

Shiplake Tennis and Social Club

Minutes of Committee Meeting 12th March 2019

Present: Tim Dunn TD Chair, Charlie Calderbank CC Treasurer, Rachel Richardson RR Junior Secretary, Andrew Stallwood AS Membership Secretary, Helma Marlow HM Social Secretary, David Channon RDC Secretary

1. Matters Arising from Last Meeting

- Consider opening a separate bank account for social committee expenditures: Under consideration (CC)

- Organise Junior Championships: Done (RR)

- Approach Shiplake Primary School to encourage junior coaching applications: Done. Included in their newsletter (RR)

- Arrange various social events: Done and ongoing (HM)

- Source hook racks for courts: Done and will be fitted shortly (HM)

- Supervise Decking Repairs: Completed (RDC)

- Arrange First Aid Training: Done and see below (RDC)

2. Status of Membership and Coaching Renewals

AS reported that 58 previous members had not renewed: 26 adults and 32 juniors, of which 9 confirmed their decision to leave when he contacted them. He is currently sending emails to the remainder to make sure that leaving is definitely their intention and that it is not due to not receiving the renewal emails etc..

AS reported there are 4 new adult members and two more wishing to join who insist on joining together, of which one lives outside our current. So, unless those two are allowed to join, we are 54 down overall, of which 22 adults and 32 juniors.

RR reported that junior coaching renewals are 6-8 down on last year, though she expected this number to improve over the next months.

3. Treasurer's Report

CC reported balances of £1106 in the current account, £1172 on the coaching account, £6906 in the deposit account and about £20k in PayPal. He reported that he has had difficulty in moving funds out of the PayPal account into the other accounts but expects that Q Jones will assist with this soon.

He reported that membership subscriptions are up £634 on last year, despite the reduced numbers and due in part to the increased fees. However he felt that this is very likely below forecasts made for this year and overall. Given the usual expected overheads and the remaining large expenditure on court painting expected this April, he could not be confident we would be able to save the £5400 budgeted towards the next court re-surfacing this year. At the end of 2019, unless membership income is increased, we might be say £2-3000 or so short of this target.

4. Consideration of opening membership and coaching to applicants outside this area.

There ensued a discussion of this item lasting over an hour.

In summary, it was agreed by a five to one majority of committee members, that the only way to become more confident that we will meet our budgeted financial requirement this year is to open up the membership (both adults and juniors) to applicants from outside the area, provided that some membership spaces will always be held open for those within the present catchment area, up to the maximum capacity of the club. To put this into effect, it was agreed that if at any time the membership reached 300, then any additional places available would be reserved for applicants from within the present catchment area and only opened up to those outside the area once membership dropped to 300 or below again. RR indicated that her support for the change depended on this cap being in place.

It was felt unnecessary at this stage to broadcast this change of policy outside the club. Instead, it was agreed that we would undertake some local advertising to indicate that the club has spaces available at present, which we hope may encourage some people to join who may have been expecting to encounter a long waiting list, as in previous years. Then, if we are approached by applicants from outside our present area we will accept them alongside more local applicants in accordance with the above provisos.

The initial advertising will comprise professionally produced adverts in shop windows (HM responsible) and if possible editorial in the Henley Standard (HM), an entry in the Binfield Heath newsletter (CC) and the Shiplake newsletter and online circular (RDC).

It was agreed that, as at present, coaching and use of our courts will only be made available to members.

5. Junior Matters

RR indicated we have a total of 23 singles entrants to the Junior Championship this year, compared with about 40 last year.

The committee had received comments regarding the junior coaching from member Nikki Botteril. RR reviewed her comments and there was much discussion of them. Nikki's enthusiasm for improving the tennis standards of our juniors is much appreciated by the committee and RR agreed to respond to her on her points as well investigate with her the possible reasons for such a steep drop-off in junior championship participation.

6. Social Events and Planning

HM indicated that the Social Sub-committee is planning several future events:

– a Family Fun Day for children of all ages and their parents, to include some parent and child tennis matches, non-tennis activities for the youngest children and refreshments. This is planned for Sunday 14th April after the club session. She is about to send out a mailchimp to relevant members.

– A celebration to mark final completion of upgrading of the courts, after the court painting, on Sunday May 12th after the club session. The Wimbledon Draw would be held then and a BBQ is planned.

– A further Curry Club event on 7th June, following the excellent attendance at the recent one.

She suggested that contributions towards an awning to cover the outside seating area could be requested during some social events. She agreed to investigate suitable awnings and their cost.

7. Wimbledon Draw

RDC confirmed that Amanda Andrews, assisted by a few other members, was happy to act as ballot administrator this year. He indicated his pleasure at this development as in previous years he had been overwhelmed by the number of phone calls and emails needed to sort out who gets which tickets during the week immediately after the ballot. Amanda has asked RDC for a handover meeting and this will occur some time in April.

RDC will be informed of the number of pairs of tickets awarded to our club on or about March 18th..

8. Health and Safety

RDC informed the committee that there had been no accidents entered in the accident book since last July, in contrast with eight in the previous period. Presumably due at least in part to the better court surfaces. Great news.

RDC informed the committee that the planned First Aid Training is going ahead on April 11th and 12th, 6-9pm in the clubhouse. He expects about nine participants. However there is room for more and he plans to put out a notice to all members a week ahead.

9. Status of Works

HM showed examples of the coat hook racks she has had specially made for the club. They are expected to last some years and are very good value compared with those available elsewhere. She is hoping to persuade Peter Robertson to fix them up!

RDC showed photographs of the decking substructure prior to the recent replacement of rotten timbers. Inspection confirmed that the main area affected was on the side nearest the gate and probably due to the vertical end plate being installed higher than the decking in that area, with no seal between, allowing water to run easily to the timbers below. He had had the previously approved works extended just slightly to enable joist supports etc. in a slightly larger area, increasing the cost from £650 to £690.

RDC reported that the umpire's chair had now been mended at the approved cost of £55.

As regards the windbreak netting he informed the committee that Tim Rose, assisted by Alastair Fisher, had taken it down during the height of the gales to prevent further damage. The committee asked RDC to thank them for doing this in such a timely manner. He reported Tim's view, which he supported, that this netting should be replaced in the summer and taken down every winter if it was to last any length of time. The committee agreed.

RDC reported that he is waiting for Peter Robertson to provide a quote to fabricate the approved gate extension, to dissuade the footballers from climbing over.

10. AOB

AS drew the committee's attention to the fact that the 'lobster' fires the balls over varying distances due to large variations in the size/weight/age of the balls. We agreed that he would first discuss this with Tim Rose, who has the most experience with this machine and then possibly investigate how much it would cost to fill the machine with standard practice balls, the cost for consideration by the committee.

11. Next Meeting

This was agreed as Tuesday June 4th at 7.30 pm in the Clubhouse

Actions before next meeting (additional to routine work)

HM/CC/RDC – Advertise new memberships available in Henley Standard, newsletters and shop windows

RR – Discuss with Nikki Botteril her possible input to junior coaching

AS – Investigate improvements to the 'lobster' balls

HM – Arrange installation of the coat hook racks

– Investigate a suitable awning to cover external seating area

RDC – Send out reminder emails re: first aid training

– Thank Tim Rose and Alastair Fisher for taking down the netting

– Liaise with Peter Robertson re: installation of the gate extension

– Attend handover meeting re: Wimbledon Ballot