

Girton Tennis Club AGM (10th March 2021)

1. Members present

Andy Luff, Alan Franklin, Kevin Keeves, Mark Lawton, John Irwin, Victor Travieso, Alan Richardson, Bruce Parker, James Page, Bob Killick, Laurence Aitchison

Apologies: Mathew Boucher

2. 2020 Minutes & Matters Arising:

The minutes were accepted.

3. Chairman's report

John reminded the meeting of the many Covid related challenges that the club has faced over the last year including the closing and opening of facilities several times in a Covid-safe manner. On behalf of club members, he thanked all committee members for working as an effective team to make all the necessary changes happen so quickly. He concluded 'you have done us all proud'.

4. Treasurer's report

AL gave a thorough description of the club accounts and these were accepted.

The club's finances are stable and there was an operating surplus last year thanks to a larger number of members and generally reduced costs. Court rental paid to the PC was £1,180 which included a rebate due to court closure during the first Covid lockdown. We believe the PC is currently discussing another rebate to cover the closure of the courts during the second and third lockdowns and an estimate of this saving has been used to calculate the 2021/2022 membership fees. The LTA refunded our fees (£220) for the year due to Covid.

At the last AGM it was agreed that AL should change the bank mandate so that a single signature is accepted and also get a debit card for the account. Due to Covid, and reduced access to bank staff, it has not been possible to do this but AL will tackle this as soon as possible.

5. Membership report

KK provided a detailed report of membership in 2020.

Last season we had 152 members as compared to 117 the previous year. Most membership categories increased by more than 28% and it is particularly pleasing to have had 23 family memberships as this helps to encourage new young players.

The increased numbers were considered to be partly down to tighter Covid restrictions for indoor venues, the continued success of our junior supervision sessions and also the provision of coaching. Covid lockdowns prevented members from playing for up to 3 months and KK suggested we must take this account in 2021 member renewal fees. Renewing members will be offered a 25% reduction compared to new 2021 membership fees as long as they make payment before the end of May. It was agreed that KK could also make special arrangements for any renewing members that missed further playing days due to Covid isolation.

It was agreed that fees for new members would only increase by around 1% compared to last year. Forecasts indicate that with the expected member renewal rate and reduced PC court rental fee this should allow the club to balance the 2021 finances. No early payment discounts would be provided this year so these new fees become due from 1st April:

Single £68	Junior £30	Family £136
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AF to put a new membership advert in the April GPN publication and also mention the coaching opportunities. KK will email the current membership with details of arrangements for membership renewal.

6. Appointment of Officers

The following were proposed, seconded and accepted:

Alan Franklin – Secretary
Kevin Keeves – Membership Secretary
Andy Luff – Treasurer
James Page – Welfare Officer
Mathew Boucher – Welfare Officer

Committee Members: Alan Richardson, Mark Lawton, John Irwin, Victor Travieso, Bruce Parker, Mathew Boucher, James Page.

Captains: Men's Team – Mark Lawton Mixed Team – Mark Lawton
Deputy: Bruce Parker Deputy: Yulia Shpak

7. Court Booking and Re-Opening

VT gave a summary of how the court booking system had operated last year. Over 1,000 bookings were made by 80 members. With around 200 good playing days, this averaged 5 court bookings per day. He confirmed that all booking data would be deleted on an annual basis. Some issues had been experienced when the web-hosting service failed to send out booking confirmation emails. This should be solved if we pay around £50 more per year for an enhanced hosting package. It was agreed that VT should arrange this before bookings start again. Laurence asked if it would be possible to book courts individually and also to have online cancellation facilities. VT confirmed that both of these requests could be developed but that the number of cancellations does not currently make it worth adding this feature. Much discussion around individual court booking took place. It was agreed that as Covid restrictions get removed, this should be considered as part of any retained booking system. For the time being, JI stated that the club approach would be to maintain the best Covid safety for our members and therefore to reserve both hard courts with each booking.

VT shared the current LTA guideline grid which shows outdoor tennis resuming from Mon 29th March (subject to Gov review on the 22nd March). This should allow most of our activities to resume with the same player number restrictions and Covid precautions that were in effect prior to this current lockdown. It was agreed that the committee should discuss the details for re-opening after 22nd March but potentially the next match practice will be on 31st March and the first club night of the new season on 2nd April. VT will check if Netball is planning to restart and make any necessary block bookings on our web site.

8. Junior Sessions

VT and AR normally run supervised junior sessions for 6 months from Easter every Fri evening. Although it was not possible to run these for the whole 6 months last year, we saw keen interest from Juniors and we normally had the maximum permitted under Covid rules (15 per court). We allowed 30 youngsters to book each week and had one group of 15 on the hard courts and the other on the MUGA. A minimum of 2 adults were with each group. VT stated that the juniors followed the Covid rules, were well behaved and really enjoyed the sessions. These would not have been possible without excellent support from many parents and helpers.

AR will be discuss the use of the MUGA with the PC as the club would like to have it available for use every Fri evening from 6pm. This would ensure that we can keep helping up to 30 junior Girton players develop their tennis skills. Payment or 'annual donation' for MUGA use should form part of this discussion.

Both VT and AR were thanked for their excellent work in promoting tennis for juniors. They are both happy to continue and sessions for 2021 could restart from 9th April (weather permitting).

Girton Colts (football) approached the club asking if we might organise anything for their young players after the season closes. After discussion, it was agreed that we might be able to run a 'come and play' afternoon or day once the Covid restrictions are fully lifted. This could be on a similar basis to the informal playing sessions provided for the Summer Village Feast. KK to reply to the Colts.

9. Pavilion Upgrade and Court Lights

The planned upgrade should not affect the tennis club as the current club room will be retained. Bob suggested that it would be nice if this was repainted and tidied up as part of the upgrade and the committee agreed. KK would also like there to be an external door to the club room if possible.

AR has made a proposal to the PC to provide an external locked switch so members with a court key can turn the court lights on. He would undertake this work, at no cost to the PC, and is meeting the Chairman of the PC again on 11/3/21 to go through the plans in advance of the PC meeting later that day. It is hoped that this will then be tabled and accepted by the PC.

10. Coaching

Last year David Nation (DN) took the bookings, managed the payments and provided coaching for the club. Despite many interruptions, he ran 3 coaching blocks of 6-7 weeks' duration with two groups in each block. He also provided some 1-1 tuition.

Some other private coaching was also taken by members using other professional coaches.

VT confirmed that DN is happy to continue with the club in 2021 and he proposes running a coaching block for 7 weeks on Thursdays after Easter. VT will confirm the arrangement.

The idea of encouraging more ladies to play tennis was discussed. In a previous year the club funded a number of successful coaching sessions aimed exclusively at local ladies and it was agreed that we should investigate running another 6 week session this June/July. VT to discuss this with DN and let AL know the potential cost.

JP agreed to see if we can apply for an LTA grant to help fund this initiative.

AF can get information into the GPN once we have agreed the details.

11. AOB

ML confirmed that two teams are entered into the Summer League. The Men will play 7 matches in May and June. Our Mixed team will play their matches in July and August.

AR has ordered new match balls so current match balls can be used on Club nights.

KK is not able to make any plans for our Club Xmas dinner yet! He also confirmed that we will no longer be able to undertake a local Wimbledon ticket ballot as the LTA now randomly allocate ticket opportunities to those who are registered with them. Club members will be encouraged to register with the LTA (no charge) but may have a lower chance of success.

The PC recently raised concern that some individuals have been seen on the closed courts. The committee have checked that the gate padlock is in place and closed securely and also discussed the subject with Chris (PC Groundsman). No specific evidence has been forthcoming and all

current club members have been reminded that the courts are currently out of use. We agreed that the club is not in a position to take any further action with regard to policing these facilities.

12. Next Meetings

No dates were set although the 2022 AGM is likely to be in late February.

This meeting closed at 20.37

A committee meeting followed the AGM and John Irwin was unanimously re-elected as Club Chairman.