

# **(Draft) Minutes of Buxton Tennis Club AGM**

**Thursday 6th February 2020: Cheshire Cheese, 7.00pm**

**Present:** Steve Thompson (chair), Anne Thompson (membership secretary), Allan Ramsay (secretary), Dan Osborne (treasurer), Jek Jacobs, Mike Badman, Simon Bradbury, Ed Ivings, Cath Reeds

**Apologies:** James Stuart, Joy White, Lin Robinson, Sally Gould, Kate Tagg, Wendy Solman, Leo Barbero

**Minutes of 2019 AGM:** Steve Thompson (ST) noted that these had been circulated following the 2019 AGM, with a copy placed on the club's website and pointer to this copy included in the emails sent round to notify members of the meeting. The minutes were accepted, and there were no matters arising.

**Chair's report:** ST noted that the various initiatives that were undertaken over the last year (notably the Wednesday evening coaching sessions for people who hadn't played for a while or who were new to the game) had led to a healthy increase in members. It was generally believed that the new members were happy with their experience at the club, and Anne Thompson (AT) expressed some confidence that the vast majority would renew their membership. ST reported that the lights had finally been installed just before the evenings became light enough for them not to be needed, but they have proved very popular since the end of the summer with the Monday night club session being well-attended and an informal Wednesday night session also apparently very successful.

**Membership secretary's report:** AT reported that we have 69 adult members and 43 juniors. The adult membership is higher than it has been for some time, and as noted above AT expected the majority of new members to continue. The junior membership has stabilised following problems with coaching a couple of years ago. It is hoped that the success of the coach who was appointed last year for junior coaching will lead to an increase in numbers again, but we do need to ensure that everyone who takes part in the junior coaching is indeed signed up as a member.

**Treasurer's report:** the accounts had been circulated previously and added to the club website. The major points were that, following the decision made at an AGM some years ago, a sum f10K had been ring-fenced for future expenditure, notably for resurfacing the courts. It was noted that this is likely to cost something around £50K when it finally becomes necessary, and that we will have to work quite hard to reach this target, but it is at least a start. The club had used £3424 of its own funds to pay for the lights and a further £7115 on court maintenance; it is not anticipated that we will have similar substantial outgoings in the next year, so the hole that these have made in the club's finances should start to be filled.

The secretary had nothing significant to report.

**Election of officers and the committee:** the existing officers all indicated that they were willing to continue in their current posts, and all were returned unopposed. ST stated that he did not intend to continue as chair after this year. Cath Reeds agreed to join the committee. It was assumed, but not actually discussed, that the other existing members would continue, but this should be confirmed by the secretary (particularly given that Leo Barbero had sent his apologies for not attending the AGM on the grounds that he felt he was no longer in close touch with what was going on, and hence it may be that he would not want to continue as a committee member).

**Membership fees for 2020-21 (not 2018-19!):** the discussion of the fee levels for the coming year included some discussion of the cost of tokens for the lights, which are higher than at some other clubs. The possibility of raising the general membership fee and making the use of the lights free at club sessions was considered, but it was felt that this would not be acceptable to members who do not attend these sessions. It was pointed out that the conditions for the grants that funded 90% of the cost of the lights required us to set the cost of tokens at a level which would cover future

maintenance as well running costs, and it was accepted that the current cost should be continued but that the reasons for it should be more widely circulated. It was noted that the membership fee had been kept level for some years now. The club has on previous occasions kept the fee steady for a number of years and then had to impose a steep increase to cope with costs which had crept up while the club's income had remained steady. This has proved extremely unpopular, and it was felt that it was better to have a small increase now rather than a big one in a couple of years. It was therefore agreed that the various categories of adult membership (standard, country, student, unemployed) would increase by £5.00/year, and that junior membership would remain unchanged.

**Teams:** the current team captains all agreed to continue in their roles. Sally Gould (SG) had previously circulated a proposal for a third winter league team, and Ed Ivings spoke to this proposal. The idea was generally welcomed, but the proposal as put to the meeting is unfortunately impractical because it would require us to host home matches every other week. Allan Ramsay (AMR) subsequently circulated a discussion document to the attendees at the meeting which may address some of the issues in SG's proposal.

**Courts, lights and maintenance:** the club's playing facilities are currently in a good state, with a number of people making use of the lights to continue evening play throughout the winter and the courts all in good condition following repainting and binding in the summer. It was noted that the last round of resurfacing the courts has far exceeded its expected lifetime (in fact no-one present could remember when it happened) and that we will eventually have to find a very substantial sum to pay for the next round. Ring-fencing £10K from our current funds is a sensible statement of intent, the increase in membership income is a step in the right direction, but this is a very challenging issue.

**Tournaments and activities:** ST expressed the view that we need to develop our playing programme, and possibly our social programme, to build on the enthusiasm of the new cohort of players. It was noted that the non-competitive tournaments run by AMR had been popular, and it was suggested that the number of these could perhaps be increased. AMR believed that running too many such events would dilute their impact, and it was agreed that they should be supplemented by complementary activities rather than just increased. It was suggested that the new Wednesday coach might have ideas about suitable activities, and it was agreed that he could be invited to run appropriate events. AMR will run a season-opening tournament, incorporating the Wimbledon ballot, a season closing floodlit event, and a Christmas event, as this year (we have more people opted-in to the British Tennis website than ever before, and are hopeful that this will lead to an improved allocation of tickets)

**Clubhouse developments:** ST reported that Bob Marsden (Cricket Club chair) is hopeful of getting funds to redevelop/refurbish the main clubhouse, but the feeling of the meeting was that it would be better to pursue a small purpose-built clubhouse nearer the courts. This is, however, a costly aspiration: ST will investigate possible routes to funding.

**AOB:** Ed Ivings asked whether it would be possible for himself and James Galloway-Booth to reserve a court for a full day in order to carry out charity 12-hour-tennisathon. The meeting was supportive of this proposal and agreed to ensure that they could do this without clashing with any coaching sessions.