

COOMBE WOOD LAWN TENNIS CLUB

Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting held on Monday 27 March 2023 at 8.00p.m. in the clubhouse.

Attendees:

Mike Bourne (President), Heather McAtackney (Chair), Robert Gale (Honorary Secretary), Paul Baxter (Honorary Treasurer), Ian Stewart, Dusko Delic, Belinda Delic, Edith Stefan, Anne Sagar, Brian Isles, Margaret Isles, Allan Lloyd, Meryl Lloyd, Ollie Lloyd, John Bryant, Wendy Seigel, Viacheslav Sigel, Andy Brownen, Louise Jordan, Gary Jordan, Armand Shahverdian, Kimberly Wilkinson, Javier Mendez, Val Jermy, Kalyana Nandakumar, Nandini Narayanan, Gopalan Narayanan, Peter Pye, John Gordon, Mary Cruickshank, Charles Cruickshank, Campbell Brown, Alfred Shahverdian, Richard James, Tim Husain, Yaroslav Kulyk, Heather Korzilius, Lester Korzilius, Daniel McQue, Natasha Sherrard, Judit Farkas, Kerry Ono, Jonathan Rushworth, Skye Pickin, Shaun Bullard.

Apologies: Chris Lewis, John Lewis, Jan Stewart, Tessa Clarke, Claire Randall, Nicki Tattersall, Jo Haigh, Carol Ward, Mike Ward.

The President, Mike Bourne, opened the meeting.

1. 2022 AGM Minutes:

The resolution to approve the minutes of the 2022 Annual General Meeting was proposed by Heather McAtackney and seconded by Belinda Delic. The resolution was approved by the meeting.

2. President's Address:

Mike then gave his report on the activities of the club over the past year.

He opened by stressing the invaluable contribution to the club that is made by the Committee under Rob Gale's leadership and thanked them for everything that they do.

Many Committee members have served for in excess of 20 years and are towards the upper end of the age spectrum, but fortunately are willing and able to contribute as we plan the period ahead. Having said that it is unrealistic to expect for this to last for ever and so it is increasingly important to position the club for future generations.

Mike said this is the most important project that the Committee is undertaking. This initiative started last year and a significant part of this is a review the Club's rules and legal structure. It is no longer realistic for the club to operate on the current basis and without a formal legal identity appropriate to a club of our size. This will enable the Club to enter into contracts in its own name and limit the personal liability of the Committee and other members.

Rob was due to resign as Hon.Secretary at this year's AGM having completed six years as Hon Secretary, but has kindly agreed to stay on for a further year to see this project through but he would then like to hand over the baton.

This is an illustration of the requirement to recruit new blood to take on the senior roles in the Club. Mike strongly encouraged those members who enjoy our tremendous facilities to volunteer to join the Committee or help in any way that their busy schedules permit. If you are interested in helping, please contact Heather, Rob or Mike.

Mike then moved on to the rest of his report.

Sadly, three of our members had passed away recently.

One of our Honorary Life Members, Angela Ralling, passed away just before Christmas. Angela had been a member for an incredible 57 years. She played in the teams and was also a strong supporter of the club, helping with many activities and providing valued support to her husband, Chris, during his time on the committee including when he was the club's Chairman. Angela was an enthusiastic gardener who spent many hours supporting the grounds team in keeping the club looking attractive. Angela had many friends at the club and will be greatly missed.

Marigold Haworth passed away in January. Along with her husband Chris, who sadly died of Covid two years ago, Marigold had been a member of the club since the 1990s. She continued as a social member after she stopped playing tennis and became an active member of the Coombe Wood Bridge Club. She will be missed very much by all for her good play, terrific sense of humour, and fun.

Roald Pettersen passed away just before Christmas. He was a very active club member in the 80s, 90s and early 2000s and continued as a social member of the club when he stopped playing. In 2021 he was also made a Honorary Life member following 40 years of continuous membership. He will be remembered

by those of us who played with him for his unfailing sense of humour and his incredible warm up routines!

MEMBERSHIP

In total, across all membership categories, we now have around 500 adult and 450 junior and cadet members.

A slide was put up showing that adult membership numbers have increased through this year, as they have for each of the last 5 years.

We have had a waiting list for adult members for the last 3 years. Initially it was put in place to handle applications during the first Covid lockdown, and it is now maintained to limit the number of full adult and Under 26 memberships to a total of 350.

There are currently 76 people on the waiting list, of which approximately 30% are beginners. When we have spaces available, Ollie is asked to play in applicants who are more experienced and those of a lesser standard are only accepted when we have suitable beginners group coaching courses available which is a condition of membership. Increasingly that means the applicants must be available during the daytime when Ollie has some spare capacity.

We are encouraging those on the waiting list to join as off-peak members if possible, and you can see that this category more than doubled during 2022 to 32. We successfully started a social tennis session on Friday mornings to cater mainly for the influx of off-peak members.

Junior numbers also rose during the year, although there has been a slight decline in the number of cadets - that's children under 8. We don't limit the number of juniors, but we advise parents that they should only accept a place when there is space for their child on the term-time coaching program.

Looking at the age profile of juniors and cadets on the next slide, we can see that many have recently moved from being cadets to juniors, a trend that will clearly continue. We are not sure why the number of new cadet applicants has dropped off, but we will continue to monitor the trends.

Earlier this year we upgraded the club's internet connection. The old system had been unstable and frequently caused problems for the iPads in the bar and clubhouse. The new system is super-fast, offering speeds up to 100Mbps with much greater reliability.

We have replaced the lock in the front door with a high-security lock that can be opened by a member's smartphone – a system that was recommended by Richard Senger. The bar door has also been converted to that system. Ian has integrated this with our membership system to allow members to use the App-based key. If you haven't already done so, please remember to download the Unloc App and apply for your virtual key. The old lock will be removed, and the new system will go fully live this Saturday, 1 April.

Mike thanked Ian Stewart, our Membership Secretary, for the fantastic job he continues to do, not only on membership matters, but also in developing and running our IT systems.

JUNIORS AND COACHING

It has been another fantastic year at Coombe Wood from a coaching point of view. Both our junior and adult programmes continue to thrive and are as busy as ever.

One area that we are looking to improve upon is our cadet participation where numbers have fallen as explained. If anyone has or knows of any kids who might like to try out the game, please let Ollie know and he can arrange a taster session for them.

We have had a quite a bit of success with our junior teams this winter, with 3 teams qualifying for the knockout stages of the national junior league team trophy. Our 8-and-under mixed team sadly lost in their quarter-final, but our 9-and-under mixed team and 12-and-under boys team have made it through to the semi-finals. Ollie is extremely proud of all our players and it just goes to show how much our coaching set up has developed during his time as Head Coach.

Registration is now available for our junior summer term programme as well as for 2 weeks of Easter camps which start on the 3rd April. Please book now to avoid disappointment as some of our classes are already full.

Finally we had a fantastic turnout for the training course for the "Bright Ideas for Tennis" disability coaching sessions. Thanks were given to everyone who attended and showed their support for this great initiative, which is set to launch later in the spring when these inclusive family sessions will be run by Ollie and Natasha Sherrard on Saturdays after junior coaching.

Ollie would like to thank everyone who takes part on our programmes and would always welcome any feedback on any aspect of the coaching activities. Many thanks to Ollie, and the rest of his coaching team, Harry, Ed and Joe, for all their hard work over the year. We are very lucky to have such a fantastic

team who do a wonderful job and help to make such a lovely family atmosphere around the club.

Mike also thanked Chis Durkin, who stood down from the committee this year, for his contribution and enthusiasm during his time as Juniors Secretary.

TOURNAMENT AND TEAMS

There continues to be a strong demand for playing competitive tennis at the club with increasing competition for team places.

Our ladies teams had another very successful year. Congratulations to our ladies 1st team on finishing top of division 7 in both the summer and winter Surrey leagues. Our ladies 2nds and 3rds also won their respective divisions in the Summer and the 2nds have also gained promotion again in the recently finished winter league.

We also entered a team for the first time in the ladies daytime midweek league and I'm pleased to say they came top of their division.

Our men's 1st team continue to perform strongly in Division 5 and the 2nd team are now hot on their heels, finishing top of division 7 in the summer.

Our two mixed teams also performed strongly last summer with the 1sts winning their division and the 2nds finishing as runners up. With an increasing number of players interested in mixed tennis, we are entering a 3rd team this summer - the first time we have been able to do this for several years.

Thanks are due to all of the team captains for running the teams.

Some of our team players have also been successful in the winter Surrey tournaments. Judit Farkas reached the final of the open singles, Judit and Natasha Sherrard reached the final of the open doubles and Clare Turner the final of the over 35s singles.

Bob Blunden was part of the Surrey County team that won the Men's Over 75s National Inter-County knock-out tournament this winter. The final was held at Queens Club in December with Surrey convincingly beating Hampshire by 4 rubbers to nil.

Tournament:

Final's Day was able to revert to its normal timing at the start of July last year. We again had first-time winners in each singles event. Congratulations to Jo

Parfitt on his victory in the men's singles, and to Caroline Bletcher for winning the women's event.

Thank you to Richard Senger, for acting as tournament referee and ensuring all the matches were played on schedule.

The singles box leagues have also continued to be incredibly popular. Thank you to Jon Rushforth and Mark Fox, for running this.

Rob Gale was thanked for running the teams over the past year in addition to his already very full workload as Hon Sec. Thanks also to Nicki Tattersall for overseeing the ladies teams until recently standing down from this role.

Jan Stewart has kindly agreed to take over as Match Secretary with overall responsibility for team tennis as well as running the tournament. Jan has already started in the role and will be coordinating the process for selecting team squads for the summer following the Team Selection Policy that has recently been put in place to formalise the process. Armand Shahverdian will be supporting Jan in this role and will helping with running the men's teams.

WELFARE AND SAFEGUARDING

Thanks were also extended to Val Jermy, our Welfare Officer, who fulfils this important role very diligently and ensures Safeguarding matters are properly considered in everything we do. We continue to work closely with the LTA to follow guidelines and best practice in child safeguarding. Our core Safeguarding and other policies were updated this year and are available on the website. Please see these policies for details of how to report a concern, or you can contact Val directly if you ever need to.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Thank you to the membership for continuing to support the social events. Last year we had a good array of events which were all well attended.

The social calendar started off with a charity Quiz night, organised and hosted wonderfully by Jan and Ian. Despite a few technical glitches, the evening was fun and enjoyable and £300 was raised for Princess Alice Hospice.

Finals day was a great success with members enjoying sandwiches, tea, cakes and the Columbian street food, with the Pimms flowing throughout as always. With the adult and junior finals all taking place, Finals Day really has become firmly established as a highlight of the club year and a fun family occasion.

This year, the finals will be held on July 8th. As always, we welcome volunteers to help on the day helping to make and serve sandwiches, tea and cakes as well as help behind the bar. The evening fare this year will be burgers, salad and dessert.

Last year also saw the return of the ever popular 'End of Summer' party. The food was excellent and the DJ made sure that everyone was on their feet dancing. Please hold 23rd of September in your diaries for a similar event this year. More details will be provided nearer the event.

Following requests from the membership, we had a Christmas party with finger food. I am pleased to say that it was a resounding success, and we will plan on repeating the event this year on the 2nd of December - another date to hold in your diaries.

Nandini was thanked for all of the exceptional hard work she puts in as Social Secretary to make these events a success.

If members have any ideas for new events or would like to help out, please just let Nandini know.

BRIDGE CLUB

Our bridge club continues to operate mainly online, although matches are played face to face against other clubs. This year, for the first time, we fielded a second team in the Surrey tennis club Bridge league. Both teams have performed well and one or other might emerge in first place.

Overall, Bridge is profitable and brings a net income of over £2,000 to the club.

Thanks were given to Jan and Ian for running this so successfully.

GROUNDS AND FACILITIES.

It's been another busy year for grounds activities, with much of the time spent planning for some of the large upcoming projects.

Terrace:

After months of discussion, planning, and going out to tender, we are pleased to confirm the terrace development will start on 26 April and is due to be finished around the 1st to 2nd week of June. Although access to the clubhouse should be

available throughout, there is bound to be some disruption, which we ask all members to be patient with.

The design plan for the project is displayed on the notice board.

Thanks to Nikki Dobson, one of our members who runs her own architects practice, for her guidance and expertise in dealing with all planning applications. Nikki will stay on board throughout the project to manage the contractors.

Lane:

Planning permission was finally granted for the proposed lane footpath, but only after protracted discussions with the planners to satisfy additional ecological and planting requirements. Because of these delays, following on from the need to put the project on hold during covid, we had to go out to tender again for the work. Unfortunately, with the inevitable price increases as well as expanded specification to meet planning requirements, the quotes came in well above the amount approved at last year's AGM. We are therefore seeking to approve the new estimated spend today so that the project can be completed later in the year.

Many thanks to Bob Blunden for his tenacity in seeing the project through to obtaining planning approval.

Nikki Dobson will be managing the project, which will be undertaken by the same contractors who are carrying out the terrace works.

Planning has also been undertaken for the conversion of our floodlights to LED during 2023. Thanks to John Lewis who is leading this project and to Nikki Dobson for assisting with the necessary planning application.

The courts continue to be maintained by contractors and with additional help from some club members, the courts are in excellent condition. Thanks in particular to Slava who has spent many hours diligently sweeping and clearing the courts of leaves and other debris. Also thanks to Bella and Sandy McDonald for their assistance with rubbish clearance and bin emptying.

The car park potholes remain a perennial problem. We have had several attempts to fill them, all of which have proven not to be long lasting. We will be looking at a more permanent solution, but in the meantime please continue to take care, and drive slowly, as you enter and leave the club.

The grounds get better each year thanks to the work undertaken by our Grounds Secretary, Chris Lewis and Nigel and his team from Willow Landscape's. Chris is also leading the Terrace project, further details of which will be covered in Rob's presentation.

Louise and Gary Jordan were thanked for their work ordering and ensuring new tennis balls are regularly available.

FINANCES.

Thanks to the efforts of the committee and the continued excellent financial management by our Treasurer, Paul Baxter, the club's finances remain in a very healthy state.

3. Treasurer's report:

Paul then presented the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022, copies of which had been made available to the meeting. It was noted that:

- Total income for 2022 had increased by 12% to £160,198 from £143,498 in 2021 due to higher membership numbers together with the 5% increase in subscription rates.
- Expenditure excluding projects had also increased by 18% to £56,443 from £47,940 in 2021. The club's costs had been subject to the same inflationary pressures as seen by homes and business throughout the country. Electricity costs had increased by over 50% to £13,323 and are expected to rise further in 2023.
- Expenditure on projects was reasonably low at £13,386, as the planned lane development had been further delayed.
- Overall, the club had a surplus for the year of £90,369, compared to a surplus of £73,071 in 2021.
- The club remained in a very healthy position at the year-end, with net assets of £302,074, including cash balances of £286,949.
- A reserve of £137,532 was set aside for future court refurbishments.

The resolution to adopt the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2022 was proposed by Nandini Narayanan and seconded by Dusko Delic. The resolution was approved by the meeting.

Thanks were given to Paul for his work on the club accounts.

Mike was sorry to report that our Honorary Auditor, John Walton, has been unwell recently and is not able to continue in the role. He was thanked for his many years of service to the club.

As John was not able to carry out the audit this year and there was too little time for us to find someone to take his place, the accounts this year remain unaudited.

The requirement for an auditor going forward will be reviewed as part of the proposal to convert to a limited company.

4. Subscriptions fees:

We are proposing an average 10% increase in subscriptions and fees for the membership year starting on 1st May.

Although our running costs have increased by nearly 18% and are expected to rise even more once the full impact of electricity price increases kick-in, we are nevertheless keeping the increase in line with the current overall UK inflation rate.

Our finances are very healthy at the moment, as Paul has explained. We have built up significant reserves but a large portion of these will be utilised on the major projects this year.

We also want to position our finances to enable us to consider employing a 'club manager' in the near future. The work required to run a modern club with record membership levels is ever increasing and we are now at the point where it is no longer realistic to expect this to be done wholly by volunteers.

The resolution to approve the subscriptions and fees for the 2023/24 membership year was proposed by Belinda Delic and seconded by Heather McAtackney. The resolution was approved by the meeting.

5. Club Officers and Committee Members:

Mike was pleased to say that we have a new member standing for election, Armand Shahverdian. Armand joined the club in 2018 and is as keen to help support with club activities. He is a regular attendee at midweek social tennis, plays for the men's and over 55s teams and is currently captain of one of the men's teams. I am sure he will be a valuable contributor to the committee.

All of the other officers and committee members are standing for re-election as listed on the slide shown.

Rather than go through each person in turn, a vote was taken on all the names together.

The resolution to approve the election of the officers and committee members, as set out below, was proposed by Wendy Seigel and seconded by John Gordon. The resolution was approved by the meeting.

Officers:

Mike Bourne	President
Heather McAttackney	Chair
Robert Gale	Honorary Secretary
Paul Baxter	Honorary Treasurer

Other Committee Members:

Belinda Grove	
Jo Haigh	
Val Jermy	Welfare Officer
Chris Lewis	Grounds Secretary
John Lewis	
Meryl Lloyd	
Ollie Lloyd	
Daniel McQue	
Nandini Narayanan	Social Secretary
Kerry Ono	
Ian Stewart	Membership Secretary
Jan Stewart	
Armand Shahverdian	
Nicki Tattersall	

6. 2023 Expenditure:

Rob Gale then gave a presentation on the projects proposed for 2023 and future years.

Normal club running costs are expected to increase significantly in 2023. This is primarily due to the plan to recruit a club manager, for which a budget of £20,000 has been included, representing recruitment midway through the year. In addition, electricity costs are expected to double and other costs are budgeted to increase by 10%.

The main projects planned for the year are the development of the terrace, conversion of the floodlights to LED and completion of the lane footpath. Details of all these projects were set out in the slides which Rob presented, a copy of which will be made available on the club website.

Thanks were extended to Bob Blunden for leading the lane project through to planning approval, and to Chris Lewis and Nikki Dobson for their work so far on the planning and design of the new terrace.

Rob also summarised the plans to convert the club from an unincorporated association to a company limited by guarantee. Details of this were also set out in the presentation slides. A budget of £10,000 was included for legal and tax advice on this review.

It had become clear during the meeting that, in addition to the projects described, members wished to prioritise the repair of the car park potholes. It was agreed that the proposed contingency should be increased to bring total expenditure to £340,000 to create headroom for expenditure on the car park.

The resolution to approve planned expenditure for 2023, totalling £340,000 as set out below, was proposed by John Gordon and seconded by Gary Jordan. The resolution was approved by the meeting.

• Normal club running costs	£95,032
• Lane footpath development	£48,000
• Legal structure and rules review	£10,000
• Development of terrace	£75,000
• LED Floodlights	£75,000
• Car park pot holes/Contingency:	£36,968
• Total	£340,000

7. 5-Year Plan:

The rolling 5-year expenditure plan was outlined. As well as the projects planned for the next year, this includes the redecoration and purchase of new furniture for the clubhouse, and resurfacing of court 1 in 2016, and of courts 4 and 5 when needed. It was noted that courts 4 and 5 have already exceeded their 10 years anticipated but remain in excellent condition so may not need resurfacing for several years yet.

8. Events calendar:

Key dates for club events in 2023 were noted.

9. Any other business:

Questions were taken from members as follows:

- a) Daniel McQue asked when the time came to resurface court 1 would there be a members vote to decide which surface would be considered? Tim Husain noted that, as court 1 is used for final's day and most of the earlier rounds are played on artificial clay, it might be preferable to convert the show court to that surface. Rob responded recognising the arguments for converting to clay but noting that the issue is one for the future as Court 1 should not need resurfacing for several years.
- b) Gary Jordon raised the issue of a tear in the surface at the back of courts 4 and 5 and Slava gave the meeting his views on the possible cause, as well as certain other issues regarding court maintenance and the upcoming floodlight conversion. It was agreed that Chris Lewis (Grounds Secretary) and Heather McAttackney should meet with Slava to discuss these matters in more detail.
- c) Jon Rushworth asked if the committee has considered solar panels on the roof. Rob Gale explained that the committee had looked in detail at this question when Jon first raised it and had concluded there was no economic case for installing solar panels at the club. Ian Stewart explained that one of the main reasons for this is the club's major power consumption is for the floodlights. Energy generated during sunlight would need to be stored on large batteries for use at night. The cost of those batteries plus the lack of storage space makes it not financially viable.
- d) Ollie Lloyd asked if the committee could investigate the possibility of installing more men's toilets. Ollie was reminded that the committee had already researched this in detail, looking at various potential redesigns of the current men's changing rooms and had concluded it is not practical given our clubhouse space constraints.
- e) Skye Pickin said she would like to run two events to fund raise for the disability tennis initiative and asked for two dates, both on a Saturday, to run events in the clubhouse. Skye was asked to liaise with Nandini to discuss the proposed plans and potential dates.

There being no further questions, the meeting was declared closed.