career that I really enjoyed I was not in a good place. My lovely wife, Mari, who many of you know, fully supports all I strive to do for tennis, had a conversation with Martin's mum-in-law, Karen Latham. I was then introduced to Mary and Neil Guthrie and joined the Club immediately and have never regretted that decision for one minute.

I know many of you have joined this club in similar circumstances, Adrian Goodall, joined a good few years after I mentioned the Club to him during a networking meeting, we got him in the end and Deborah as well!!

But let me return to Club matters – our coaches Martin Wright (17 years in post) and Jon Gregory (10 years) turn out in all weathers and deliver first rate tennis programmes for all ages and all abilities. They are highly rated by Wiltshire Tennis and me. Jon is now a qualified referee and will try to find the time to complete his LTA Level 4 qualification in 2020 – it will take 10 working days, is expensive and with a young family not that easy, especially as the courses are in Warwick. However, the Club is providing financial support and Jon, the huge time investment.

Over the past years I have always been conscious that the Club needed to support their personal development and provide all the support they need to deliver what we expect – they are an integral part of your Committee and this Club and long may it remain – thank you Martin & Jon.

There is more to report and celebrate:

- Club membership remains high at 345 with 72 under 11s enjoying club membership for free
- The Club raised close to £1600 for various charities and as always I am personally grateful for the continued support for the National Autistic Society.
- Amanda, our wonderful Club President, who although standing down from that position tonight, continues to run the ever popular club roll-ups, helps with tournaments and we are planning to re-vamp/re-launch the Parent & Child tournament that she has run for many years.
- The prestigious Wiltshire Junior Closed tournament held in August last year was a great success and my thanks to Mary Connorton, Phil Plunkett and Judith Deck plus many ,many other members for running the Pewsey Cafe throughout the week .This tournament is here again this year, last week in August.
- In addition to the annual visit from Tedworth House (the Help for Heroes rehabilitation centre) where we give 6/7 veterans a club experience, we hosted their Summer Games with 5 UK rehabilitation centres competing across a mixture of sports over 4 days, but they start the week with tennis here at Pewsey – it is here again on Monday July 6<sup>th</sup> in the afternoon, you are all welcome to attend. Press coverage was brilliant. This new partnership between Tedworth House, Wiltshire Tennis and Pewsey Tennis Club will be showcased at the LTA SW Regional Forum in March by yours truly – it demonstrates inclusivity at its best and 'tennis opened up'.

- Peter and Judith Deck are our longest serving Committee members, notching up 20 years!! Peter provides a strong link with the Parish Council, our landlords and Judith always ensures the Annual Wimbledon ballot is run like clockwork.
- The B2P (Beginners to Players) programme now in its 4<sup>th</sup> year is as popular as ever. Our thanks to Jane Watkins for running this successful programme together with Martin & Jon. Clare Bamforth and I attended the B2Ps end of season tournament and social – they all had nothing but praise for the programme and virtually all of them were playing tennis for the first time. We are hoping to schedule a new daytime session for them to make further progress.
- And for me to receive recently the Wiltshire LTA Lifetime Achievement Award was a nice surprise and the icing on the cake!!!

So finally I would like to thank a few members who have helped me over the past 15 years whilst leading the Committee team. Rob Lindeman and Derrick Day were instrumental in making me Chairman (I was actually originally asked to be Treasurer) and gave me great support in the early years.

Matthew Popham and I joined the Committee in the same year, 2003 and Matthew has given great service to the Club as Match Secretary and will now be taking on the Treasurership of the Club – he is also a very fine cook and we have loved his food on many occasions.

Paul Coxon, currently sunning himself in Tenerife, was my VC for many years and still helps with facilities, a great supporter of all that happens at this wonderful Club.

Within the Committee team, the Chairman naturally works closely with the Club Secretary and the Treasurer and it has been an absolute pleasure to work with Amanda Hampson and Clare Bamforth – very positive people and committed members and team players.

So let me close with my final thank you. Volunteering is about giving back, but it is a two way process. As your Chairman for the past 15 years I have enjoyed the Committee camaraderie, the huge challenges the Club has faced, helping to develop our wonderful coaches and seeing this fantastic club achieve so much success. For me it has been a great, enjoyable journey and I thank you most sincerely for the opportunity.

### 3. FINANCE

The audited accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 were presented by Clare Bamforth and circulated to all attendees.

**Proposer:** Marijke Craig; **seconded:** Mike Hutchinson

### 4. COACHES' REPORTS

#### **Martin Wright – Head Coach (as presented)**

During the last year we have continued to offer a wide variety of coaching activities, our coaching programme reaching out to all ages and abilities. Over the last 12 months we have welcomed a huge number of players from age 3 right through to adults in their 90,s. Our coaching groups and Holiday

camps have remained popular and we have some real success with Schools and some of our younger players which I will come on to.

Our cardio sessions, Adult improvers sessions and Saturday pay and play sessions have continued to run and have been popular with new members looking for an entry into the Club. We have also set up a New Rusty rackets session that will run on a Wednesday morning. This session will be aimed at players that have some tennis experience and are looking to get back into the sport. It will combine coaching tips and drills focused around doubles play. We hope this will provide another way into to our Club for people who may not feel comfortable to come to our main Club sessions. As always, we are always trying to attract more players to our club and continue to provide Tennis For All.

Team practices were run for all the teams and we hope these sessions were beneficial in seeing many teams either with or finish runner up in the leagues resulting in our biggest haul of trophies in many years.

Our Nature Valley Great British Tennis Weekend was run in May and provides a taster of what coaching activities we have to offer. This event is advertised nationally through the LTA and players book on to the sessions via the Clubspark online booking system. This year we are revamping our GBTW event to provide an even more attractive day to potential new members. The day will have more of a whole Club focus rather than just coaching.

My thanks as always go to Jane Watkins who is the mastermind behind our ever popular Beginners to Players Programme (B2P). We were slightly concerned we may have lower numbers this year but were soon proved wrong with all 18 places booking out quickly. It has been one of our best years with a fantastic group of players and for the first time we have extended the programme to provide an additional 4 weeks coaching as requested by the graduates. We are hopeful our graduates will convert into members and attend our B2P Club session on Friday evenings. The B2P Programme really is fantastic for everyone involved and we are confident our 2020 programme will follow suit.

Holiday Camps were run during the Easter and Summer Holidays, the camps are always popular and the kids attending receive a great mix of tennis and multi-sport activities. We pride ourselves in running these camps in a professional, fun and safe environment. The Easter camp received 120 booking over the 4 days and the Summer Camps nearly 200 booking over 9 days. We see members and non-members attending the camps and many are attracted from our Schools programme and follow into our coaching groups. Easter and Summer Camps will run again this year and our Easter camp is already 25% booked.

We are very proud of two of our Mini Red players this year who have been selected to play and train for the County team. Toby Weston and Alex Broadie have been working hard attending regular sessions at the Delta tennis centre over winter as well as matchplay and representing Wiltshire in inter county matches. This is a fantastic achievement and we continue to enjoy watching them develop, improve and love their tennis. We are hopeful we can put more players forwards to represent the County in the Future.

One of the areas we have had most success this year is our Schools programme. During the Wimbledon fortnight we visit the local primary schools in the area and offer the whole school an opportunity to experience tennis. During our School visits we gave nearly 500 pupils a taster session.

Our sessions are well received by the pupils and we welcome pupils to attend sessions at the Club after our Visits. Our link with Burbage School remains strong and we are always fully booked for 16 pupils attending our after school Club. In addition, this we have also established a link with St Francis School and currently have 20 pupils attending an after school tennis club. We have run this session in the school sports hall which has been a welcome relief from some of the weather conditions we have experienced this winter. These two schools alone have attracted another 36 pupils into our Programme.

We have finally had success with Pewsey Vale School and have established a link to provide tennis opportunities for the pupils. We have been trying to set up a link for a long time so are naturally delighted we have got this going. 8 pupils have attending coaching here at the Club on Fridays from 3.15pm to 4pm for 6 weeks free of charge. We have funded these lessons via a grant we received years ago ringfenced for our Pewsey Vale School satellite link. We start another 6 week course this week where the pupils will pay a small fee to attend. This has been a real target for us as teenage players can be hard to attract into the sport. We look forward seeing this link grow and allowing kids who may not have otherwise tried tennis to continue to enjoy the sport we love.

Other addition to the calendar was a Christmas party for the junior membership. This was held at the Club on a pretty cold Saturday afternoon and consisted of fun tennis games followed by games in the Clubhouse and food. I must thank Mary who worked so hard to make this event a success. Mary catered for all the Children and put in a huge amount of effort. Also, to Liz who assisted Mary on the day. The Children who attended had a fantastic time and we have a couple of new social events planned for the junior membership this year.

We have been looking to attract a new level 2 coach to assist our programme and take on the running of our Saturday morning Pay and Play sessions. We have one of our home grown players attending the Level 2 course over the next couple on Months so are very hopeful we can expand our Saturday morning offerings.

Lastly, I must say a massive thank you to Colin who has been and absolutely fantastic chairman. I have worked with Colin over the last 15 years and he has been hugely supportive of the Coaching programme and well as the needs of the Tennis Club membership. Perhaps I am best placed to see everything Colin has done for the Club and for me personally. His drive and enthusiasm has been second to none and he is always looking for his next project. Our wonderful facilities have been thanks to Colin's efforts. I can remember only having 3 floodlit courts and coaching over split sites when it got dark in the winter months. Thanks to Colin efforts since 2006 we now have 6 fantastic floodlit courts all on a rolling maintenance programme to ensure everyone enjoys first class tennis facilities all year round. So, Colin my Sincere Thanks goes to you for everything you have done for me the Coaching programme and the members of our fantastic Club.

We welcome our new Chair Clare are and very much looking forwards to working with you.

I must also thanks Jon for all his hard work and drive in making the Club an attractive place to play as well as running the competition side of the programme that Jon will report on.

We have another busy year and we look forwards to providing tennis for all here a Pewsey Tennis Club

## **Jon Gregory – Coach (as presented)**

2019 has been another busy year for junior competitions at Pewsey Tennis Club.

The junior tennis season started as usual with Easter Tournament, held during the school holidays in April. The event was extremely busy and attracted a record number of entries for the 10 years I have been running it. 146 entries were made, playing across 13 events. The biggest successes were the mini events where we received the maximum 16 entries in each age group. On the first day of the event Me, Martin and our team of umpires oversaw 117 matches, starting at 9am and finishing at about 6pm. Huge thanks go to all our umpire and particularly Roger Henry, who umpired 2 courts by himself for most of the day and Ali Ward at Wootton Bassett who lent us some nets when we discovered ours were broken at the last minute.

As usual, another huge thanks to Mike Fowler and the other financial supporters of the event, without whom the event wouldn't be able to go ahead.

Pewsey also entered 5 teams in the junior summer league, giving our players the chance to play competitively against other clubs. Our 12U boys team finished runners up in their division but our biggest success was our 8U team who won their league beating teams from Chippenham, Marshfield and Biddestone, a fantastic result.

We also had more 8U success at the mini tennis fun festival at the Delta Tennis Centre in June where our team finished first out of 16 teams from other clubs, another great result.

We also ran a new event this year, the Quorn Family Cup, an LTA event which is for players 10U playing with a related adult. The event was a great success, attracting 16 pairs from the club and it seemed a good time was had by all.

Martin and I also tried on 2 occasions to run the junior clubs champs, once alongside the adults champs and once in October half term. Unfortunately on both occasions due to players being away we just didn't have the numbers to run the event. We will try again this year.

The club also hosted a Road to Wimbledon Competition (a 14U comp), with the winner of our event going on to the county event at the Delta Centre. Lawrence Crapper won the Pewsey event out of 7 entries. Unfortunately, he didn't progress any further but hopefully enjoyed the challenge at the county event.

The club also entered 3 teams in the winter league, with our 14U team finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in their division. The 8U event was cancelled first time round because of the bad weather but is being played on the 7<sup>th</sup> March instead.

We also ran a junior club session last year, the idea to give some of our players some extra match practice but unfortunately didn't attract the numbers we were looking for. We shall look at re vamping this offering for the summer season. Big thanks to James Birkett though who ran the session for most of 2019.

As you have heard, there has been a busy program of events for juniors at the club last year and I am hoping to build on last years events so we will run again:

The Easter Tournament; Junior summer/winter league; Road to Wimbledon; Quorn Family Cup; Mini tennis fun festival; Club champs; A re vamped junior club session.

Also this year I am looking to try and introduce more of our players to competition. The LTA are changing the rating system and the age groups for juniors, hopefully with a greater emphasis on recreational play. With this in mind I have lined up 6 extra dates for competitions for club members this year that will hopefully get our players more ready for competition outside of the club. I ran the first of these on Saturday and managed to get 9 14U boys playing in a timed tennis competition. I hope to run this type of event for different age groups in the year.

I have also spoken to coaches at Ramsbury and Trowbridge tennis club about doing a Team Challenge competition, again with the idea of creating a stepping stone to our players managing to compete outside of our club at other tournaments. Hopefully I can get these arranged for later in the year.

Finally I'd like to pay tribute to our outgoing chairman, Colin, whose tenure at the club has been a huge success. Colin has also been a huge support to Martin and I in what we try to achieve at this club both in terms of us making a living out of being tennis coaches but also developing the club in many areas. I'd just like to thank him hugely for his support over the time we have worked together and I know he will be a terrific ambassador for the club as our new president.

I know I speak for both Martin and myself when I say that we both feel extremely lucky to work at this club (as we have played here since we were children) and that we hope the club can build on it's huge successes over the last few years.

#### **5. MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2020/21**

Colin Gratton confirmed that there would be no change to the membership fees, and for 2020/21 they are as follows:

Family - £259  
Senior - £163  
Off-peak - £98  
Intermediate - £79  
Students - £35  
Junior 11-18 - £26  
Junior U 11 - Free

The new fees were accepted by the AGM.

**Proposer:** Keith Hampson; **seconded** Judith Deck

#### **6. ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE for 2020/21**

The Committee listed below was voted in en bloc:

President – Colin Gratton

Vice-Presidents – Amanda Foxton, Dave Major, Peter Deck



Chair – Clare Bamforth

Vice-Chair/Facilities - Nick Hewens

Secretary – Amanda Hampson

Treasurer – Matthew Popham

Second Treasurer – Pauline Archer

Membership Secretary – Cathy Temple-Brown

Match Secretary/Projects – Keith Hampson

Social Secretary – Mike Hutchinson

Junior Rep – Mary Connorton

Head Coach – Martin Wright

Coach – Jon Gregory

Parish Council Rep – Peter Deck

Member – Judith Deck

Member - Philomena Plunkett

(Welfare Officer – Debbie Crapper)

**Proposer:** Mike Cox; **seconded:** Margaret Godson

#### **7. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR – CHRIS HARRIS**

Chris Harris was thanked for his first year of service, and his appointment for 2020/21 was accepted by the AGM.

**Proposer:** Jon Gregory; **seconded:** Richard Newport

#### **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Clare Bamforth, the newly elected Chair, put forth the revised PTC constitution, in which it is stated that the position of Chair now carries a five-year term. The new constitution was accepted by the AGM.

**Proposer:** Mike Hutchinson; **seconded:** Patti Mann

Clare Bamforth thanked Colin Gratton for his 15 years of service as Chairman, and paid tribute to him with a short presentation (as presented):

Thank you for electing me as your new Chair, and for re-electing the rest of the committee – they are a great team. And welcome to Nick Hewens!

Just before we head for a drink and Mike's slideshow I'd like to say a few words about Colin. He's been Chairman of our club for 15 years (15 years!)

Not only has he been Chairman but he has also been in charge of facilities, organising regular repainting and resurfacing of the courts, clubhouse painting, fencing repairs, new bulbs for the floodlights, new bins, new mower – it's a long list ...

So, that's not only 15 AGMs and about 120 committee meetings, but also a lot of work that's not always obvious to our members - many meetings with committee members, coaches, and workmen, and certainly a lot of emailing. I did a quick count of how many emails I'd had from Colin over the last week and with some quick maths reckon this year I've had about 1000 emails from him!

During his time as Chairman, Colin has achieved a number of notable things:

Pewsey Tennis Club was one of the first clubs in Wiltshire to be awarded the Tennis Clubmark + accreditation which recognised the club's high management standards. Colin led the application for this - much paperwork involved I'm sure!

He installed new floodlights to all courts (which involved organising grants from the LTA and the Council). More paperwork!

He established a 10 year rolling plan for Capital Expenditure which means that finances are available for improvements and new projects.

He has encouraged links with local schools, has established good links with the media and Wiltshire LTA and, recently has established a link with Tedworth House, the Help for Heroes rehabilitation centre, so that veterans can experience tennis at our club.

In 2018 our club won Wiltshire LTA club of the year and last year Colin was presented with the Wiltshire LTA Lifetime Achievement Award which recognised his hard work. What an amazing way to finish Colin!

Colin, you have been an enthusiastic, hardworking and dedicated chairman for our fantastic club and it's been a pleasure working with you. On behalf of the committee and the members I'd like to say a BIG thank you, and present you with a memento of your time as Chairman.

Clare presented Colin with an engraved silver salver, a voucher for dinner at the Bell, West Overton, and a card signed by all the Committee.

**THE AGM CLOSED AT 8.45PM, and was followed by an informal presentation from member Mike Hutchinson, entitled "The F-team over the Alps".**

