

# STEEP LAWN TENNIS CLUB

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 20 November 2018

At Steep Village Hall, Church Road at 7.30 pm

item	Present	action
	<p>Graham Heath (GH) Chairman  Michele Mangham (MM) Membership Secretary  Lesley Whyte (LW) Social  Jennie Azevedo (JA) Social  David Panton (DP) Grounds  David Gaterell (DG) Coach  Carol Norris (CN) Tournament Secretary and acting Club Secretary</p> <p>and 14 other members.</p>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Chairman's welcome</b>	
	<p>GH opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He noted that as there were fewer than 40 members attending the meeting was not quorate for voting on resolutions.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b>	
	<p>Apologies for absence were received from: Sue Amesbury, Susie Best, Jane Butcher, Peter Clist, Gareth Dobson, Judy Entress, Lucy Fatkin, Tanya Heath, Christine Lally, Brian Park, Cathy Robinson, Ian Ross, Ben Russ, Sharon Russ, Ann Saunders and Mary Sellers.</p>	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Minutes of AGM 21 November 2017</b>	
	<p>It was noted that these were circulated to members by email on 26 March 2018.</p>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Matters arising</b>	
	<p>GH gave an update on planned maintenance works to the Club. He noted that the previous plan had included refurbishment of courts 7&amp;8 and work undertaken on the clubhouse. And this was scheduled to proceed as follows in 2019:</p> <p>i. Internal and external redecoration of the Clubhouse;</p>	

	<p>ii. Replacement of edging on courts 7 &amp; 8.</p> <p>Mike Boyce (MB) said that there was a drainage problem on 7 &amp; 8. It was noted that the soakaway alongside the courts requires maintenance and will be looked at under the revised maintenance plan below.</p> <p>Gh then said that the committee were in the process of producing a new maintenance plan to cover the period 2020 -2030. Although the timing of work was not set yet, the expected items to be covered under the new plan are as follows:</p> <p>i. Courts 1 &amp; 2: these were last resurfaced in 2013 and are next due in 2023;</p> <p>ii. <b>Courts 5 &amp; 6:</b> due to be resurfaced in 2025-27;</p> <p>iii. <b>Courts 7 &amp; 8:</b> GH noted these were last resurfaced in 2006, but the usage of these courts is different to the others in that they are mainly used for coaching rather than match play and the surface is still sound. He noted that repainting of these courts is likely to be sooner than any planned resurfacing. In addition the Committee had received a request to add junior tennis lines on these courts and this would be considered nearer the time, taking into account DG's views.</p> <p>iv. <b>Court lighting:</b> GH said that the provision of lights on courts 7 &amp; 8 should be considered alongside the replacement of lights on courts 1-4. The oldest lights on these courts are now 20 years old and represent a significant future cost for replacement. Replacement by LED lighting was raised. GH said that this was not an option yet but would be considered when available; it is also not clear how much replacement LED lights will cost.</p> <p>GH said that the new maintenance plan therefore comprised two cost estimates:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">without lighting on 7 &amp; 8 of £120,000; and with lighting on 7 &amp; 8 of £157,000 (including planning consent).</p> <p>Matt Trench (MT) questioned why the club was not going ahead with planning consent for lights on courts 7 &amp; 8 as this could be banked for future use and would last several years. He said he believed the minutes of the 2017 AGM were incorrect as planning would not be rejected out of hand and there was no</p>	GH/DP
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	<p>need to engage the parish Council. GH noted that the 2017 AGM took place prior to MT's involvement in the lighting review. GH explained that the decision on lighting on 7 &amp; 8 had been deferred on the grounds of necessity and cost; the estimate of £35,000 is in excess of the current reserve.</p> <p>GH went on to say that last winter courts 3 &amp; 4 were unusable in wet weather. The new clay courts appear to be far more usable in all conditions and the Committee had decided it would be prudent to monitor court usage through this winter before committing to the cost of a planning application for 7 &amp; 8.</p> <p>MB noted that courts 5 &amp; 6 were reserved for juniors on Fridays between 5.30 and 7.00pm in winter but were being used less and asked whether more courts should be released for booking. DG said that it was impossible to predict how many juniors would turn up and that it was important to encourage and make provision for juniors who may become future full members. A short discussion was had on ways to involve juniors more. DG confirmed that he was on Facebook and messaged juniors on specific match play events.</p> <p>It was agreed to do an analysis of court usage which would be reported back at the next Committee meeting.</p> <p>GH said that more details of the 10 year plan would be provided during the course of 2019.</p>	<p>DG</p> <p>GH</p>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Chairman's overview</b>	
	<p>GH said that it had been a busy and successful year for the Club. He highlighted that there has been very good feedback on the new clay courts.</p> <p>GH thanked all the Committee members and others who have given time to the Club for their hard work throughout the year, including Mary Sellers for organising teas and Rosemary Swan for ensuring light cards are available.</p> <p>GH said that he had now been Chairman for three years and wished to give advance notice that he would not stand for re-election next year. He said that he would be happy to talk through the role for prospective candidates for 2019.</p>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Committee Members' and Officers' Reports</b>	

	<p><b>Membership</b></p> <p>MM reported that that numbers were slightly down on last year, with a drop from 482 to 471 members. She noted that declining membership was a trend in other clubs. However mix –ins are very well attended and Monday mornings are very busy. The clay courts are booked in priority most mornings.</p> <p>MM reported that two members, Eunice Dempster and Blinky Trewby had died recently.</p> <p>MM reminded all members to record their guests in the guest book before playing and ensure that guest fees are paid.</p> <p>MM noted that the LTA had introduced some new regulatory requirements this year, which the Club needed to comply with for insurance purposes and for the Wimbledon ballot allocation. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. a Safeguarding Policy;</li> <li>ii. a Diversity and Inclusion Policy;</li> <li>iii. appointment of a Welfare officer; and</li> <li>iv. a risk assessment.</li> </ul> <p>The club has also drafted a Privacy Policy and completed all the necessary work in respect of GDPR legislation.</p> <p>She advised that copies of all documents are held in the Club House.</p> <p>Finally MM reminded members to register with the LTA for the Wimbledon ballot.</p> <p>There was a discussion on the downward trend in membership and how this could be addressed. MM confirmed that the Club was still attracting new adult members. GH said that an analysis of the data over a number of years showed that the decline was mostly in junior membership. DG commented that the club has a high membership compared to other local clubs and that activity levels were good with a high level of court usage, strong uptake of the coaching programmes and a large number of teams playing in the various leagues.</p> <p>It was noted that the website needed updating. GH said this was being addressed by LF.</p> <p>MT volunteered to help set up an Instagram page for the Club. GH agreed to set up a meeting with LF to take forward.</p> <p><b>Secretary</b></p> <p>CN said that Peter Clist had resigned as Secretary at last year’s AGM and</p>	<p>GH/MT/LF</p>
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	<p>Paul Raine had been appointed. Paul subsequently resigned in June of this year and she has been acting Secretary since then.</p> <p>CN thanked both Peter and Paul for their work on the Committee this year.</p> <p><b>Grounds</b>  DP reported that hedge cutting and annual anti- fungal treatment would take place in the next few weeks.</p> <p>He noted that more gravel is required in the car park and the options are to arrange for a contractor or put together a working party. The latter option is preferred and volunteers were requested. MT offered to assist by ordering the gravel at a discount via his firm and suggested hiring a mechanical roller to stabilise the fill. DP agreed to liaise with MT on putting together a working party.</p> <p>DP gave an update on the maintenance of the clay courts. He said that a decision had been made not to purchase a tractor; a local firm had been engaged instead to undertake the intensive brushing and clay redistribution. The aim is to have sessions approximately every three weeks. Members are welcome to use the snow shovel in the interim. It was also noted that there are information sheets at the court entrance on the procedure for manual dragging.</p> <p>DP reported that the plumbing problems in the Club House have now been resolved and new drains have been installed.</p> <p>Mb asked about PAT testing of appliances in the Club House, DP confirmed that this takes place in accordance with requirements.</p> <p><b>Tournaments</b>  CN reported that the Club tournament reverted to the Finals Day traditional format with Finals Day taking place on 30 June. Over 60 members competed in 5 categories over a 3 month period. The winners were as follows:</p> <table data-bbox="304 1637 1099 1827"> <tr> <td>Ladies singles</td> <td>Cath Lowe</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Men’s singles</td> <td>Matt Fernandez</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ladies doubles</td> <td>Christine Lally and Carol Norris</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Men’s doubles</td> <td>Barry Carter and Philippe Mougín</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mixed doubles</td> <td>Natasha Harris and Jon Graham</td> </tr> </table> <p>There was insufficient interest to run a mixed handicap event  As requested last year, the Jumbles tournament was also reinstated and held on 19 August and 18 members took part.</p>	Ladies singles	Cath Lowe	Men’s singles	Matt Fernandez	Ladies doubles	Christine Lally and Carol Norris	Men’s doubles	Barry Carter and Philippe Mougín	Mixed doubles	Natasha Harris and Jon Graham	<p>DP/MT</p>
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CN thanked all those who helped in the running of the tournaments and in particular Ben Russ for his help and advice.

### **Social**

LW said that it had been a busy year; the club held a curry evening and Italian evening as well as the very successful Wimbledon barbecue. However she noted that numbers were down at social events. This has created extra work for LW and JA, LW thanked both Mike Boyce and MM for their help in promoting events at mix ins and sending emails.

The Quiz night was well attended, LW thanked David Kidd for continuing as quizmaster this year but noted that he intended to step down and we will need a new quizmaster next year.

LW thanked Mary Sellars for continuing to organise the tea rota during the Summer and noted that extra volunteers were always appreciated.

### **Coaching and juniors**

DG gave an update on the performance of the teams as follows:

**Aegon league:** the Men's division 1 team came 5<sup>th</sup> out of 6, the division 3 team 5<sup>th</sup> out of 6 and the Boys' under 16 team 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 5.

**Junior winter league 2017/18:** the Boys' under 14 won the league but the Boys' under 16 were in last place.

**Junior winter league 2018/19:** we have entered boys' under 16 and girls' under 16 teams - the girls for the first time. Girls have played 2 and lost 2 so far, but both good matches. Boys have played 1, which they lost, also a good match.

**LTA Team Tennis next year:** we hope to enter two men's teams again but this will depend on the commitment of our players. It is unlikely we would enter a ladies team.

**Coaching:** DG reported that holiday coaching camps have been busy with the exception of October half term, which was spread over two weeks instead of one. As the weather was good over the summer, very few dates were cancelled.

There have been a series of adult match practices for the various teams.

Adult coaching has also been busy with sessions across the levels.

	<p>DG announced that there will be two free sessions in spring 2019 for intermediate/improver adults who want to learn how to move confidently on the clay. DG to confirm the dates next year.</p> <p><b>Juniors:</b> DG said that the Club seems to have a small core of players across the age ranges who like to compete in tournaments and match and he hopes that this will grow.</p> <p>Junior Club nights have experienced a mix of attendance, depending on the particular event, age group, time of year and weather! But DG feels that this is a good format that is contributing to the increase in competition interest.</p> <p>The Junior Club competition was held in September and was popular with 5 events including an under 9 event.</p> <p>Road to Wimbledon went ahead again this year, with 2 players able to participate in the county finals. Once again this was boys' only. However it may be possible to run a girls' one too if there is enough interest from the appropriate age girls.</p> <p>In July we participated in the Junior Team Challenge, an event between 4 teams, held this year in Thornden School. Steep won the Challenge, our 5th victory. The Club is likely to host this event next year.</p> <p>In his own tennis, DG was selected again to play for over 35's Hants team at County Cup in Devonshire Park, Eastbourne. He won the over 35's National Grass Court Doubles at Surbiton. He also won the singles at a grade 4 ITF at the Avenue, Havant, and made the final of a grade 3 at St Georges Hill.</p> <p><b>Website</b> GH said that LF planned to meet with the Club's website coordinator to restructure the website and bring it up to date. The Committee are awaiting the outcome of that and will update members next year.</p> <p><b>Fixtures</b> David Mangham (DM) reported that the club continues to have very strong participation by members for inter-club matches in the East Hants Tennis League. More than 60 members have been involved with somewhat mixed results.</p>	<p>DG</p>
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	<p>Last winter eight teams participated, two Men's three Ladies, two Mixed and one Mixed Vet's. The main results were:</p> <p>The Ladies C and Mixed B teams both won their respective divisions. Unfortunately the Ladies A and the Mixed Vet's teams were demoted.</p> <p>All other teams stayed in their divisions.</p> <p>This summer there were also two Men's three Ladies, two Mixed and one Mixed Vet's teams.</p> <p>The Men's A team were runners-up in Division 1 and the Men's B team won Division 2, consequently both will play in Division 1 next summer. The Ladies B and C teams were both runners-up in their respective divisions. Unfortunately the Mixed A team was demoted from its division.</p> <p>All other teams stayed in their divisions.</p> <p><b>Welfare</b> GH noted that this was a new position this year and included safeguarding. He said that there were no incidents to report.</p>	
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Proposed changes to Membership categories and subscriptions</b></p>	
	<p>MM ran through the proposed changes which the Committee intend to make to membership categories and subscriptions as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. To change the start of the membership to 1<sup>st</sup> April</b> <p>No renewals will be sent in December for January payment. Current members will have 3 months free membership and will receive their renewal the last week of March for payment by 30<sup>th</sup> April.</p> </li> <li><b>2. To change the categories of membership</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. to add a sub category for Juniors under 8 years old;</li> <li>ii. Family membership will now include a minimum of one junior plus one Student under 25 and in full education; and</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	



iii. to change "Non-Player" to Social.

**3. New members**

- i. No joining fee;
- ii. For those joining after 1<sup>st</sup> January until 31<sup>st</sup> March the 2019 fees will be pro-rated on a monthly basis.

**4. 2019 Fees**

The proposed fees are as follows:

Adults: £130

Students: £55

Juniors (under 8): £20

Juniors (over 8): £45

Social (formerly Non-playing): £25

Families (2 adults plus 2 juniors over 8 or 1 student plus 1 junior) :  
£320

Families (2 adults plus 2 juniors over 8): individual memberships

For current members the penalty for late payment after the 30<sup>th</sup> April will be £30 for each adult.

**5. Increase in guest fees**

MM noted that guest fees have not increased for a number of years and said that the proposed fees from 1 January 2019 are as follows:

Adults £3

Juniors and Students: £2

The proposed fees and changes to the membership structure listed under points 1 -5 above were accepted.

**6. Other changes**

MM said that there are two other changes for next year, the first

	<p>that membership cards and stickers will no longer be provided and secondly that the handbook will be sent by email (or hard copy for people without an email).</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Treasurer's Report</b>	
	<p>GH read a report from CL on her behalf.</p> <p><b>1. Accounts</b></p> <p>The accounts show a small surplus of income over expenditure for the year to 30 September 2018. Income was at a similar level to the previous year, although guest fees were substantially lower.</p> <p>On the expenditure side, again most items were roughly the same as the previous year, with the exception of maintenance costs. We spent over £3,000 sorting out the problem with the drains and a similar sum on pressure-washing the courts.</p> <p>It was noted that the cost of utilities had increased by approximately £1,000 on the previous year.</p> <p>The Club remains in a sound financial position, even after spending approximately £45,000 on the new artificial clay surfaces on Courts 3 &amp; 4. At the end of the year we had around £42,000 in reserve (roughly equivalent to one year's worth of subscription income). The Committee would like to build up reserves again before committing to any further significant expenditure.</p> <p>GH proposed that the accounts be accepted and this was agreed by those present.</p> <p><b>2. Auditor</b></p> <p>The auditor has expressed his willingness to continue to act.</p> <p>GH proposed that the auditor, John Forgan FCA, be appointed for another year and this was accepted by those present.</p> <p>It was noted that the cost of utilities is mainly electricity for floodlights. There was a short discussion on whether lighting cards were worthwhile or whether use of floodlights could be included in membership. GH said that this had been considered by the Committee over the years and it had been concluded that unlimited access caused</p>	

	problems with lights not being switched off.	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Election of Officers</b>	
	GH said that one post was up for election, that of Club Secretary. One nomination has been received for Carol Norris, proposed by Mervyn Hollidge-Goode and seconded by Zahur Amin. Carol Norris was duly elected.	
<b>10.</b>	<b>Resolutions</b>	
	GH referred to the agenda and noted that the question of whether a Resolution was required to make the changes to Membership categories had been discussed by the Committee after the agenda had been issued. It has been agreed that the changes did not require an amendment to the Constitution and therefore this item was withdrawn.	
<b>11.</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
	Judy Ross raised an issue with the height of the nets on court. DP said that these were checked weekly and that the new net bands should make adjustment easier, but agreed to remind the handy man. DP also agreed to ask the contractors to check the net post height on courts 3 & 4.  Mike Boyce asked for clarification of the booking times for courts 3 & 4. MM and GH agreed to look at communication to members.	DP  MM/GH
<b>12.</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b>	
	The date of the next AGM is Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 7.30 pm at Steep Village Hall.  The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.	

