

Castle Hedingham Tennis Club

St. James Street, Castle Hedingham Halstead Essex

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 28th February 2019 @ 7.30pm, in the Disraeli Room, The Bell, Castle Hedingham

Apologies: Maria Selby, Matthew Chater

Attending: Andrew Temperton, Caroline Chater, Sam Stent, Stephen Hendry, Jo Bright, James Hatfield, Julia Metson, Sheelagh Chapman, Mike Osborne, Adam Redgewell, Keith Chapman, Vicky Osborne, Kevin Waller, Peter Drury, William Parker, Sheetal Pandya, Gareth Jones, Liam Lovelock, Keith Argent, Ben Newell, Dot Clarke, Mike Clarke, Wendy Taylor, Alex Irving

MINUTES

Andrew opened the AGM by welcoming everyone.

2018 Minutes – no comments made or amendments required.

Chairman's Report

Andrew reported as follows:-

From the committee's point of view we have had to take on a lot more work this year. Having already dealt with the new GDPR regulations we have now had to actively incorporate safe-guarding, diversity and inclusion policies.

Membership-wise we had a good season last year with membership levels and income broadly similar to last year. Financially we have not done quite so well however, largely due to the cancellation of our major fundraising event following poor take-up of tickets. Nevertheless we are in a good financial position overall which Sam will report on later.

Regardless of our healthy financial position, we do however have two major imminent problems which will require a far greater level of funds than we have immediately available. These are the collapsing wall between us and the road and the deteriorating court surface and netting. Our target is to get the wall sorted out this year and the courts in early 2020.

We are currently at least £40,000 short of the money we will need and thus there is much hard work for your committee to do in raising the necessary funds and managing the process. In order to achieve this we will need much support from the membership both financially and practically. Without this support the Club will not be able to make it through this next stage. Please support events and fundraising efforts as much as you can and offer your practical support as and when requested.

In view of the above, fees will have to increase this year but they will still appear very good value for money by comparison with other local clubs and most other hobbies or sports people may choose to follow.

Looking back on last season we had a mixed performance from our various teams, a little down on what we would have hoped, largely due to various player injuries. Nevertheless we put out 4 mens teams, 2 ladies, 2 mixed, 1 senior. We also put out 4 Junior teams – one mini, two under-14s boys and 1 under 18's girls. We also put out 2 mixed teams for the winter season. I will report on the results a little later.

Our junior coaching is going very well and Sheetal will fill you in on this a little more later.

I am pleased to announce that we have reached agreement with Gosfield Tennis Club who have some wonderful new floodlights and very few players to make use of them. For the foreseeable future our members will be able to rent their courts for £10/court for 2 hours. This will enable both social tennis and team-practice to take place in winter evenings. Sheetal is making arrangements to run some evening sessions there so that our Juniors can similarly keep playing in the week. We may also be able to make use of these courts as overspill when we are struggling to re-arrange match fixtures on our own courts. This will be of particular use to anyone looking to prepare themselves for the coming season. We will circulate details of booking and payment arrangements after this meeting.

The clocks go forward on 31st March this year and our new season starts on 1st April so that means our popular monthly Peroni & Prosecco evenings start again on Friday 5th April. We will send a reminder around nearer the time and look forward to seeing you all then.

Treasurer's Report

Sam reported on new income from the neighbour's access licence which is bringing in £50/month. This commenced in September. She also noted match fees were up but it was a poor year for fund-raising resulting in £4,000 being transferred to the sinking fund as opposed to £5,000 in the previous year. This gives a balance of £21,000 in the sinking fund as at 31/12/18.

The accounts were proposed by James Hatfield and seconded by Mike Osborne.

The Constitution

Andrew read out the new text on the LTA minimum requirements (policies and procedures). See attached updated document.

Proposed by: Mike Clarke and Seconded by: Dot Clarke.

Coaches' Report

Juniors - Sheetal reported that the Junior section is thriving. For the past 2 years there have consistently averaged between 40-60 juniors on each Saturday. A new weekday junior session will be starting over at Gosfield TC soon and there is a drive by the committee and the team captains to get the top juniors playing in the Men's teams. The camps continue to do well and are at capacity almost every day. February half term camp was a great success and one of the only ones in the area that ran.

Schools & community partnership – through this partnership Sheetal will be going into 6 local schools (3 through CHTC and 3 through Stebbing TC) once again offering 2 hrs coaching every other week free of charge starting the first week of March. Julia asked whether he would be able to visit Finchingfield school - Sheetal will follow up with Julia. The partnership aims to give new children access to tennis and ultimately encourage them to join the club.

Adult coaching – exercise referrals are coming in from the local GP and Sheetal will be offering a day time activity to these people.

Junior League tables: following up on Andrew's comments earlier, Sheetal said there are currently 4 junior teams. U18 girls (Currently in 5th place but have only played 2 matches due to cancellations), U14 Boys div 1 (2nd place currently although played a lot less matches than number 1) & U14 Boys div 3 (2nd place currently with 3 played and 4/5 to play) and Orange mini team – Under 9's (3rd place currently with quite a few to play). It is now an annual league which runs Sept – July. He said with more match experience, the juniors were gaining in confidence.

Adult coaching – what has historically been called rusty rackets is being re-branded to Quick start tennis. Sheetal added, 1- to- 1 adult coaching is available. An on-line questionnaire on coaching requirements will be sent out shortly to gauge what sort of adult sessions members are interested in and the responses to this will help with future planning.

Team Captain's Reports

Caroline was pleased to announce that the Mixed A team had come 2nd in division 1 in the summer league and been awarded a cup. Mens A had finished 2nd in division 1, Mens B had finished last in division 1, Mens C 2nd last in division 3 and Men's D 2nd last in division 4.

In the winter league the Mixed A is currently in the top half of the table in division 1 with 2 still to play and the Mixed B are top half of division 2 with 1 to play. The seniors have just finished their matches and will hopefully finish 2nd.

Peter thanked all players and captains and congratulated them on managing to put out so many teams on behalf of CHTC.

Announcement of Team Captains (see attached list)

Rules – including Subscription Rates (see attached)

Adult membership: Proposal 1 – to increase from £90 to £110 (voted for by 15 members present at meeting).
Proposal 2 - to increase from £90 to £100 (voted for by 4 members present)

Agreed 2019 Adult membership rate: £110. It was noted that this equated to less than £10/month.

Mike C asked how many members there were in total – Sam estimated 140 members of which 50-60 are adults. He was concerned that putting the membership up might result in losing some members. Mike O made it clear you would need to lose 10 members for the increase to have a negative financial effect. Andrew added that the increase is in line with what other local clubs charge (£110 at Sudbury and £105 at Earls Colne). It was suggested we clearly explain to members the increase is necessary to increase funds for repairs and for resurfacing courts in 2020. It should also be noted that the last rate increase was in 2015.

Julia suggested an increase in subs from £2 to £3 to fall in line with other clubs. A discussion followed. Although this would raise an extra £600 income it would only be from a few members. Peter added some clubs only pay for home matches and not away matches (CHTC pay subs for home and away).

Family membership: the committee recommended an increase from £195 to £220. Whilst it was noted juniors get a good deal and a lot of court time this is such an important area for future growth of the club and in addition is something the likes of the LTA and Sport England look at when agreeing to loans and grants.

Junior membership: 2018 rate was £50 with included the free 10 week Saturday coaching in the summer term and subsidized Saturday coaching in the autumn and spring terms. The options for 2019 would be to increase this to £60 and keep the 10 week free coaching or increase to £55 and reduce the free weeks from 10 to 5. Sam commented that the local children have lost their play facilities in the village so it was not recommended to reduce the free sessions. The consensus of the members present was to keep the free 10 weeks and thus increase fees to £60.

Sam commented that if a family of 4 paid separately for 2 adults and 2 children this would cost £340 but after a discussion all agreed any further increase beyond £220 would put them off joining as a family and may result in losing one parent member and it is part of the club's ethos to encourage family play and get juniors playing.

Senior membership: the committee recommended an increase from £70 to £85.

Half membership rate will apply from 1st September as before.

Adult coaching – 6 weeks Quick start will be included in membership or on a pay as you go basis for non-members from mid-April as well as adult team practices from mid-march for 4 weeks at a cost of £5/session.

Payment options – some members had requested an option to pay subs by instalments or credit card so the cost could be staggered. After discussion, the committee recommended that, although the club will incur a surcharge for each credit card payment, this would be a less labour intensive way than managing instalments.

Court booking app ('Booker') details added to rules.

Changes to Rules including all subscription rates above, proposed by: Mike Osborne and seconded by: Stephen Hendry

Election of Officers and Committee members for 2019

Andrew read out the job list of committee members (see attached) and added that new committee member Keith Argent will be assisting with maintenance, including wall repairs and court upgrade. He added there is still a vacant position for a PR person. Maddie Westropp has taken over the new role of child protection/welfare officer.

The officers and committee members was proposed by: Mike Osborne and seconded by James Hatfield.

Development Plan / Repairs & Court upgrade for 2020

Wall between tennis court & road retaining wall. Andrew said this is slowly collapsing and needs repairing before damaging the historic wall and before (or at least at the same time) as the court works. The estimated cost is over £10,000. Dot and Mike asked if Highways could fund and maybe the some of the damage may be due to heavier road traffic and lorries. This will be followed up on. Peter commented that the courts had never been excavated and if anything court surface is higher than the grounds there prior to putting in the courts in 1975 so it seems unlikely that that is a cause of the wall deterioration. Liam read out some of the structural engineers report: the foundation is rolling, there is a lack of buttresses and no weep holes. By repairing and adding weep holes and buttresses or rods it should be good for another 50 yrs. Peter added it would be good if these works could be incorporated into the overall court re-surfacing plans. It was also noted that rods would be better than buttresses as the plan is to extend the run back of courts 1 & 2.

Courts – the court surface of all 3 courts is now deteriorating cracks/bumps/holes and needs tackling now. The courts were last re-surfaced in 1999. The netting is becoming lose and needs replacing and supporting posts are rusting and need replacing. Andrew went on to say with the run back extension on Courts 1 & 2, the cost for re-surfacing the 3 courts and replacing the netting would be approximately £50,000-60,000 for same sort of surface. Other surface options will be discussed although in the last questionnaire sent to members there was an approximate 50/50 split between wanting to replace with the same surface and opting for something more forgiving on the joints like a rubberised surface or clay. Clay or a rubberised surface would likely add another £5,000-£10,000 potentially per court. Peter noted Sudbury paid just over £50,000 for all 3 courts without new netting. The clay would also require on-going annual maintenance which should be factored in. The conversation on court surfaces was cut short and agreed all options need to be explored and priced before feed this back to members.

Wendy is leading with the funding and Keith will lead the works plans.

Fund-raising (excl grants and loans)

William began his fund-raising summary by reporting 2018 had been a disappointing year but noted 2017 had been exceptional. The total raised for 2018 was £1,115, considerably down on what was projected due to the cancellation of the swing dance (owing to lack of ticket sales) and the junior fun day.

On a positive note, Peter had suggested running some new fund-raising live sweepstakes. The Grand National and Wimbledon sweepstakes had together raised £240. The Cricket match against CHCC had raised £160 for each club and further funds from refreshments at the Halstead & District League tournaments. The annual presentation and dinner had raised £438 (inc sales of the 100 number prize draw ran by Mike & Vickie).

Plans for 2019: Junior fun afternoon confirmed for Saturday 4th May (est takings: £500 weather permitting). Sheetal & Leaf helping run tennis related games for the kids. Friday 7th June – Cricket match (Dean King). Non-profitmaking adult/junior tournaments will be continued in 2019 after their success in 2018 (Mike O). Golf day (Keith A) – many of those present expressed interest in playing. Quiz night – Friday 8th March – Sam is the quiz master, Adam is cooking the chilli and William is running the bar. Currently there are ticket sales for 60 people approx. with a few places left. Liam will take a table of 6 and Wendy may take a table too. Thanks to those who are bringing non-members.

Any Other Business

Peter updated those present on the Wimbledon ballot. A record 76 members had opted-in this year. In 2018 the club was allocated 11pairs (with 72 opted-in members) so Peter is hopeful we should get the same number of tickets or possibly even better.

Julia suggested inviting Stringers World along to a club night/morning so people can try out new rackets. Caroline will follow up with them and if not the sports shop in Gt Dunmow may be interested. Sheetal added he is able to get 2 racket bags of rackets through Stringers World as a coach so this avenue should be explored.

Match fees - the over-riding consensus of those present was to keep match fees at £2

The AGM drew to a close at: 8.43pm

.....