



SLINFOLD TENNIS CLUB – MINUTES OF AGM 19.00 9th OCTOBER 2023

Present

Andrew Gentry (Chairman), Mark Ponton (Treasurer), David Gubb (Welfare Officer), Neal Zimmermann (Membership Secretary), Simon Stokoe (Team Captain), Kristine Amman (Coaching Co-ordinator), Helen Tarran (Website Co-ordinator), David Woodley, Adrian Booker, Peter Goodwin, Ian Ratford, Andrew Bardot, Jon Hughes, Liz Masson, Sam Campbell, Duncan Campbell, Carol Rawnsley, Fran Zimmermann, Annabel Stokoe, Norman Agnew

Prior to the meeting there was a presentation, led by Simon Stokoe, to Andrew Gentry thanking him for his five years as Chairman which was attended by 30-40 members including those who subsequently attended the AGM.

	Action
1. Introduction	
The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.	
2. Apologies for Absence	
Sally Coren, Annabel Walker, Peter Bird (Committee Member) & Cordy Carr	
3. Minute of last AGM	
The minutes of the last meeting held on 10 th October 2022 were approved.	
The Chairman advised that Liz Masson had agreed to join the Committee.	
4. Chairman's Report	
The Chairman advised that this year he had sent out his report in advance, a copy of which is attached.	
He did not propose to go through it at length but confirmed his personal highlight of the past year was the introduction of the Ladies 2 nd Team which was enjoyed by those playing both on and off the court!	
He thanked the Committee for all their hard work during his Chairmanship.	
5. Treasurer's Report & Club Accounts	
Mark Ponton provided a review of the Club's financial position and presented the accounts for the year ending 31 August 2023. He ran through the various sources of income and expenditure and in particular highlighted:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The income from subscriptions was slightly down from last year and less than the £18-£18.5k which had been budgeted for. This was mainly due to a number of members who had joined during Covid not renewing.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The income and expenditure from tennis balls, bar, tournaments and social events were each broadly similar – the intention was not necessarily to make a profit from these.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The tennis balls costs had increased due to more matches being played.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We were currently £800 in credit on electricity.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The admin costs had been reduced to due sending out renewals and the Newsletter by email.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The surplus for 22/23 was c£3,000 less than last year mainly due to last year including the Jack Allum £1k bequest, this year subs were £500 down and the cost of the defibrillator and new dragnets.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The overall Surplus was £70,764.12.	
The intention is to get LED lights which will cost around £20-£30k but will halve the energy costs whilst also improving the lighting.	

Mark advised that the Parish Council (PC) had approached the Tennis Club asking whether we had considered having a Padel tennis court. They were advised that we had (sited between the clubhouse and the football pitch) but the £80k likely cost was prohibitive. The PC indicated they may be able to pay 50% of the cost. Mark and Andy had attended a meeting of the PC last month but there did not appear to be full support from PC members to the idea. The PC were advised we would not move forward with considering the idea without the full support of the PC and also of our members. If we did move forward with the idea then we would need to give consideration as to how it would be run (not by a commercial company) and possibly have a separate Padel membership. The Committee will consider further when a response from the PC is received re their support.

Committee

6. Membership

Neal Zimmermann reported that the current membership was 192 including 39 juniors (last year 204). There was a constant stream of enquiries from potential new members e.g. there had been four that day. Juniors who had coaching through Nigel Matthews Tennis and were not members paid an increased coaching fee which was then passed on to the Club rather than being obliged to join.

7. Election of Officials

The Chairman confirmed that he was stepping down from the Committee. Peter Bird had agreed to become the new Chairman which was nominated by Andrew Gentry and approved by all present. In Peter Bird's absence Andrew Gentry continued as Chairman for the remainder of the meeting. Liz Masson had agreed to join the Committee, her nominated was proposed by Helen Tarran and approved by all present. All other Committee members had agreed to continue and all were re-elected.

8. Question & Answer

The Chairman advised he had had no prior questions and asked for any from the floor.

- David Woodley asked what Padel tennis was. The Chairman advised it was a hybrid of tennis and squash (easier than tennis) played on a 20x10m court with walls and, in this country, a roof. Jon Hughes (who works for the LTA) said that the number of courts in this country had increased from 60 to 400 over the past year. Peter Goodwin questioned whether there would be enough members.
- David Woodley asked whether the solar panels on the clubhouse roof generated any income. Mark confirmed that they were connected to the grid but despite him pursuing our energy supplier they had not generated any income. He was looking into purchasing batteries to save the power generated for our own use.
- David Gubb asked those present whether they were happy with the Newsletter being sent out by email. The meeting confirmed they were.
- The Chairman said that there had been a request for permanent picnic benches to be placed on the patio. A discussion ensued as to the pros and cons and also having a coffee table. It was agreed the matter would be considered further by the Committee.
- Mark Ponton mentioned that the Football Club now had a defibrillator outside their clubhouse and bearing in mind ours had been the subject of vandalism whether it should be moved indoors. Committee to consider.

Committee

Committee

9. AOB

There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 20.05

Dear Members,

I want to start my final chairman's report by thanking all the members for their support over the last 5 years. I took over as the interim chairman rather unexpectedly but hope I have managed to maintain the enjoyable spirit of the club that first attracted me to join.

The last year has proven relatively quiet certainly compared to the Covid period and although the club developments haven't proceeded as quickly as we would have liked, work has been going on behind the scenes and I'm sure with some fresh impetus from the new chairman things will move forward with renewed vigour.

Financially the club remains in a robust position a more detailed breakdown will be provided by Mark , our longstanding Treasurer at the AGM itself. However, the committee will need to continue to balance the requirements for sensible investment in the existing facilities, new developments and a sinking fund for court renewal all while maintaining an attractive annual membership rate. Members will have noticed the settlement impacting court 1 although advice received so far is to await renewal of the court surface before attempting any remedial action.

Membership numbers did suffer a larger than normal drop at renewal but having undertaken some investigation it appears this was largely either people who had joined during COVID but were not using their membership or people who had moved away / stopped playing. Neal Zimmermann will provide a more detailed breakdown at the AGM but we remain at a ratio above the LTA recommended members per court guideline.

Slinfold is primarily a social tennis club aimed at attracting a mix of intermediate ability players with those new or returning to the game. As most of us will testify Tennis is a difficult game to master and central to enjoyment is providing a supportive atmosphere with a range of different playing opportunities. I am delighted that all the club sessions remain well supported and that the mix of adult and junior coaching, hosted session, team and private play seem to work well most of the time.

Once again all of our teams under the guidance of Simon Stokoe and the respective captains have performed admirably. Both men's and ladies first teams are likely to be promoted with the men winning a competitive Division 5 . However, my highlight was the enthusiasm of our newly founded lady's 2nd team who finished a creditable 5th in their division while giving a range of players their first experience of interclub play.

I am delighted to inform you that with the support of the entire committee Peter Bird has agreed to take over the role of Chairman from the AGM, although due to holiday plans he won't be able to attend the meeting itself. I am equally pleased that Liz Masson has volunteered too also join the committee. The committee are only in place to represent the views of the membership so if you have feedback, ideas or views please either come along to the AGM or drop me a line in advance. We are considering a suggestion to have permanent seating / tables on the patio area if you have views on this or other matters impacting the club, please do get in touch.

Finally, I must close my time as the club chairman by saying thank you on behalf of myself and the membership for all the work of the volunteers on the committee. Mark, David, Simon, Neal, Peter, Kristine and Helen all give up significant hours of their own time in supporting club activities and ensuring that the club remains in a healthy state going forward both on and off the court.

Best wishes

Andrew