

Great Shelford Tennis Club – AGM 2022

Date of Meeting: Thursday 24th March, 7.30 pm, held online via Zoom

Committee members present: Penny Saich, James Diver (JD), Jeff Scripps (JS), Angharad Harris (AH), Ifthi Shareef (IS), Rik Henson (RH), Hamid Hejazi (HH), Marcus Forgham (MF), Victoria Roles (VR), Sarah Richards (SR)

Meeting Minutes:

Introduction by Chairman (James Diver)

JD welcomed everyone to the AGM via Zoom. 10 members of the Committee were present with a further 12 members attending online. John Coleman was the only Committee member not present.

JD explained that Angharad Harris (“AH”) would host the meeting tonight – AH to explain how the meeting will run, such as how to ask questions. This was the second AGM held via Zoom. Last year was very successful, and members should let the committee know if they particularly wish the meeting to return to face to face in future years, as the online format seems to work well.

JD explained that due to family commitments, HH had asked if the coaches report could be covered first in the meeting. This was agreed, before returning to JD’s introduction and the agenda order.

Zoom introduction by AH

AH welcomed everyone and explained that the meeting would be recorded to help SR to make notes.

All microphones would be muted unless an attendee was specifically invited to unmute to ask a question. AH asked anyone who wished to ask a question to use the ‘hand raised’ button or send AH a message in the chat box.

AH explained that proposals would be put to members by online polls throughout the meeting. If members attending the meeting were sharing a screen, they would each need to be logged into the meeting separately in order to have both their votes counted. Results would be displayed to members. Some polls had multiple questions, so members were asked to cast a vote for every question in each poll. An example fun poll was run.

Apologies for absence

SR: Apologies for absence were received from: John Coleman, Dani Grant, Sarah Coppendale, Stephen Chittenden, Erica Lowry, Sue Fox and Biddy Wilkinson.

Minutes of last AGM (2021)

A minor query was raised on the 2021 minutes- the minutes state apologies from Sylvia Morton, but Sylvia was present at the meeting and is minuted as making two comments. SR to amend minutes accordingly before the minutes are signed off.

Coach’s Report:

HH: Thank you to everyone for allowing me to speak first at the meeting. The start of the year was a disaster, with lockdown, but since then, tennis has boomed and the support for coaching at the club has been as strong as it has ever been. As an example, in Block 1 (the summer 2021 term), 223 people came to coaching of which 159 were children and 19 were preschoolers. This is amazing for a four-court village club. These numbers have continued since lockdown. 242 different children played tennis at the club during summer camps. This is an amazing level of work for the coaches and we are very grateful to the committee for the court time that we are given. There is, of course, more that we could do, with more courts, but we understand that we get our fair share of court time, and we hope that club members are happy with current arrangements.

There is definitely more demand for adult coaching groups, and we are going to look at more adult coaching during the day because evening court time is so precious. We have also started some new mini tennis groups.

The level of coaching at the club is amazing, not just for a village tennis club but in comparison to many clubs. A huge thank you to all the coaches. Thank you also to the committee- having worked with over twenty clubs, the Shelford committee is exceptional, and the club is unique in having a committee that considers what is best for the club as a whole. Thank you too to everyone who supports the coaching programme at the club.

HH offered to take questions. There were none.

JD thanked HH, saying that Over & In do a great job. It is a challenge to keep everyone happy, but we do feel that it is important to bring the juniors through. However, the committee is always conversant and open to suggestions.

Treasurer's Report

JS noted that after seven years, this would be his last report to the AGM. Reports and balance sheets had previously been circulated. JS asked for questions before considering points of note.

Raised hand from Rob Harris: The pre-payment has gone up a lot this year- what is this?

JS: The majority of this is the deposit on the new floodlights, which are being installed now, and also the deposit for the social event, which we had to pre-pay despite it being booked in for May.

Points of note on accounts:

The Covid grant received covered the 25% membership discount over the last two years.

Due to reduction in club usage during lockdown the electricity cost is quite depressed and will rise in the next year.

The energy renewal is due in May, and this will be a negotiation task for the new treasurer.

PayPal stopped working with ClubBuzz last year. There is a new system in place called Stripe that members will be able to use to pay their subs via ClubBuzz.

The court booking system has a cost. It seems that this system has been welcomed by many, and the cost is affordable, but to be noted.

There have been no match fees since 2020, and there will need to be a discussion as to whether these are reintroduced, particularly with rising costs.

The Sinking Fund has been utilised to pay for the floodlights. The deposit has been paid and there is approximately £18 000 to pay upon installation (which is currently underway). The fund will be replenished over the next few years, but future capital spends will be court resurfacing and possibly re-fencing.

JS offered to take further questions on the accounts. There were none.

Subscription and Entry Fees for 2022/23:

The proposals were circulated to members in advance, in accordance with the club rules, and no objections were raised. There has been no increase in subs for two years and a 25% discount has been applied. 2022/23 subs have returned to the levels required for running the club and have increased slightly from the previous rates- from £150 to £160 for a senior member and so on through the membership categories.

JS offered to take questions on the subs. There were none.

One question was put to members:

1. Proposed subscriptions for the 2022/2023 membership year were circulated in advance of the meeting. Please vote in favour of, or against, the proposal.

Poll result: Passed – 100% in favour

JS was thanked for all his work on the committee over the last seven years.

Match Captains' Reports:

Mens and Mixed:

RH shared the results of the Summer and Winter Men's and Winter Mixed 2021 league results. Points of note: Men's 1 were champions of division 1 again. Unfortunately, Men's 2 were demoted to division 2. Men's 5 were promoted to division 5. This means that for 2022 Summer, Teams 1-5 are in divisions 1-5.

The Winter men's results were not quite so good- there were some issues with match organisation, which have hopefully now been resolved. In mixed, some of our teams dropped, although mixed 5 were promoted.

The Vets matches are still ongoing. Vets 1 may be demoted. Vets 2 will stay where they are, and Vets 3 may be promoted to the same division as Vets 2.

For summer 2022, there is an expectation that the teams will not be as strong. We have lost a number of second team players who have moved away and have also decided that the first team will be primarily regular club members, organised by Andrew Greenaway- based on a decision to have a good club team, rather than the best team possible.

RH offered to take questions. There were none.

Ladies and Mixed:

IS: There were six ladies' teams in summer 2021. The 6th team, which was a new team, won their division and were promoted. Ladies 2 and 5 were demoted in their divisions. There will be six ladies' teams again this summer. However, there will only be three mixed teams due to previous poor availability (in summer 2021 there were six).

In Winter 2021, all the ladies' teams stayed in their divisions, with the exception of Ladies 6, who were promoted to the same division as the Ladies 5s.

JD thanked RH and IS for their hard work, acknowledging what a difficult job and responsibility being a team captain and managing the process of matches is. Noted that post-Covid, people's lifestyles and agendas have changed, but hopefully over the next year will revert to something closer to that of previous years.

Election of Committee and President for 2022/23 Season:

JD: 5 proposed changes to the Committee for 2022/23. Firstly, Colin Yeoman, who was Membership Secretary but also did so much in terms of the court booking system and streamlining membership categories has now moved away. Rebecca Stacey is proposed to replace Colin as Membership Secretary, having been involved in the Committee previously, and in this role since Autumn 2021. Judie Simmonds is proposed as Events Secretary, taking over from AH. JS is standing down as Treasurer, with Simon Lancaster proposed to replace him. JD is standing down as Chairman with AH to take on this role. Junior Secretary is a new role, which JD will be taking on this year.

The proposals were circulated to members in advance, in accordance with the club rules, and no objections were raised.

Penny Saich (President)
Angharad Harris (Chairperson)
Simon Lancaster (Treasurer)
Sarah Richards (Secretary)
Hamid Hejazi (Head Coach)
Rik Henson (Men's Captain)
Ifthi Shareef (Ladies' Captain)
Judie Simmonds (Events Secretary)
Rebecca Stacey (Membership secretary)
Marcus Forgham (Tournaments secretary)
John Coleman (Maintenance and repairs)

Victoria Roles (Compliance secretary)
James Diver (Junior Secretary)

Question from Rob Harris: "Can I propose that the title 'Chairman' is changed to 'Chairperson'?" This was agreed.

One question was put to members:

1. The proposed Committee appointments for the 2022/2023 year were circulated in advance of the meeting. Please vote in favour of, or against, these appointments.

Poll result: Passed – 100% in favour

There is still one vacancy on the committee- Social Media secretary. If anyone is interested, please do come forward.

JD welcomed the new committee members and thanked the committee, over the last year and for his time as Chairperson (five years). We are lucky to have such a supportive and pro-active group of people involved. Thank you also to SR for the secretary role in the last year, keeping committee and members informed.

Any other business

JD asked for any other business from the floor.

JD: Question from Dani Grant, who feels that a lot of time is taken up by holiday camps and that this impacts particularly on Off-peak members, with a reduction in membership appropriate.

JD Answer: We review the holiday camps and the court time given to coaching, and we try to move things around and accommodate every aspect of the membership. We know that there are times when the courts are busy, and that at times all four courts are in use for camps for a couple of hours of the day- the summer is the most difficult time for this. We try to manage the situation, but if anyone has any grievance, please let us know- we do continue to look at this. As earlier mentioned, we are committed to providing our coaches with a platform and we feel that this a reason that our club is a success and that we bring more people to our club, and it has a vibrant feel.

JD: I would like to make people aware of the social event that is planned in May, and we would like as many people to come as possible.

AH: Two things happening on the same day- during the day we have Bright Ideas for Tennis charity coming to provide a coaching day. There are two sessions for juniors and two for adults that you can sign up for on the website. In the evening there is a quiz at The Red Lion in Whittlesford.

Question from Mark Sanders – Mark thanked all the committee, particularly those retiring. Asked "How will we be raising funds for Bright Ideas for Tennis?"

AH: The funds raised stay in the club. It will cost money to attend the coaching sessions, plus we will be selling food and drink, cakes, have a fastest serve competition etc.

Question from Mark Sanders regarding membership numbers and any plans/ideas for additional courts.

JD: Previous talks re. additional courts have dried up. We have had a preliminary discussion regarding using Stapleford courts, which we may hear more about at the end of April. Membership numbers, we are at 434. Of these, 326 adults (including students), 106 juniors. The club is in a healthy position.

Question from Mark Sanders – A lot of LTA development is coming through ClubSpark. We may miss out on things if we don't adopt ClubSpark rather than ClubBuzz and I just wondered whether there were any thoughts on this.

JD: This is something that we are thinking seriously about.

RS: I have a session on it next week, so will be able to give feedback then.

Question from Mike Mills – Has there been any thought about a collaboration with Hauxton court?

JD: This could be a possibility. We would need to think about what we would be able to use the courts for- perhaps for additional adult coaching sessions.

Question from Mike Mills – is there any feedback on improvements due to the LED lighting?

JD: The lighting will be cheaper to run. I saw the lights on this evening. The lights looked fantastic, very clear. Hopefully we will enjoy these for many years.

JD: Thanks all for attending. Please do get in touch with us if you think of anything else.

Meeting closed.