



The Hungerford Club

3 The Croft, Hungerford, Berks, RG17 0HY, Tel: 01488 682357

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 24th November 2021 at 8pm in The Croft Hall

President: John Conn

Trustees: Micky Lambourn and Chris Ticehurst

Officers: none in post

Committee:

Denis Brown (Acting Chairman), Chris Scorey (Acting Treasurer), Graham Brown (Maintenance),
Chris Dodd (Acting Minutes Secretary), Paul Ivinson (Communications and IT),
Jennifer Bartter (Bowls), Colin Currill (Indoor Sports), Phil Brown &/or Alex Jinivizian (Tennis).

Members:

43 members were in attendance

1: Welcome by Chairman:

As I write this, we are going through, hopefully, the last winter of Covid. We have lots to look forward to. However we must look back at a time like no other. We have had lockdown and the concerns of our survival as a Club.

Can I compliment all involved who have, in the background, worked so hard to maintain our Club. During lockdown we decided to employ Debbie Hutchins as our Bar Steward. I think you would all agree this was a very good move.

As we moved out of lockdown, we have developed a strong base to progress further. It is good to report a successful Beer Festival and Tennis and Bowls leagues once again.

Our offering now includes food options. This, of course, is with the help of Debbie and Gary.

Increased membership has also pushed our success.

As we go into the winter period, please support your Club.

Thank you again for your support and remember, the success of the Club is in your hands.

2: Remembrance of Members Deceased:

Members stood for a few moments silence in remembrance of Keith Tuttle, Brian Fagan and Carol Nash, all of whom passed away in the last year.

3: Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from: Pete Rackham, Gill Venner, Lis Allen, Alex Jinivizian, Robert Fennell & Ian Hart.

4: Minutes of previous AGM as circulated:

Approval of the minutes of the previous AGM on 4th November 2020 was proposed by Colin Currill and seconded by Graham Brown with a show of hands in favour from members present.

5: Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

6: Forward Thinking:

Graham Brown reported:

We, as a committee, have been pleasantly surprised that the Club is in such good condition financially, following the COVID epidemic in the past 18 months or so, when everything looked so dismal with lockdown.

Unfortunately with such an old building for a Club House, things are not quite so rosy! We have had large expenses in previous years improving the flat's condition, plus decorations etc. We have also refurbished the toilets. Then with members' help, both financially and by their physical assistance in carrying out the works, we have refurbished the main Club, including the area behind the bar. This has been a great improvement for all to enjoy.

The next big expense will be replacing the main pitched roof tiles on both elevations, plus probably installing felt. Fascia boards etc will also need to be checked. We have resisted clearing the moss from the north facing elevation (facing the Croft), for fear of opening up a 'can of worms' as most of the roof tiles are showing signs of deterioration and require replacement. There are always 'hidden' things that require urgent attention from time to time!

All this is very costly and could run into £50,000 - £60,000. We therefore need to build up funds to assist with this large outlay. We also need to consider fund raising and obtaining any grants and outside funding. There is always something that requires attention.

There is also the sports ground expense to consider. Trees – We know that we have Ash trees with some suffering from Ash Die Back disease. We propose a tree survey of all the Club trees and then to consider action along with the Tree Officer of West Berks Council (since the trees are set in a conservation area).

Courts – Court one is now in need of resurfacing, and with the increased tennis membership and activity, we are considering adding another court set into the garden area. With the large Ash almost certainly having to be removed because of disease, this will create the space required. As part of the works, the 'Fisherman's Hut', bowls store shed and machinery shed will need to be relocated closer to our Eastern boundary.

These overall costs could again be in the region of £50,000 - £60,000, so we could be looking at possibly £120,000 to be raised somehow in the near future.

How do we proceed with these tasks? And what do members want from their Club and Club House in the future? We are open to your thoughts, from the floor, now.

Comments from the members present:

Rhian Barnett: Would prefer floodlights to all existing courts before any other court works, considers 5th court not best use of funds, but could use court one to provide additional parking area whilst creating 4th court alongside existing block of three. Considers that the roofing estimate to be too high.

Peter Harries: Considers the roofing estimate to be too low. Fisherman's Hut will fall to pieces if any attempt is made to move it. Existing Clubhouse is a money pit, far better to develop a new clubhouse set into the sports ground.

- Ian Doolan: Have we had a structural report and estimate of costs on the clubhouse?
Answer, not yet.
- Gary Hutchins Has contacts with the Bowlers Arms who raised substantial grants for a new pavilion and offered to put us in touch with their fund raisers.
- Caroline Walker: Should we charge VAT on subscriptions to be able to re-claim VAT on works? CW has been in touch with the LTA regarding VAT charges on sports facilities and will continue to chase the issue. **Answer**: VAT can be reclaimed on Club House works, but not on sports ground works. The Club, especially the Bowls and Tennis sections have been very successful at securing grant funding for projects.
- Andy Pullen: Offered assistance with roofing and advice on modern materials.
- Dave Broderick: Advised use of more modern materials and methods for the roof.

The chairman noted that the Club House roof was the first priority for the new committee.

7: Treasurer's Financial Report as circulated:

The Acting Treasurer referred to the accounts and notes already circulated and commented that it had been a tough year, including a change of bar steward whilst the bar was closed, along with arranging for new tenants in the flat as well as associated refurbishment works, during lockdown, at a time when there was no bar income. Gratitude was expressed to members who renewed promptly as their fees helped to cover the costs of the flat refurbishment.

The committee felt that it was most important that a new bar steward such be employed even though the potential re-opening date of the bar was unknown, we needed to be in a position to open as soon as permitted. In retrospect this proved a wise decision.

Cash was extremely tight during the lockdown, with cash balances checked daily to ensure bills would be covered since the Club does not have an overdraft facility (and cannot obtain such a facility due to the constitution of the organisation). Some £15,000 was borrowed from the sinking fund, since re-paid.

Since being able to re-open performance has been strong, with membership up and bar trading up ahead of previous 'normal' years. It is considered that with this strong performance, there will be no need to borrow from the sinking fund as finances have been stronger after the various COVID grants than before lockdown.

Comments from the members present:

- Jim Priest: Queried why section income and expenditure are shown in the accounts complete with 'profit / loss' when all the funds go into a central account and are not section funds. **Answer**: These are management accounts and give an indication of section performance in the same format that has been used for many years.
- Rhian Barnett: These are standard accounts showing income and expenditure across the Club
- Chris Ticehurst: Quoted from the letter written by L J Smith (Club accountants) showing that all processes and accounts were in the correct form and order.

- Jennifer Bartter: Members' who wish to play sport, join the Club as tennis or bowls members to do that. The income would not be present otherwise and so is rightly allocated against the sections.
- Jim Priest: The accounts are not audited, so the letter from the accountants' is irrelevant as they were working to instructions from the Club. **Answer:** It was pointed out that the accountants had been given all the correspondence alleging malpractice, fraud, threats etc and that their letter was as a result of their re-examination of the accounts.
- Jim Priest: There have not been any threats. **Answer:** The threats were listed, including reporting the Club to HMRC, CASC, the press and others. It was pointed out that these were actual threats.
- Denis Brown: The committee has become fed up with these constant 'requests' and are not prepared to listen any further.
- Peter Harries: Please move on.
- Rhian Barnett: Instead of complaining, people should volunteer to join the committee.
- Alice Anstee: These complaints are vexatious.

Approval of the annual accounts was proposed by Alan Bartter and seconded by Rhian Barnett. There was a show of hands with a majority in favour and one vote against. The vote was carried.

8: Subscriptions 2022:

There will be an increase of £5 per person for all subscriptions in 2022

9: Section Reports; Bowls, Tennis and Indoor Sports all as circulated:

The reports have already been circulated. No questions were raised.

10: Election of Officers and Committee to 2021/2022 Committee:

Trustees:

We are required to have a minimum of two and a maximum of 4 Trustees. We presently have Micky Lambourn and Chris Ticehurst, both completing their first year of a three year term and therefore we are compliant with the rules. There have been no further nominations for the post of Trustee.

Officers: Officers serve a one year term.

President: John Conn. Proposed by Peter Harries, seconded by Denis Brown and approved by a show of hands

Chairman: no nominations

Treasurer (qualified): Jennifer Bartter. Proposed by Vic Lardner, seconded by Sonja Heath and approved by a show of hands

Secretary: Paul Ivinson. Proposed by Chris Dodd, seconded by Denis Brown and approved by a show of hands

Committee members: Committee members serve a two year term
Denis Brown and Paul Ivinson have completed one year of a two year term

There are 6 nominations for 6 vacancies, however as Paul Ivinson has been elected as Secretary, there are now 7 vacancies. It was noted that Matthew Bronson, although nominated, is ineligible due to Club membership being less than 2 years. As a consequence the following 5 nominations are elected unopposed for a two year term.

Graham Brown, proposed by Jim Lawton, seconded by Micky Lambourn
Andy Pullen, proposed by Gary Hutchins, seconded by Paul Talbot
Colin Currill, proposed by Dave Broderick, seconded by Paul Talbot
Chris Dodd, proposed by Thomas Brockman, seconded by Andy Pullen
Chris Scorey, proposed by Mike Roques, seconded by Ian Hart

It was noted that the committee will consider the co-option of Matthew Bronson at their first meeting.

11: A.O.B.

Chris Ticehurst proposed a vote of thanks to Debbie and Gary for all the work they have put in at the bar. Seconded by Rhian Barnett and approved with a round of applause.

Meeting closed at 9:04pm