

Minutes of the Buxton Tennis Club Committee Meeting
7:30pm, 27 March 2024

Apologies: Tracey Ellis, Mike Badman

Present: Carol Taylor, Sue Turnbull, Carol Basset, Sally Gould, Catherine Reeds, Allan Ramsay, Dan Osborne (by zoom)

Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted, and there were no matters arising not covered later in the agenda.

Carol Taylor welcomed the new committee and suggested that meetings should have a set of standing items as the main agenda, to make it easier to generate the agenda each time and to provide a degree of continuity between meetings. The items below follow that agenda.

Membership secretary: Sue Turnbull reported that she had set up systems for managing the membership lists and for sending out emails. We currently have 98 adult members, in various categories, and 38 juniors (some as part of family memberships), which is a fairly healthy state. There was a brief discussion of whether we might at some point need to limit the membership, but it was felt that if this ever did become an issue it would do so gradually and we would revisit it at that point. Sue suggested that it would be a good idea to keep track of the date of birth for juniors (we used to do this), which led on to a discussion of whether there were other questions that we should be asking people when they joined/renewed their membership. This led to the suggestion that the membership form should be a Google form, and that the "Join us" page on the website should contain a pointer to this form rather than a fillable form.

Sue also suggested that we should send out a newsletter to members ahead of the new season, which would include a link to the membership form and might include an explanation of the new questions, along with an explanation of the new Whatsapp community proposed by Carol Taylor (see below).

Treasurer: Dan Osborne note that the change of signatories for the club's bank account was largely done, though for the moment the only people who can actually sign cheques are Dan, Allan Ramsay and Steve Thompson. Once it is fully completed, the signatories will be Dan, Allan and Carol Taylor, with Sue

Turnbull able to see the account to help her keep track of who has actually paid their fee.

Welfare officer: Catherine Reeds agreed to complete the simplification of the LTA's procedures for reporting issues. She noted that the LTA had agreed that given our facilities it was not necessary for us to have CCTV in the relevant areas, and that it would be appropriate for the coach to carry out a risk assessment before running activities such as open days and summer camps. Given the distance from the courts to the pavilion, and the fact that the pavilion is a shared facility, she noted that we should have a policy on juniors' use of the toilets. The recommendation is that

- children can use the toilets in the pavilion if accompanied by their parent
- they may use them if accompanied by a coach, a volunteer helper or an older child (i.e. secondary school age), but in that case **at least two children must go with the helper** (even if only one of them actually needs the toilet)
- older children may use them unaccompanied

Management committee: Carol Taylor gave a brief summary of the relationship between the three clubs and the role of the management committee for the benefit of people who were not familiar with them. She noted that she and Bob Marsden (management committee chair) had had a positive meeting, at which Bob had highlighted that we have equal right to use the pavilion for changing, for social events (after consultation with the other sections to avoid clashes) and in particular for teas after matches. He suggested that we should be pro-active about this – if we actively use the pavilion for these purposes then our right to do so will be more readily recognised than if we just do so occasionally, and Bob promised to be supportive if any issues did arise.

Teams: it was agreed that Sally Gould would be captain for the ladies' and summer mixed teams, Andy Storer for the men's and Liz Blyth for the winter league. It was noted that the ladies' team has a good-size pool of potential players. There was some discussion of how men currently outside the men's team, particularly those who had played in the Winter League, might get a chance to play in the summer league. It was recognised that the men's team is currently playing in a very high division, and that simply including players who had enjoyed the winter league into this standard might not work. Carol T has

been in touch with Andy to suggest ways in which the current men's team might become more involved at the club and so more aware of the other men who could potentially play. It was agreed that Sally would discuss this with Andy, with a view to him picking existing club members when the team is short of players, and that we would review entering two teams in the men's league for next year. Allan Ramsay noted that the SDLTA were considering running a veterans' league (age criteria not yet clear but over 40 in other areas), and it was suggested that entering a team for this might help bridge the gap. Additionally, it was agreed that it would be good to offer interested men the opportunity to participate in the Late Summer Mixed League.

Club sessions and coaching: no issues to report

Maintenance: Carol T noted that Bob Marsden had expressed his thanks for the work that had been carried out on the hedge. It was suggested that as we are now a bit closer to being realistically able to resurface the courts someone should try to get quotes for the resurfacing itself and for other major work which could be carried out at the same time (e.g. replacing the fencing), since the lead time for such work can be considerable. Carol T suggested having two pre-season working parties, probably one on a Friday afternoon and one on a Sunday afternoon, to deal with the moss on the courts and all the other everyday maintenance issues that need dealing with. These will be advertised to the wider membership along with the renewal notice.

Tournaments: Allan Ramsay agreed to run a season opening tournament along the usual lines (play in randomly selected fours, keep your own score, tea and cake afterwards). Sally Gould suggested running a sweepstake on the French Open as an accompanying fund-raiser. It was agreed that it would be good to run more tournaments during the year, possibly using different (and perhaps more competitive) formats.

Club development: it was noted that we do not have a current copy of the club's constitution, and while it is probably acceptable to use the LTA's model as a guide for now (especially since the last agreed version was based on this model and we expect the new one to also be based on it) we do need to get this sorted out for the next AGM. Mike Meaton had noted that the Macclesfield Tennis Club had also used this as a model, but that they had added a section about the club's aims and aspirations, and it was agreed that this was a useful thing to consider and add.

Carol T suggested generating a year plan, with crucial dates like maintenance working parties, committee meetings, and so on. Major events could be added to the “forthcoming events” section on the club's website so that all members would know what was coming up.

The meeting noted that building a small clubhouse nearer the courts remains a key development aspiration for the club and there was some discussion about possible sites. Carol T will liaise with Anne Thompson for a full update on what has previously been considered and discussed with the council. A sub-committee will likely be needed to drive this forward.

Carol T has proposed using a Whatsapp community as a way of facilitating communication between members without running the risks posed by having a standard Whatsapp group. The key difference is that only people who have been added by the community's administrators can use it. There are a number of other advantages, including the possibility of easily setting up sub-groups. The people at the meeting tried this out, and it was agreed that this would be a good way for members to communicate (albeit the experience was not uniform across different platforms!) The committee agreed to trial it prior to offering it to members the option to be joined during the membership renewal process.

The meeting closed at 21:30.