

HALESWORTH TENNIS CLUB

MINUTES OF THE A.G.M. 2024

The A.G.M. was held on 27th March 2024, at Maureen's Community Space

The Meeting opened at 19.30pm

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Simon Thackray (Chair) welcomed those present to the AGM.

Present

Trustees: Simon Thackray, Lyn Burnett, Charlotte Binder

General members: Steve Burnett, Ewen Bell, Jane O'Hanlon, Shayne Davis, Ann Jones, Nick Hoare, Sarah Giles, Heather Laws-Smith, Kate Batten-Phelps

Coach: Ross Wilson

Apologies

Trustees: Mick Binder, Ben Sharratt, Mike Davis, Tessa Summers

General members: Liz Cunningham, Christopher Jenkins, Will Bird, Philip Gough, Joan Cane, Pam Fenner, Pat Rennie, Roger Webb, Valerie Carroll, Sue Foster

2. Approval of the minutes of the A.G.M. 12/04/2023

Ahead of the 2024 A.G.M., the minutes of the 2023 A.G.M. were circulated via email to all members. These were agreed as a correct record and confirmed by **Heather** and **Steve**.

There were no matters arising from the minutes not otherwise covered within the agenda. These will be signed by **Simon**.

3. Officers Reports

(a) Report from the Chair

Simon delivered his Annual Report which is presented verbatim below. Additional comments made during his presentation are **underlined and in bold.**

"Welcome to one and all to the AGM for the 2023/24 season.

This last season certainly presented challenges for the club. To list a few of the main ones:

- 1. We are still playing on courts where the surface is undoubtedly worse than this time last year. What life remains in them remains to be seen. Any chance of getting the courts resurfaced over the last year has been beyond us as we still haven't secured any external grant aid. Meanwhile, the rate of inflation over the last year will simply have pushed the total sum required even further away from us.*
- 2. Not only have there been worries about the court surface but also at one stage one of the net posts became uprooted and it looked like we might be down to one court for quite a while. Thanks to **Mick** and his very able assistant (**Charlotte**), a new oak post was quickly installed, and all was well.*
- 3. From late autumn onwards, we had to endure some dreadfully wet weather which led to the cancellation of more sessions than usual. If one gets 2 or 3 wet weeks in a row, people get out of the weekly rhythm of playing regularly and some decide to go into hibernation to hopefully emerge in the spring with the lighter evenings. Further evidence of the milder wet winter has been that to my knowledge there has only been the need to salt the courts twice to melt any early morning frost/ice.*
- 4. This Club has always had a turnover of members with a number of people every year either leaving the area, having illness or injury or possibly just age catching up. But we seemed to suffer more than usual during the last year, and we know already that this coming year we will suffer from a combination of all these factors leading to some people not renewing their membership. I'd like to give special thanks to **Pam Fenner** who has told us she won't be renewing her membership this year on health grounds. I thanked her at last year's AGM when she stepped down from the committee after many years as both Secretary and Welfare Officer, but I'd like to repeat those thanks today and acknowledge the great service she's given to this club.*

But let me not dwell on the negatives. Allow me to list some of the many positive things that have happened over the last year.

- 1. We began the year with a very successful Open Morning. The result of that was this year we have increased the number of members to 70. This includes quite a number of juniors who are progressing under **Ross's** coaching. Considering we had a membership of half that number only a few years ago, we all ought to feel encouraged. Plus, from a financial point of view, the club is sustainable.*
- 2. Late in July last year, we were finally able to secure our future on the Dairy Hill site by entering into a 25yr-lease with HCSL (Halesworth Community Sport & Leisure). Until this was in place, we really couldn't make any advances on applying for grants as the question of our security of tenure was open to question.*

3. *We are a tennis club so it's right to focus on the playing front where I can certainly identify a number of advances:*

- (i) The committee took the bold step of subsidising Tennis Xpress (held on Monday evenings) so it became free to members throughout last summer. This became, and still is, a popular feature within the coaching programme and the committee is grateful to **Ross** for what he's done with that group. We are planning to come to a similar arrangement with **Ross** this coming season, albeit the subsidy may be limited to only the first 10 weeks.*
- (ii) Thank you to **Sue Foster** for her continued leadership of the Intermediate group that meets on a Thursday evening at 6.00pm. She's always 'on it' calling out for players each week; the group has attracted a number of new regular players this year and is now a fixture on the calendar. A number of players, as a result of joining the Intermediate group, have felt increasingly confident about playing with the Experienced group. The latter group, meeting up on Saturday mornings and Tuesday evenings, did at one stage before the wet weather intervened, look like it would need a third session to accommodate the numbers wanting to play. What I hope we can encourage during this coming season is a greater fluidity between the various groups, that players within Tennis Xpress will want more tennis via Club Night on a Wednesday or the Intermediate group on a Thursday and similarly some players might wish the greater challenge of the Experienced group. **To achieve this fluidity, we need a mechanism, and this is our coach Ross who knows the players in the different groups and can ensure movement where appropriate. He is our arbiter.** I did just mention Club Night. That has lurched from being well attended to not being even a handful. I hope we can find a way this coming season to give it the consistency that the Intermediate group has been able to find. Perhaps the main problem with Club Night has been to find its true identity as we've endeavored to embrace some coaching with some mixed ability match play; we probably need to send out a clearer message that this is essentially 'social match play tennis', which is available to all members, whether relatively new to the sport or highly experienced.*
- (iii) Thank you to **Tessa** for once again being the organizer, getting a team out every week during the early/mid-summer to participate in the Lowestoft & District League. Not only did she get a team out every week, but the team finished in a respectable mid-table position. Onwards & upwards! **Tessa was absent from our AGM because she was attending the Lowestoft & District League's AGM (a clash with ours unfortunately). The outcome of her meeting (any rule changes etc.) will be shared with members in the next Trustee Meeting minutes.***
- (iv) We held a couple of tournaments during the summer, something the Club hasn't done for a number of years. One tournament in particular may become a regular fixture and that is to integrate new members by pairing them up with a more experienced player and playing some competitive*

doubles. **Tessa** managed the handicapping system very well, so it ensured close competition. **It is also hoped that we can run a Round Robin tournament once again, involving any interested members. Nick wondered if this could be organized over one day as last year it was quite difficult to find the time to complete matches. The logistics of this tournament will be reviewed.**

4. Pre-Christmas, thanks to **Lyn, Charlotte & Mick**, we arranged for an excellent end-of-year drinks & buffet held at The Angel. It was well attended so I hope we might do something similar this year.

To conclude this review, I think we all realise that our sport, and particularly our Club, provides fabulous value for money. I hope the AGM will ratify the Committee's proposal not to increase member subscriptions for the forthcoming year, which means a full member is having full access to tennis courts for £1.73 per week, a junior for as little as £0.57 per week. That is astonishingly low. If a member attends a subsidised coaching session like Tennis Xpress, in effect the Club is paying the member! There are not many other sports clubs where this would happen.

Our immediate focus is now on the Open Morning to be held on 28 April 2024 10.00am-1.00pm. I hope we'll see quite a number of existing members turning out to meet-and-greet and give prospective new members a warm welcome. If you have any friends or family who you think might be interested in trying tennis maybe for the first time, please do bring them along.

Ongoing we will be doubling our efforts to secure grant funding for the essential court resurfacing. The financial report to follow will show that we are under the hoped-for mark in the reserve fund. A big thank you to those members who did respond positively to the request for donations to the fund. It was nonetheless a relatively small number of members who have thus far contributed. Our problem remains that even if we find a willing grantor, there is every likelihood that the grantor will insist on 'matched funding' i.e. a grant of 50%, we find 50%. That means that we will need to get up towards £25,000; at the moment we are under £10,000. All I can say is that it's not too late to donate should you wish to do so.

On that note, I hope everyone stays fit and well and enjoys another year of playing some excellent tennis."

(b) Finance – Treasurer's Report

In **Mike's** absence, **Simon** shared 2 documents with attendees – "Halesworth Tennis Club – Accounts to 31 March 2024" and "Notes" on the account balances, income, and expenditure. The former document listed receipts with an opening bank balance of £7,420.06 and payments with a closing bank balance of £9,922.73. The "Notes" indicated, for example, that the Deposit account is renamed as Court Resurfacing Account. **Nick** asked

what our optimum numbers are (thinking about income from Membership subscriptions) and **Ross** said that with 2 courts this would be 100. In the “Looking ahead to 2024/25” section **Simon** wrote the following points: a) There will be a saving of around £100 to Clubspark who were inadvertently overpaid this year. b) There will be no legal fees next year as the lease is in place, thus saving around £500 on the 2023/24 figures. c) The amount payable under the terms of our lease with HCSL ought to work out slightly less than this year. d) The biggest pressure on income, as ever, will be to sustain club membership numbers. **Nick** wondered if the many new houses being built in the area may bring in more members and therefore it would be worth targeting these when we advertise our Club’s Open Morning. The accounts were proposed by **Nick Hoare** and accepted by **Ewen Bell**.

4. Club Developments

a) Membership & Club Developments

Open Morning

Lyn introduced the posters and flyers which have been prepared for this year’s Open Morning which will take place on Sunday 28th April 10am – 1pm. These have been designed by our member **Roger Webb** and the advert will also be in the Ilketshall St Margaret Village Show brochure which will be delivered to many businesses in the area. The advert indicates that the usual discounts will be available for new members joining on the day as well as coaching offers for individual/group lessons. The **Heads-Up** coaches will organise activities and **Ross** suggested that there will be a proper schedule to give the morning more structure. **Ross** will take posters into the schools where he coaches and promote the Open Morning and the Club in general. **Kate** asked whether pickleball can feature this year. **Ross** explained that it was not possible to offer a taster in this sport last year as it was too difficult to have a designated area with the number of very young children on the courts and it was too windy for the plastic balls. However, **Ross** has recently taken pickleball coaching courses and will attempt to include it at this year’s event. **Lyn** indicated that she will be in touch with Micropress in Reydon ahead of the April deadline to have our Open Morning advert placed in the Community News. **Nick** suggested we could write an article to go alongside the advert and he has very kindly offered to do this. Although the Club must pay for the advert, the article would be free. The usual refreshments etc. will be provided and if any member is happy to contribute to the event in any way, please let **Lyn** know. **Simon** will have the list of offers available as new members arrive and if current members are able to attend to meet, greet and interact that would be very much appreciated as **Simon** indicated in his report. **Lyn** encouraged attendees to take posters/flyers if they knew of key places to advertise. A big push on promoting Open Morning will commence from the 8th of April.

Coaching Programme 2024-2025

Ross talked through his activities and spoke on the positives of the programme. Junior tennis is going well and there are signs of good progress with some examples of excellent competitive play. Tennis Xpress has been very successful with good numbers attending and

Heather said it was great fun. **Ross** is considering the possibility of Walking Tennis which, as the LTA states, is “an easy way for older people to keep their body and mind active – while also enjoying the social side of being part of a tennis community”. **Ross** also wants to encourage Family Tennis with lessons at the same times for adults and children. **Ross** emphasised again his determination to be more active on Facebook to promote events and activities both before and after they have taken place. He will be using official parental consent forms to take photos of junior players in strict accordance with the HTC Photograph and Filming Policy (see “Safeguarding” on the website). **Lyn** indicated that **Will Bird** is very keen to help with any aspects of social media and suggested that **Ross** approaches him about this.

(b) Subscriptions 1st May 2024 - 30 April 2025 and Clubspark

(Clubspark is our online platform for tennis where we create and manage our website, manage membership through online card payments, manage court bookings etc.)

Lyn indicated that all members would receive an email on the 1st April to say that they are required to renew their membership through **Clubspark** from 1st May 2024. She reiterated that the membership fees will remain the same as for the 2023-2024 season. That will be £150 for a Family Membership, £90 for a Single Membership and £30 for a Student/Junior Membership. New members joining on Open Day should also go through **Clubspark** and the discounted rate will be available - £135/80/25. **Lyn** stated that for most of this season, we have had a membership total of 70 which breaks down as 33 men, 25 women and 12 Juniors. 14 of these members joined on Open Day. **Lyn** reminded those members paying for a Family Membership to include all participating members so that there is an accurate count in **Clubspark**.

(c) Court Maintenance

Simon indicated that the courts have been treated for moss as usual. All other aspects of court maintenance are referred to in his report.

Just before the election of Officers Lyn reminded attendees what can be accessed on our website. This included the following:

The navigation bar has the following sections:

Welcome/Membership/Programme/Coaching/Book a Court/Safeguarding/More. Under “More” can be found Fundraising/AGM Minutes/Trustee Meeting Minutes/Contact.

To access the AGM minutes and the Trustee minutes you need to login (top right on home page says login (in black strip). Click on this and a message comes up with LTA login and here you input your Username and Password.

In the ‘Book a Court’ section there are details of on-going bookings. If these sessions change/are no longer happening etc., please remember to adjust details on the booking page.

5. Election of Officers

The following officers were elected and proposed by **Ann Jones** and seconded by **Shayne Davis**.

Chair: Simon Thackray

Secretary: Lyn Burnett

Treasurer: Mike Davis

Welfare Officer: Lyn Burnett

Trustees: Simon Thackray

Mick Binder

Charlotte Binder

Tessa Summers

Mike Davis

Lyn Burnett

Ben Sharratt

6. A.O.B.

In response to **Jane's** request, **Lyn** will send an email when meeting minutes go on the website.

Meeting closed at 20.45pm.

**THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING THE
HALESWORTH TENNIS CLUB A.G.M.**

2024

HALESWORTH TENNIS CLUB - Accounts to 31 March 2024

	RECEIPTS		PAYMENTS
Opening bank balance	7,420.06	Clubspark	237.60
Membership subscriptions	4,679.34	LTA affiliation subscription	270.00
Donations for resurfacing	1,770.00	Club professional	1,339.00
Match fees	73.50	Moss treatment	306.00
Bank interest	127.69	Salt for frozen courts	27.96
Court fees paid by non-members	171.00	Legal fees for the lease	510.30
Miscellaneous	82.68	Grass cutting	164.37
		HCSL rent & sevice charge	800.00
		Tennis balls	318.00
		Micropress	133.22
		Open Day costs	202.49
		Lowestoft league registration	20.00
		Bank charges	62.20
		Miscellaneous	10.40
		Closing bank balance	9,922.73
TOTAL	14,324.27	TOTAL	14,324.27

NOTES:-

The opening bank account balances held in 2 accounts:-

Current account	£3,781.89
Deposit account	£3,693.17
Total	£7,475.06

The closing bank account balances held in 2 accounts:-

Current account	£1,210.48
Deposit account (renamed as Court Resurfacing Account)	£8,712.25
Total	£9,922.73

Excluding donations for court resurfacing,

Total income for 2023/24 was £5,134.21

Total expenditure was £4,401.54

Trading surplus for 2023/24 was £732.67

NB the trading surplus has been transferred to the deposit a/c

Petty cash

Opening cash held £165.08

Cash added (competition entrance fees) £70.00

Spent (to court resurfacing account) £170.00

prizes £27.80

Amount in the tin £37.28

The objective of creating a minimum of £10,000 towards court

resurfacing fell short by about £1,287.75

Looking ahead to 2024/25:-

There will be a saving of around £100 to Clubspark who were inadvertently overpaid this year.

There will be no legal fees next year as the lease is in place. Thus saving around £500 on the 2023/24 figures.

The amount payable under the terms of our lease with HCSL ought to work out

slightly less than this year.

The biggest pressure on income, as ever, will be to sustain club membership numbers.