

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SHILLINGSTONE TENNIS CLUB
HELD AT THE RECREATION GROUND PAVILION
ON SUNDAY 26TH NOVEMBER 2023**

Present:	Sharon Proyer (SP)	Chairman
	Kathy Frazier (KF)	Treasurer/Membership Secretary
	Jo Fordham (JF)	Welfare Officer
	Richard Dodd (RD)	Member
	Tim Cotton (TC)	Member
	Michael Salisbury (MS)	Member
	Chris Whitfeld (CW)	Member
	Mark Talbot	Member
	Tracey Talbot	Maintenance
	Heather Dhondy (HD)	Secretary

1	Apologies:	Tora Sweetman (TS)	Social media contact
		Ken Francis	
		Lin & John West	
		Gill Smith	

2 Minutes of the previous AGM

These were approved

3 Matters arising

There were none.

4 Club captain/Chairman's Report

Social Sessions

SP reported that these have been running on Sunday afternoons from 2-4pm and on Thursday evenings from 6-8pm during the summer and from 2-4pm in the winter. Since October, the time was changed to a Sunday morning from 10am, which has generally seen an increase in numbers. The WhatsApp group has been used to enable people to indicate whether they are going, but it was pointed out that we need to be mindful that some people may still turn up e.g. those without WhatsApp access, or new members. We had our Start of Season tournament on 30th April with about 9 people attending, and it was an enjoyable afternoon.

Coaching

Graham generously gave his time to run the Open Day on 22nd April. The afternoon was divided into 4 one hour sessions. The first, for the youngest children, was well attended. Many of these children had already signed up for his coaching course. The next hour was for teenagers, however no one turned up. The following 2 hours were for adults, one hour for beginners and one for rusty racquets. There were about three or four in each of these sessions. Most attendees had either already signed up for Graham's coaching or did so after the Open Day.

Graham ran two children's coaching sessions this year on a Wednesday afternoon for different ages, each for five weeks. The youngest had most attendees. He then ran a second four-week course, but only for Reception to Year 4 (four to nine year olds) and changed the time to 6pm, in order to transition smoothly into his adult class.

For adults, Graham split his first course into beginners and intermediates. He then ran a second course but only for intermediates. At some point it was advertised that people could turn up and pay to play, rather than sign up for the whole course.

No courses were run in the summer holidays.

Graham did not continue coaching for groups in the Autumn. He does, however, provide some individual/private group coaching throughout the week. As in previous years, we offered free coaching and membership, via the Headteachers, to children in our local schools who are designated Pupil Premium (disadvantaged). We had no take-up for this offer. (We have a ring-fenced fund for this as we received a donation arising from the closure of Blandford Tennis Club).

Volunteer Coaching

A big thank you to Tracey, who went into our local school to run an after-school tennis club during the summer term.

Leagues

During the summer we entered the Dorset Doubles Leagues. The men won division four, and the ladies came fifth out of six in division four.

The Dorset Doubles Winter League has now begun. We have two teams entered. The men have had to postpone their scheduled matches due to poor weather, and the ladies have played one match v Mudeford Wood which, unfortunately, they lost. We entered two teams in the mixed Shaftesbury Tennis League. Our A and B teams each finished second in their respective divisions. The end of season social event for the Shaftesbury League was held at Pythouse on 24th September.

Team practice nights took place in April/May and then resumed at the conclusion of the Shaftesbury League until light prevented play at the end of September. All members were asked if they were interested in joining in, and the option of joining a WhatsApp group given. 21 people opted in to this.

RD has been keeping charge of the balls for team practice and club sessions. He has been using ex-match balls and occasionally new balls.

We had an in-club Box League running until March 2023. JF and RD won. Well done to them. The remainder of the pairings did not complete their matches.

Ball recycling

SP gathered up all of the old balls in the bin and sent off 275 balls for recycling, and was pleased to say we received £30.75 for them (205 balls), as she was concerned that they would reject most of them according to their criteria.

Maintenance

Thanks to KF, CW and TT (our new maintenance contractor!) for upkeep, including leaf clearance, moss killing etc – and to Hilary Mc Phillamy, who empties the bin.

SP was pleased to say that the Cricket Club did improve their maintenance obligation around the courts during the summer by strimming the area around the courts.

In early September our courts were given an update. This included moss-killing, pressure-washing, and the holes were filled and painted. This meant that we needed to close the courts for a short period of time during this work. Our courts should now be in good order for another few years.

Keysafes

The member keysafe needed a new cord when it had been overstretched and the cover became detached. The public keysafe (Igloohome) has had a few issues which have needed to be dealt with. One problem is that the batteries are not lasting and if they fail, it cannot be operated. These will need changing more often now. On the positive though, it has been working for public use and quite a number of people are using the courts in this way.

Website/Facebook

Thanks to TS who stepped up to take on the role of Facebook organiser. She has been updating with pictures and information supplied to her.

The website still has no one who is keen to take it on, therefore members of the committee update with new information as needed.

Secretary's note: HD has now offered to take this on.

LTA

SP reported that she attended an online forum for small clubs in September.

JF has updated all of our policies and ensured safeguarding requirements are all in order. This has enabled KF to pay our fee to the LTA for our next year of registration. Many thanks to them both for their work on ensuring our club is compliant and registered with the LTA.

Newcomers' Party

CW, Carole Whitfeld and SP attended this event. There were not many newcomers, but we spread the word about our tennis club.

Parish Magazine

This is produced bi-monthly and delivered to all households and businesses in Shillingstone. We submit an article for each issue. SP requested that anyone who would like to write an article for a future magazine, should please let her know.

Cricket ball risk

Before the cricket season began, all members were informed of the risk by email. The known dates of cricket matches were put on the website on the booking page and CW updated the notice on the gate.

Parish Council

We asked the Parish Council if the trees which overhang the tennis courts could be cut back in order to preserve the condition of the court surface in the far corner. CW and SP met with the Chair and Clerk of the PC to discuss. Although we disagreed that the £250, which is put aside by the PC annually for court maintenance, should be used for this purpose, it was agreed to use this money at a PC meeting. On reading this in the PC minutes, SP spoke to a councillor to ascertain how they came to this decision. SP was told that the tennis club had agreed to this. It has been suggested that we attend the next PC meeting, or put forward in writing, our reasons as to why we feel this is the wrong decision.

Much discussion followed in respect of the PC decision. MT suggested that we contribute £250, rather than use the ring-fenced money. It was noted that this would only be appropriate if both the cricket and football clubs also contributed the same amount. JF asked for clarification about the ring-fenced money, and SP agree to write something, for approval by the committee, to put to the council.

Secretary's note: This has now been done, and amended by CW.

KF pointed out that £25-30k expenditure would be needed in a few years, for refurbishment. CW suggested that we should be able to secure grants for about 75% of that.

5 Membership/treasurer's report

KF reported that our membership numbers were lower than the previous year but still good, resulting in a drop of just £126. We have spent £6,600 on repairing the courts, hence our total funds have dropped. The accounts have been audited and we currently have £30,242.08. Overall, our accounts are very healthy.

Investments

These comprised £10,000 with Cambridge Counties invested on two-year bond, which matured on 02/11/23. We have reinvested it for a further two years at 5.20% (previously 1.5%). This matures on 03/11/25.

The investments with United Trust Bank has been consolidated from three accounts (one 40-day notice, one six-month notice and one, a year's notice) to one account, totalling £28,526.59. It has been invested, as agreed, on a one-year bond at 5.06%, maturing on 19/10/24.

KF reported that all was looking good and she hoped there would be no more capital expenditure for at least five years. At that time, we will need to be prepared for a full refurbishment of the courts in the region of £25-30k. She proposed increasing our membership fees for the forthcoming year to cater for this capital expenditure. We have not increased our fees since 2020, when we amended our categories and fee structure.

A paper with the revised fee-structure was tabled, and approved with one minor amendment, reducing student and junior fees to £5 each.

6 Secretary's report

HD thanked SP, JF and KF for keeping the club running smoothly and efficiently, and for their assistance, and CW's, in helping her ease into this role.

As a volunteer, she attended an Open day at the National tennis centre. She met a group from Crablands tennis club in Surrey who had recently had court lighting installed. (She was advised against referring to it as "flood-lighting", as this term could have a negative impact on neighbouring residences). She asked them for any advice they could give, and was sent the names of two companies, one which Crablands went with, and one that they had communication with. They also sent a quotation from a neighbour who had been apprehensive.

"The lights at Crablands Tennis Club look really good. We weren't sure how they would affect us but they don't".

This might be useful to quote to our neighbours if we proceed.

7 Welfare officer's report

JF reported that no safeguarding concerns had been passed to the Welfare Officer. All DBS checks are up to date. Safeguarding is covered in Club policies which are available to all members via the website, including what they should do if they have a safeguarding concern. All Club policies have been updated as required for the LTA registration renewal, which was in November. The updated policies are displayed on the website, and some are on display in the shelter at the courts.

There is a new policy, the Online Safety and Communication Policy. All members should refresh themselves with the content of these policies and read the new policy.

ACTION: ALL

Club Coach Graham Howell renewed his coach accreditation in November 2023. Safeguarding refresher training was delivered during the September 2023 committee meeting, and another session was due to be held ahead of this meeting for the four who were unable to attend.

This was cancelled due to availability issues, and rescheduled for just before that start of the next committee meeting.

Secretary's note: three members of the committee completed this following today's AGM, and two further member who have yet to complete this have been reminded.

8 Subscription fees/charges for 2024-5

Covered in KF report. In addition it was agreed to keep guest fees and court hire at the same rate as last year.

9. Election of Officers and Committee

All officers and committee members were re-elected. It was agreed that HD would circulate club members in advance of the AGM next year to see if there was any interest from other members.

10. Appointment of auditor

John Paul was reappointed.

11. Any other business

It was agreed that a notice would be put on the cupboard door reminding players to keep the shelter clean and tidy.

none.

11. Dates of next committee meeting

This was agreed for January 28th at 12md.