



MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: 2nd March 2022 via Zoom, 7.45pm

23 members present.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Steph Wotton, Gill De Berry, Sally Ingham, Cathy Temple-Brown

2. MINUTES OF 2021 AGM

These have been available to view on the PTC website and in the clubhouse. There were no matters arising, and Clare Bamforth approved the 2021 minutes.

3. CHAIR'S REPORT – CLARE BAMFORTH (as presented)

It has been a good year for the club despite the restrictions that we faced with the COVID epidemic. Tennis could resume on 29th March; members could once again bring guests; the club returned to providing tennis balls; in July, turn up and play club sessions replaced book-first join-in sessions, with a newly formed rota of people organizing players into half hour slots; and restrictions on clubhouse use were cautiously lifted. The popular court booking system, introduced the previous year, remained in place. The Pewsey Tennis Club shop opened online in May, with a focus on offering sustainable clothing, and the club is now signposted from the Co-op car park.

I would like to thank my dedicated team of committee members who worked hard to ensure that we continued to be the friendly, inclusive and safe club that we strive to be, and also our fantastic coaches, who creatively adapted their coaching offerings to make sure that their pupils stayed safe, and who continued to provide a warm welcome to pupils and members whatever the weather. Thanks too to Colin Gratton, the Club's President, for his support, and to Debbie Crapper, our welfare officer, who is our main contact for anyone who has any concerns about safeguarding. My appreciation also goes to Chris Harris for auditing our accounts for a third year.

Pewsey Tennis Club endeavours to offer tennis for all. We encourage juniors to give tennis a go by offering a comprehensive junior coaching programme; we offer a pathway for adults by providing coaching for beginners and improvers, and last year we introduced a course for players of team standard.

Conscious that it can be hard for new members to find their way in a club, the club started offering 'meet and greet' sessions on court with our Club Captains Nick Hewens and Paula Tailby, to give these new members an idea of what club sessions and WhatsApp groups would suit them. My thanks to Nick and Paula for their enthusiasm in embracing new members.

Our social calendar was hit hard by COVID. Nonetheless, we were able to run quite a few events and my thanks to Mike Hutchinson, our Social Secretary, for organizing so much and putting up with last minute cancellations and postponements; our roll up tournament and BBQ in August was really well

attended, and it was wonderful to finally get together - thank you to Amanda Foxton for doing a fantastic job of organizing over 50 players!; Debbie and Keith Lovern did a great job of running a mixed tournament in October, and this raised in the region of £300 for Cancer Research in memory of Dave Major, one of the club's Vice Presidents, who we sadly lost in 2021. The Dance and Awards evening was held in October and it saw Debbie Lovern win the Most Improved Player award, Gill Tatum win the Team Captain award, and Paul Denton win the Club Member award, not forgetting Lorraine Lamb's award for most sparkly outfit! 30 people enjoyed a long weekend of indoor tennis and a host of other activities in November at The Manor Hotel in Okehampton, and thanks to Keith Hampson for putting together a helpful timetable for us! We much appreciate Amanda Foxton continuing to run regular roll up sessions, despite the cold conditions. In addition, Roz Denton organized a group of members to try out Padel tennis at Wootton Down – an outing that was enjoyed by all.

Our membership, which was 440 in December, remained higher than in pre-COVID times, and this enabled us to enjoy healthy finances and to pay back the Government COVID grant that we had received in 2020. My thanks to Cathy, our Membership secretary, for handling the busy workload and also to Matthew and Pauline, our treasurers, who, to quote our auditor, "have again done an excellent job keeping on top of the accounts."

Courts 4 and 5 were repainted in August and the prickly hedge by court 4 was removed and will be replaced with paving this year. Thank you to Nick Hewens for all he does to maintain our facilities to their high standard, including replacing nets, locks, lights etc.

Amidst the excitement of Emma Raducanu's success at the US Open, Amanda Hampson was on BBC Wiltshire radio not once but twice last year to discuss Emma's achievements and the rise of British tennis.

We had a fantastic year in the Swindon and District League last year. Our mixed A team, the only team we entered into the winter league in 20/21, came top of Division 2 and of the 13 teams that played in the summer league, (7 men's, 3 ladies and 4 mixed) 5 teams won their division, 2 were runners up and 2 finished in 3rd place. Thank you to all the captains, who worked hard to field teams and motivate players.

In addition, Colin Gratton and Nick Hewens both represented Wiltshire in Wiltshire Senior Men's teams, and Colin's team finished 2nd in the M70 category.

We were proud to hear that Peter Deck, who was a long time committee member at the club until last year and is a club vice-president, was awarded a British Empire Medal in this year's New Year's Honours - well done Peter!

Mike Hutchinson is stepping down from the committee and the committee has created a new role of Events Coordinator which encompasses both tournaments and social events, with the idea very much being that the role is one of finding and coordinating people to run events rather than running everything. Paul Denton was co-opted onto the committee to take on this role - thank you Paul – and I hope that many of you will offer him your support to help run our events.

Mary Connerton is also stepping down from the committee this year.

I would like to thank Mike and Mary for all they have done over the years.

Mike joined our committee in 2015 and became Social Secretary in 2017, since when he has organized many of our regular events such as the Quiz night, the Awards evening, Roll up drinks and nibbles, and also introduced the popular annual trips to The Manor Hotel. Thank you Mike and thank you also to your wife Kathryn for always providing a huge helping hand for our big events.

Mary joined our committee in early 2018 and has been a big help in organizing, in particular, events that involved food – for example the 20th anniversary party for the clubhouse back in 2018 and the Junior's Christmas party in 2019. Thank you Mary.

To conclude, we all look forward to a great year of tennis and fun events, hopefully even freer of COVID restrictions, supported by very healthy membership numbers, which undoubtedly contribute to PTC being the great club that it is.

4. FINANCE

The accounts to 31st December 2021, as audited by Chris Harris, were presented by Matthew Popham. Matthew reported that the refurbishment fund had been met, and an extra £10K had been put away. The excellent member numbers and subscriptions meant that the subscription budget was £10K above budget. The Covid grant had been fully paid back.

Question: Colin Gratton asked whether the Club would consider new investments, in view of rising interest rates. Matthew Popham responded that he had been exploring possible investments for some time, and was now looking at Nationwide.

The accounts were accepted by the AGM.

Proposer: Colin Gratton; **seconded:** Mike Hutchinson

5. COACHES' REPORTS

Martin Wright – Head Coach (as presented)

Our coaching offerings have again proved very popular over the last year and we have continued to offer a diverse variety of coaching activities, attracting players of all ages and abilities. The programme provides a gateway into the Club and we have had many success stories where tennis has become a huge a positive part in players' lives. It's fantastic to be able to offer tennis to such a wide variety of people of all ages and playing standards.

Our weekly group sessions for children shadow the term time and are a key part of our programme. These sessions are now under the umbrella of LTA Youth and this branding gives our coaching courses extra credibility as well as many other opportunities including incorporating LTA team challenge events. LTA Youth covers all of our under 11 coaching sessions and we start this with our ever popular Tots tennis classes age 4 and 5, and then children move through the Red, Orange and Green stages. At each of these stages the court gets bigger as does the racket size and the bounce of the ball. This provides all our u11 players a gradual and progressive transition onto full court yellow ball tennis. These weekly sessions have been very popular over the last year and during the summer months we are often at capacity in many of these groups. For our over 11 juniors we have our development sessions, and we have many children attending these sessions who have started tennis at a young age at the Club.

I am pleased to say that Alec Choules has completed and passed the LTA level 2 coaching qualification and regularly helps out with our weekly sessions as well as our Saturday pay and play session. We are hoping to utilise Alec to expand our Saturday offerings including a Junior Club session. Alec has played at the Club from a young age and we are so pleased that his experience at PTC has inspired him to pursue a career in tennis coaching.

Our cardio tennis 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 restarted our Rusty rackets session that runs on a Wednesday morning. This session is aimed at players who have some tennis experience and are looking to get back into the sport. It combines coaching tips and drills focused around doubles play. This provides another way into to our Club for people who may not feel comfortable to come to our main Club sessions. As always, we try to attract more players to our club and continue to provide Tennis For All.

We have recently added an adult Team coaching session to provide technical and tactical training for those looking to increase their performance. This session is open to any member who has represented the Club in team matches. Lots of teams have once again had fantastic results in the Swindon and District tennis leagues and we hope to build on these successes.

Jane Watkins once again did a brilliant job of running our ever popular Beginners to Players Programme (B2P) We were hoping for a full house and we were not disappointed as all the places booked out quickly. It was another great year and we had a lovely group of players. These players received an initial block of 6 weeks coaching followed by a further 4 weeks. These lessons are carefully designed to take our players on a pathway from beginners, to players. We are hopeful our graduates will convert into members and most importantly continue to enjoy tennis. The B2P Programme really is fantastic for everyone involved and B2P now has very solid roots in our yearly calendar. My huge thanks goes to Jane for all her hard work and for heading up such a brilliant programme. Jane is always extremely organised and approachable and I am extremely grateful.

Holiday Camps were cancelled at Easter due to number limitations but we had two very good camps during the Summer Holidays. The camps are always popular and the kids attending receive a great mix of tennis and multi-sport activities. We have run these camps for many years in a professional, fun and safe environment. We see members and non-members attending the camps and many follow into our coaching groups. We attracted over 100 separate bookings over the 9 days. Our Easter and Summer Camps will run again this year.

We are very proud of Alexander Brodie who has been selected to play and train for the Wiltshire Under 10 County team. Alex has 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 another fantastic achievement and its brilliant to watch him develop.

Our Schools programme during the Wimbledon fortnight, where we visit the local primary schools in the area and offer the whole school an opportunity to experience tennis, was cancelled last year but we are delighted to be offering these links again this year. These School visits give nearly 500 pupils a taster session of tennis and are a great way to inform our community about our tennis club. Our link with Burbage School remains strong and we are always fully booked for 16 pupils attending our after school Club. This is also true of our link with St Francis School and we currently have keen

pupils attending an after school tennis club. This runs in the school sports hall which can be a welcome relief from some of the weather conditions over the winter months.

Our link with Pewsey Vale School established opportunities for the pupils to give tennis a try at the tennis club on Friday afternoons. We are happy that this link is looking like it will restart after Easter. This has been a real target for us as teenage players can be hard to attract into the sport. We are excited to see this link grow and that it is providing tennis opportunities for local pupils in the area.

Naturally I have a few people to thank for what they have done over the past year. Firstly Clare who has been so supportive of our programme. Clare is dedicated, hardworking, approachable and a pleasure to work with. Also I must thank the club committee who give up so much of their time making the tennis club a fantastic place for everyone to enjoy. We are all very lucky to have such dedicated group of people. I also thank Jon who is always so welcoming, hardworking and trustworthy. He provides a friendly welcome to everyone who attends the Club. Lastly I thank the members who really make PTC a fantastic club and place for us to coach. I am looking forward to another successful year ahead.

Jon Gregory – Coach (as presented)

2021 was an unusual year for competition at Pewsey Tennis Club. The pandemic still meant that many events that I would have run or entered teams in were cancelled.

The year started with the junior Easter tournament being cancelled by the LTA, we had just finished a national lockdown at the end of March and they decided to cancel all grade 4 tournaments over the Easter holidays for a variety of reasons.

We entered teams in the junior summer league but this was also affected by the pandemic with entries well down on previous years, possibly other clubs like me were still concerned about gathering too many people together. This meant that some of our players didn't get team tennis as some age groups (10U and 18U boys) had no entries – meaning we didn't have anyone to play against. This meant that we were limited to playing in three age groups, the highlights being our 9U team playing well against very tough opposition on a blazing hot day in Ramsbury on the artificial clay and our 14U team putting up a great fight against players who would normally play in Division 1.

Two of the other events we would normally run didn't go ahead, the mini tennis fun festival at the Delta Centre in June was cancelled and the Quorn Family Cup came too soon after the national lockdown, so we decided it was not an appropriate event to run.

We did however run the “Road to Wimbledon” competition, a national competition for 14U players. 6 players from Pewsey took part in our club event, with the winner, Seb Du Toit going off to play in the county event in Swindon, but unfortunately he did not progress any further.

The junior winter league was also cancelled this year as Roger Witt (the comps coordinator for Wiltshire) tragically died whilst running the county closed at Wootton Bassett in August. Roger was a real character and a dedicated organiser of competition in the county – he will be sorely missed.

I was also pretty wary about gathering too many people from other places at the club so held off running matchplay events until later in the year. Luckily this delay coincided with the release (finally)

of the LTA's new rating system and competition structure. The WTN (World Tennis Number) has finally been introduced and the competition structure has a focus much more on development of the player than results. I am very excited about the new rating system and structure as the old system had developed some problems that made it harder for the recreational tennis player to get involved in more formal competition.

I ran one of the new LTA Youth Matchplays for 14U players in October, it was open to players from all clubs but there were 6 entries, all from Pewsey. I thought the new format was better and the feedback I got from the participants was also positive.

The new competition structure also allowed me to run some other events that we haven't run before. The best of these is the new LTA Youth Matchweek competition. This is formal competition run during coaching groups with an emphasis on team competition. The LTA provide resources such as certificates, prizes and ideas for the competition format. Martin and I ran 5 of these towards the end of the year, 3 within our coaching groups and 2 in primary schools, and again I would say that this event is great addition to the competition programme.

Overall, 2021 was a mixed year, I probably didn't get in as much opportunity for competition as I would have liked but due to the pandemic there weren't as many events on offer and those that did run were done so in a more limited way.

Looking to 2022, I am excited that now we have the new LTA World Tennis Number (WTN) and competition structure in place, and now pandemic restrictions are lifted I am looking to run a lot more events in the coming year. I have just entered our junior summer league teams and have entered more teams than I have in many years. The Easter Tournament is all set up and opens for entries in the next few days. Alec Choules (our 3rd coach) is booked onto a competition organiser course shortly and will be well placed to help me deliver some of the events I have planned. The first is a junior matchplay session on Saturday afternoons for players 11 and over, hopefully starting in the next month.

I am also about to enter the club into the Road to Wimbledon competition, I plan to run a Quorn Family Cup event and enter a team into the Mini Tennis Fun Festival in Swindon later in the year. I am also planning to try and run a lot more matchplay events over the year after the positive response to the one I ran in October. In addition to this I plan to keep our LTA Youth Matchweek competitions as part of our structure and expand it into more of our coaching groups as they become comfortable with competition so they get some exposure to matchplay.

Hopefully the junior winter league will run again this year and I am also planning to hold junior club champs at some point during year. A very busy programme!

I would also just like to thank you, the committee and all of the tennis club. 2021 was an incredibly strange year for everyone including me and my family and I would just like to say that I have really felt supported by the club, and I cannot tell you how grateful I am for that!

6. MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2022/23

Clare Bamforth presented the proposed fees for 2022/23, and stated that they would remain the same as for the previous year, except for the category U11, which will now be £5.00/year.

Senior = £163
Family = £259
Off Peak = £98
Intermediate = £79
Student = £35
Junior 11 – 18 = £26
Junior U11 = £5

The new fees were accepted by the AGM.

Proposer: Keith Hampson; **seconded:** Roz Denton

7. ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE for 2022/23

CB informed the AGM that all existing committee members were standing for the coming year, apart from Mike Hutchinson and Mary Connorton, who will be standing down from Committee work.

The Committee listed below was voted in en bloc and agreed by the AGM:

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

Events Coordinator – Paul Denton

Marketing – Roz Denton

Head Coach – Martin Wright

Coach – Jon Gregory

(Welfare Officer – non-Committee - Debbie Crapper)

Proposer: Colin Gratton; **seconded** Mary Connorton

8. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR – MARK NOBLE

CB thanked Chris Harris for his service to the Club, and the appointment of Mark Noble for 2022/23 was accepted by the AGM.

Proposer: Colin Gratton; **seconded:** Chris Harris

9. PROPOSED CHANGE TO CONSTITUTION

Clare Bamforth proposed an amendment to the constitution (circulated to all members prior to the AGM) to change the current limit on member numbers from 400 to 450. The amendment was accepted by the AGM.

Proposed: Colin Gratton; **seconded:** Judith Deck

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Question: Martin Moore expressed the view that the Sunday morning club session is now poorly attended, and asked Committee what could be done to increase numbers. PD commented that this was largely due to club sessions being reduced during the pandemic, and to the introduction of the court booking system, which had meant a change in dynamics, with fixed doubles being organized. Colin Gratton suggested that the off-peak membership be extended to include play on Sunday mornings, and the AGM agreed that this was a good idea.

Question: Judith Deck asked if there was likely to be any more planting round the Club? Nick Hewens responded that the prickly hedge had been removed next to court 4, and would be replaced with slabs and a gravel drainage channel, to allow more space for members to sit and watch matches.

Question: Keith Lovern asked if the ball basket system was working, and if more new balls could be made available? Clare Bamforth explained that during match season, new balls are provided for all home matches, which are then available for general club use. At interim times, six new sets of balls are provided each Sunday. There was general agreement that Penn balls should no longer be ordered, and Matthew Popham confirmed that he would stick to Babolat balls. Also, new balls should not be sued on wet courts if possible. Keith Hampson said we have the challenge of knowing when balls are no longer usable. Some attendees thought members should provide their own balls. Clare Bamforth said the matter would be considered by the Committee, with a view to introducing a ball policy.

CLARE BAMFORTH THEN THANKED EVERYONE FOR ATTENDING THE AGM, AND CLOSED THE MEETING AT APPROX 9.00PM.

