

Tewin Tennis Club – Minutes of 48th Annual General Meeting

Held at Tewin Pavilion, Upper Green, Friday 1st March 2019

Committee members present: Chairman - David Room, Membership Secretary - Val Winfield, Treasurer - Phil Raine, LTA rep - Ann Connolly, Co-opted member - Hazel Lee, Co-opted member – Henrik Malker, Club Coach - Ross Alexander

David welcomed everyone to the 48th AGM.

- 1. Apologies:** Peter Burgess, Kevin Doyle, Rupert Stanley, Viv Campbell-Davis, Roger Clarke, Jane Lockwood-Taylor, Jude O’Sullivan, Roger Toms, Val Vanderbroek, Mari Barton-Jones, Linda Read, Nick Whiting, Anna Pertoldi, Gerry Murphy, Mike Purser, Roe Hill, Dave Rawlins, Nick and Nicola Toombs, Jane and Roger Southey, Kate and Steve Stott and Mike Brady

Attendees: Bert & Cheryl Robinson, Jane Raine, Jane Room, Keith Duerden, Gerry and Helen Smith, Jo Swift, Di Bradley, Alan Grimmond, Angela and Chris Loveys, Lynne Christie, Malcolm and Joanne Allen, Lis Tyers, Karen Shaw, Plamen Yanev, Hilary Armstrong, Deirdre and David Hatt, Mark Lee and Amanda and Steve Glew.

- 2. Minutes of Last AGM** were proposed by Ann Connolly, seconded by Val Winfield and approved unanimously.

3. Chairman’s Report

David reported that this has been a busy year not only on the playing front but with two very successful social events, the appointment of a new coach and the successful resurrection of a junior coaching programme, improvements to the facilities and some important work necessary to meet new standards set by the LTA.

Leagues

In the Datchworth Summer League, this was not a vintage season results-wise for the club but there was good representation of members involved with 15 ladies and 25 men participating.

Tewin 1 – having been promoted for 2 successive seasons, unfortunately struggled and finished 8th out of 8 in Div 4A and have been relegated.

Tewin 2 – 6th in Div 6A; one place lower than the previous year.

Tewin 3 – 5th in Div 7B, one place higher than the previous year

Tewin 4 – had finished 3rd in Div 9A in 2017 but found themselves playing up in Div 8B and ended up by a close margin 8th and so have also been relegated.

All the details are posted on the noticeboard and at [www. datchworth.net](http://www.datchworth.net). Thanks to the captains – Jane Southey, Alan Grimmond, Keith Duerden and Rupert Stanley. The captains have already met to plan for 2019 under Keith's direction. We find that there will be several senior players unavailable in 2019 through injury and in one case moving out the village. Jane has signalled her wish to stand down and so it has been decided that we will withdraw the 1st team and for this year at least we will consolidate into 3 teams. Provisional squads have been drawn up. If you have not already volunteered and think that you would like to play, please make yourself known to Keith. For the avoidance of doubt, this means that the teams will be re-numbered 1, 2 and 3 but will stay in the previous divisions, i.e. Team 1 will now be in Division 6, Team 2 in 7 and 3 in 9.

There are more men willing and available than ladies and we are investigating whether there is any other local league or cup which we might enter to capitalise on their enthusiasm.

Ladies Summer Orchard League

Jo Swift reports that the ladies played 4 matches with 2 pairs playing 2 short sets against the opposing team. The matches are played at times to suit both teams on days when captains can put together a team. 8 ladies played and the team won all 4 matches to come top of Division 5. The 8 winners were:

Di Bradley, Roe Hill, Val Winfield, Mari Barton-Jones, Eileen Doyle , Hazel Lee, Linda Read and Cheryl Robinson.

Jo tell me that she will enter a team again this year and asks that if you haven't played for this team before but would like to do so, please contact her.

Datchworth Autumn League

We had another successful season – this time we came runners-up in Division 7, so have gained promotion for the third successive season. We even have a trophy for the year 2017, which Keith collected at the Datchworth - congratulations to David Rawlins and his playing squad of 9 ladies and 7 men plus reserves. And good luck to Roger Toms who has volunteered to take over the reins next year in Division 6.

Club Tournaments

This year the doubles' tournaments were held in July because we thought that the pavilion extension works would interfere with them. There was an encouraging injection of vitality from the younger generation, even to the extent that we might have to re-introduce a Veteran's Category if some of us are to get a look in in the future.

The Club tournament champions were:

Ladies' Doubles: Val Vanderbroeck and Angie Watson

Men's Doubles: Harry Goode and Neil Whiskin

Mixed Doubles: Eileen Doyle and Nick Toombs

Men's Singles: Harry Goode

Ladies' Singles: not played because of there were insufficient entrants

Everyone is encouraged to participate. Please enter as soon as we put out the forms – it helps enormously if we actually know in advance how many entrants we need to organise for. Consideration is being given to an alternative format for the ladies' singles – possibly involving a single day round robin but this might need a volunteer to take care of any catering needed.

The Friday evening ABC League continues to be enjoyed and was won by Team D captained by Karin Shaw and Keith Duerden who were ably abetted by Hilary Armstrong, Di Bradley, Debbie Pritchard and Deidre Hatt, Rupert Stanley, Adam and Mark Lee and Nathan and Andy Reeves. Thanks again to Gerry and Rupert for their organisation. Gerry and Rupert will be in harness again for 2019.

Club Play

The Adults Club sessions on Tuesday evenings took place during the summer co-ordinated by Deirdre Hatt, some weeks well supported, some weeks less so. The Ladies' CATS and Men's RATS sessions on a Saturday morning have continued, the men in particular being extraordinarily well attended.

The deferral of the tournaments into July meant we didn't fit in other mixed doubles' informal days in 2018 but if there is the demand in 2019 I am sure that there will be the opportunity.

You will all know that coaching had been an issue since Steve Hunt retired to the West Country in 2015. I won't dwell on the history, just say that I am delighted to report that shortly after last year's AGM we found a new coach. Ross Alexander now has junior group classes running after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays, an adults' hour on Tuesday evenings and several one to one private sessions. And for the most part, these have continued to run throughout the winter. We will return to coaching plans for 2019 under item 8 on the agenda

Facilities

The courts continued in good condition after the re-paint in 2017 and a jet-wash early in 2018. We are currently considering a proposal by a new contractor to implement a moss treatment and power brush regime in place of the quite aggressive jet-washing. If we spend the money on this annual maintenance we think we can prolong the life of the court surfaces, certainly beyond the 10 year mark which is longer that they have lasted previously.

Last summer we replaced the two tennis nets and erected two new scoreboards fixed to the fences, both funded by Friends of Tewin. And a couple of plastic numbers to identify which is Court 1 and which Court 2.

This year we are considering replacing the court net posts, which whilst still standing are badly rusted such that the nets are not as well attached as they could be. Not a serious problem but an improvement we could make.

Fortunately we have had willing volunteers to undertake a number of other tasks. I would like to record our thanks to Roger Toms for his continuing work on weeding and weed-killing around the courts, to Peter Burgess and Henrik Malaker for re-oiling all our benches, to Keith Duerden and Rupert Stanley for help with replacing the nets and to Kevin Doyle for his acrobatic repairs to the fencing when we suffered the attentions of vandals. Plus Peter and Rupert for their sterling work on the floodlights which is much appreciated.

Floodlights seem to have been a perennial topic at these meetings but last year we concluded that installing permanent traditional floodlights was a major project which required planning

permission. This need not stop us if there really was a significant demand but to progress we would need at least one individual to own the project, who would need to be prepared to devote a significant amount of time to it – securing a planning permission, fund raising and organising a contractor. We were clear that the committee did not feel able currently to undertake this but what we would do was take responsibility for reviewing the temporary lighting arrangements in consultation with any new coach.

So in the autumn following the arrival of Ross, first we adjusted the two trial lights erected on the netball posts a couple of years ago. Ross supplemented this by buying a cheap lamp on a portable stand which extended head high and coaching continued into the darker months. There were rather too many leads and trailing extension cables but the juniors coped well, taking the conditions as all part of the fun.

We decided to extend the lighting attached to the fencing. We found that the price of LED lights had dropped again and we could buy 4 500watt lamps for less than the price we paid for one of the original trial lights (for the technically minded the original were a double bulb unit of 100watt each) so the new ones are not only considerably cheaper but also considerably better.

The work proceeded in several stages, involved fusing the lights in the pavilion about 3 times, replacing a couple of defective sockets and junctions which let in water but we are pleased with the end result.

Court 1 has effectively been rewired and the electricity circuit extended all the way round Court 2 so that there are now 4 double sockets available on court side. 6 new 500 watt LEDs have been installed on the fences, two on each side and one at each end, all trip hazards have been eliminated and an isolator switch has been installed on the rear pavilion outside wall. The LEDs are readily demountable to qualify as temporary for planning purposes.

The whole system is switched on and off at the isolator switch, which is protected by a padlock so that teenagers cannot interfere. Leaving the isolator switched off whenever we don't need the lights means that we should not cause any more problems inside the pavilion. The sockets on court are all shut to keep the rain out – you can open them but please don't, they are a bit of faff to close. You cannot switch the lights on from the sockets.

So we now have a lighting system which is more than adequate for all year-round coaching. It may help late finishing early season Datchworth matches if the opposition agree, it may help on other evening events but the lighting is neither tournament quality nor intended to extend the court booking hours.

Also on the facilities front, last year you know the pavilion was extended. The Tennis Club had not asked for this: it was driven by a plea from the cricketers to increase the size of their changing rooms and a desire from other users to extend the size and capacity of this main room. We made it quite clear that these changes were not needed for tennis use, although we understood the reasoning of our fellow pavilion users. We had lobbied that if work was going to take place, we would like an alternative direct access from outside to the kitchen and toilet facilities. The Parish Council did not feel it was feasible to accommodate these alterations in the plans but did agree to provide extra kitchenette facilities in the away changing room for our exclusive use.

They thought that this would enable tennis club members to access pavilion facilities when Pilates classes were on; we can go through the changing room outside door and there are facilities to make tea or other refreshments. There is a small sink, an electric point and with a donation from Friends of Tewin, this week we have bought and installed a small refrigerator. These facilities are effectively in a locked cupboard and we can safely and securely stock the cupboard with tea bags, coffee etc.

The key to the cupboard door is in a keysafe in the adjacent cupboard and the code is the same as that for the keysafe in our shed, or it will be as soon as Peter adjusts it. We could even store a few chairs in one of the cupboards if you find the changing room benches are not comfy enough.

British Tennis Venue Registration

That is the physical side of the facilities. We have also had to cope with significant off court bureaucracy this year. We are a member of the LTA or more technically we are an LTA Tennis Registered Venue. There are two primary benefits from this. First we gain comprehensive public liability insurance. Second all our members can join British Tennis Membership and access the Wimbledon Ballot. There are a whole range of other services and benefits, most of which we don't currently make use of. We could use Club Spark, their free online management tool for membership, court bookings and even coaching programmes but we don't as not all of our members are keen on electronic applications. We do take advantage of reduced court fees at the Gosling.

Anyway from the 1st October 2018 all British Tennis Registered Venues have been required to meet 5 minimum standards. These comprise:

- Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Procedures
- Welfare Officer
- Criminal Record Checks

- Risk Assessment

Ann Connolly volunteered to become our Welfare Officer, went on a training course, got herself CRB checked and prepared all the necessary paperwork. And got us successfully re-registered this year, so we qualify for our Wimbledon tickets.

Social

Finally, we also held not one but two successful social events. A big vote of thanks to Messrs Doyle and Rawlins and their team of helpers for organising again the spectacular summer party and BBQ held on the evening of Saturday 30th June. Especially for ensuring that the weather was so fabulous. Obviously David and Kevin did such a good job, that we have asked them to organise another event this year. Save the date of Saturday the 29th June 2019 in your diaries.

And then thanks to Hazel we had the first winter social for a few years – the very well attended Quiz and Fish Supper evening on the 24th November in the Village Hall. Much enjoyed by all I think, even if some demonstrated more general knowledge than others. Hazel hasn't been put off and says that she has promised to reprise next winter, although whether the event will be a Quiz or something else has yet to be finalised.

That, ladies and gentlemen, is my report for 2019.

4. Treasurer's Report

Phil reported that this is the 15th set of accounts that I have presented to Tewin Tennis Club members. I only intended to take on this role for a short time to help out so if there are any volunteers to take my place that would be much appreciated.

Also, although once again Mr A J Haggar (Tony) has provided his services to review and audit the accounts, he would like to step down this year so a volunteer to take his place is necessary. I would like to express my appreciation for the invaluable assistance and advice he gives me. I hope the club members can endorse this and pass on our thanks to him.

In the financial year 2017-18 Tewin Tennis Club generated some £5,055 of income (previous 4,425 so up 630 driven by an increase in membership). Expenditure was limited this year to some £1,877 (previous year 1410 up 466), leaving an excess of some £3177 (obviously down by 467).

At the end of the financial year our general fund stood at £25,395. This represents a healthy balance and will enable us to satisfy our main objective, to maintain a playing surface and surround that is recognised as top quality and a pleasure to use. I think everyone using the courts will agree that indeed we do have a great surface to play on.

The primary source of income comes from member subscriptions, with maintenance the largest contributor to spending. As always spending has been focused on improvements to the club facilities. It may be remembered that two years ago the club invested heavily, to the tune of some £13,000 in court upgrades, including fences and playing surface.

During the last year we cleaned the playing surface (£520); this will probably need to be done again this year and possibly painted. Two new nets were bought together with score boards for some £600. This was covered by a donation from Friends of Tewin. We also made a donation of £1000 to Tewin Parish council, towards the upgrade of this fine facility, the Pavilion. Our thanks go to friends of Tewin for the financial assistance. Also thanks to our chairman for the negotiations that secured funding.

The limited investment from the previous year in lighting for the courts has proven popular. This was further explored and decisions taken to expand this facility. While not in the accounts presented, the costs will be seen in the 2018/19 year. Again we have had great feedback and thanks to Peter Burgess for championing this initiative. The costs of LED has come down remarkably so we have invested at the right time to improve our facility.

We need to continue to be mindful that we are partly responsible for the Pavilion maintenance and refurbishment. So far the efforts of the CIC have ensured that the Pavilion is used effectively. This use draws an income that relieves the tennis and cricket clubs from annual payments. It is anticipated (and hoped) that this situation will continue. However nothing is guaranteed.

Court maintenance expenditure is anticipated to remain at relatively modest levels. The courts have been cleaned in 2018 and it is anticipated that we will clean and paint the courts in 2019. This expenditure is within the means of the club and should not seriously impact our general fund. It is with this projection in mind that we are proposing to leave subscriptions for the 2019 year at the same levels as 2018. I hope everyone will agree a great offering and one of the few inflation-proof household expenses around!

This concludes my report for this financial year.

Approval of the accounts was proposed by Ann Connolly and seconded by Val Winfield.

5. Election of Officers

David Room said that we ought to have ten committee members, the four officers and six ordinary members. Some new help would be welcome. The re-election of current members was voted in unanimously but unfortunately our auditor of many years, Tony Haggard, needs to step down so a replacement is being sought. Many thanks to him for the work he has done.

6. LTA British Tennis Venue Registration

Ann Connolly introduced herself to all members as our Safeguarding, Diversity and Welfare Officer and made them aware of our new safeguarding policies, with herself as contact if anyone has any concerns. Our policies are all listed in detail on the Tennis Club website. She also discussed the visit of the LTA Eastern Regional Safeguarding Officer and told everyone that after a couple of alterations had been made, Tewin Tennis Club had passed the Minimum Standards Inspection which is necessary to remain affiliated to the Lawn Tennis Association. This has been a time-consuming process involving training courses and altering the standard policies to suit the conditions at our tennis club so we are very grateful for all her hard work.

7. General Data Protection Regulation

All members were made aware of the opt out contact details on the membership form and that contact lists can no longer be made available to members. They were also told that all our GDPR policies are listed on the website.

8. Coaching

Ross Alexander introduced himself to all members as our new coach. He has been playing tennis for 30 years including GB caps as a junior and he has been coaching for 8 years. As well as Tewin he coaches at David Lloyd, St Albans and Bushey and has had one pupil qualify for Wimbledon in the past. He currently has 30 juniors at Tewin which he is happy with but would ideally like 50. He is hoping to do 2 adult groups but doesn't want to interfere with current player bookings so finding a suitable time for this is difficult. He asked if there was interest in daytime coaching sessions or cardio tennis which has been successful at other clubs.

9. Tennis Club Clothing

In Peter Burgess's absence, Henrik Malter modelled a Tshirt with the Tewin Tennis Club logo. David reported that Peter had organised a wide range of Tewin Tennis Club tennis clothing to be available online from <http://www.tewin.merchandise.clothing>. The link will be going on the main website shortly. He explained that this had been done at no cost to the club, so the website was a little basic and also confirmed that the Club was not taking any cut from sales.

10. A.O.B.

There was no other business

A vote of thanks was made to the committee for their work during the year