

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF CAMBER LAWN TENNIS CLUB
(HELD AT 5PM ON 5 MARCH 2023 AT THE CLUBHOUSE)

Meeting commenced at 5.06pm

ATTENDEES: *Melanie Carew, Chris Smith, Rebecca Smith, Colin McEye, Angela McKay, Judy, Helen Noakes, Midge Beauchamp; John Stephens, Mark Challen, Lena Grannell, Koroush, Laurent Compagnon, Stephen Sin, Nick Nelson, Nick Bolt, Eimar, Neil McLennan, Katy Higginson, Peter Kiss, Fernando Chehtman, Gianluca Santoro, Jacopo, Callum Higgins (attending members together constituting a quorum for the purpose of a Camber General Meeting)*

1. **Apologies:** *Jill Purkis, Stephanie Mackay, Guilia, Malcolm, Randy, Ollie, Charlie, Sami.*

2. **Election of AGM Chair:** Our Club President dutifully presided over the universal acclamation of Melanie Carew as chair of the AGM, for which presiding the Chair thanked the Club President by reference to her title. Mel supplemented her acceptance of her role in the meeting with a BIG thank you to all members for their efforts in making Camber the success it is. In particular, she (and everyone else) wanted to thank John Stephens for all his work as bar secretary over many years, and to thank Chris for all the work he has done in the past year, in particular in relation to the installation of the new LED floodlights on Courts 1 & 2, which are now up and running. And very bright.

3. **Draft Minutes of 2022 annual general meeting:** approved with no amendments at all, having been very carefully reviewed by Members prior to the AGM when circulated in advance, and will now be published as approved minutes in the customary way.

4. **Matters arising:** None raised.

5. **Committee Officer Reports – Questions from Members** This year's AGM innovation was to circulate these written reports to all members prior to the AGM for transparency and recording purposes (only a cynic would suggest it would be an effort to make the AGM a bit shorter than previous years). Colin Mckl did ask why the papers could not spell his family name correctly. No one could give a satisfactory answer, so it was, by popular acclaim, decided that the Club Secretary should be held responsible for this error and be sacked (although, obvs not until he had typed up the minutes of this meeting).

Notwithstanding the above, and with no further questions or comments arising, Mel, as chair of the AGM, declared that the members were all very happy with the officers' really good reports (herewith attached) and happy with the performance of the Club officers in the past 12 months, which declaration was met with silently, but nonetheless performatively, enthusiastic nodding heads of all present (as far as the minute taker could see).

- 6. Acceptance of Annual Accounts with Auditor's Report** Chris as Club Treasurer reported orally on the Annual Accounts, which had been circulated to all members prior to the AGM for transparency and recording purposes. Big thanks to Ellen for all her work in assisting in preparing the accounts, which is an onerous task for which all present are grateful.

Chris reported in summary that the Club was financially very healthy. Nevertheless overheads are increasing, and court replacement / resurfacing costs in the coming years are likely to be more costly than previously envisaged. As things stand we are making an annual cash profit of about £20,000, and we have about £50,000 in the bank. We estimate that the costs of replacing courts 1 & 2 is likely to be in the region of £100,000, so the timeframe for when the members want that replacement to take place will guide the financial strategy of the club in the coming years. At the moment, the committee is working on the basis that the Courts would be resurfaced in 2 and a half years' time, and the Club's finances are on target for that, if the Members approve the committee's recommendation this year that subscriptions for most playing members are increased by approximately 12 %. This led to general discussion as to the state of the courts and the expected timetabling of resurfacing works. No decision will be made in the coming 12 months, so the committee will report back as part of the finance report at the 2024 AGM.

The Chair reported that the Club's Auditor, Malcolm Dunk, had also approved the accounts, and accordingly the Members approved the accounts, again with big thanks to Chris and Ellen.

- 7. Determination of the 2023/4 classes of memberships and subscriptions.**

The Committee has put forward proposals for increases in subscriptions for the existing tennis-playing membership categories. This is as a result of the increasing costs and strategy detailed previously by the Club Treasurer. Subs have not been increased for the past 3 years, and even with the proposed increase, our subs would still be lower than those in neighbouring tennis clubs. The proposals were approved by the meeting as set out in the AGM documents previously circulated to Members in advance of the meeting (in the knowledge that a supplementary motion for subscriptions had been proposed).

8. Committee Resolutions put to the AGM.

The Members are being asked to decide whether they want floodlights to be free at the point of use. If so, the members are being asked to decide whether that change should be implemented as of 1 April, or to give the committee a mandate to make the decision later in the year. The committee's recommendation was that if either course were approved, then a further increase in subscriptions would be required to fund the change (as set out in the documents attached herewith).

There was general discussion as to the way forward. The income from lights fees in recent years is about £2k a year; the costs have been less. Any change would benefit some members more than others because of times at which they usually play. However, a majority developed in the meeting supporting the proposal that the lights be free at the point of use. Colin Mc-A in particular said that the current coin-operated lights payment system had become difficult to use, not least because it has in his experience been many years since anyone has had the right denominations of crowns, shillings and pence to put into the coin meters. It would, he believes, be preferable to have a one-size fits all system. There was some concern that there may be lights left on overnight if peeps weren't paying for them, but there was also some confidence expressed that members would have it within them to remember to turn the floodlights off when they left the club, so as to save energy and not impact unnecessarily on our dear neighbours, or the local bats. It was confirmed that with the new lighting system there is a potentially game-changing 'on-off' switch to turn the lights a) on; and b) off.

There was some discussion as to which membership categories would have a further increase in subscriptions to fund the free-at-point-of-use change. It was agreed that the subscription sums put forward in the papers submitted in advance of the AGM would be amended so that subs would be as follows:

Full: £252

Midweek: £126

Student: £126

Over 65: £168

7+ Miles: £126

Wheelchair tennis and midweek coaching: £72.00

Junior 13-18: £62

Junior 12 & Under: £31

Runners: £54.00

Social: £20.00

The proposal was put to a vote. An overwhelming majority of AGM attendees voted by way of show of hands for the proposals that a) floodlights be free at the point of use; and b) the subs level for 2023-4 should be further increased to the amounts set out above.

There was one vote against, and at least two abstentions. However, given the evident majority in favour, a count was not called for.

9. Members' Resolutions put to the AGM

i) *Re Clubplay:*

It was agreed after detailed discussion that:

- a) the Bar will be open as often as possible after Clubplay;
- b) The Members will try to organise groups on WhatsApp (or any other social media application groups they desire) and/or sign-up sheets to communicate about intended attendance at play seshes;
- c) The new balls policy at club play will remain the same as it has been all year.

Additionally, the committee made clear it would of course welcome and review any:

- evidence that would assist it in assessing how the prolonged use of useable tennis balls affects members' attendance at club play; and/or
- workable proposals as to the storing (and, if appropriate, continued use) of tennis balls in the following categories:
 - I) *Balls as yet unopened or unused; and/or*
 - II) *Balls used but still nice & bouncy & useable; and/or*
 - III) *Balls used but neither very bouncy nor useable for the purpose of participation in the pastime of tennis such as it customarily practised at Camber; and/ or*
 - IV) *Balls for the dogs, frankly.*

ii) *Re Practice Wall*

The committee will look at the feasibility of a practice wall installation either on court 3 (or maybe just maybe the car park) but the current thinking is that it would cost about £10-13k to instal a decent one, and the committee would tend to think that it would not want to encourage the booking of our limited court space by a sole player.

Mel thanked members for their resolutions and said the committee always welcomes suggestions and volunteers from among the members to assist in the administration of the Club.

10. Election of Committee members / officers

Mel reported that Melanie Carew, Jill Purkis, Stephanie Mackay, Rebecca Smith, Laurent Compagnon and Chris Smith have all indicated their willingness to serve another year on the committee in their current posts. In the absence of any other Members expressing an interest in taking on those roles, Mel asked for the meeting to approve their re-election. All of them were re-elected unanimously.

John Stephens has retired as Bar Secretary. Again really great thanks to him for all his work. Helen Noakes is standing for the post for 2023-24. She is proposed by John Stephens and seconded by Midge Beauchamp. Helen was elected unanimously.

Finian Davern has stood down as Club Secretary. Callum Higgins is standing for the post for 2023-24. He is proposed by Finian Davern and seconded by Laurent Compagnon. Callum was elected unanimously.

11. Election of auditor

Mel reported that Macolm Dunk has indicated his willingness to serve another year as club auditor. He was re-elected by universal acclaim.

12. Election of President and Vice-President

Mel reported our current President (who needs no introduction) and our current Vice President (Midge Beauchamp) have indicated their willingness to serve another year in their posts. They were both re-appointed by universal acclaim.

13. AOB

Members raised the following issues:

- i) *Water tap access for our skateboarding neighbours and interaction with the same;*
- ii) *Group coaching sessions;*
- iii) *Members' skills audit to assist with club planning and works;*
- iv) *Fire doors to (or perhaps, more usefully, from) the club house;*
- v) *Clubhouse security; and (most importantly)*
- vi) *An additional bench on Court 3 for Camber's growing and ageing membership (ILWCOCTS)*

The newly-elected committee promised that it would look into review all these issues and report in due course during the year, and in any event not later than the next AGM in 2024 (*so whoever's the Secretary, better make sure those are on the next AGM agenda. ☺*)

Mel, our newly re-elected Chair, then brought the meeting to a close, thanking all for attending and participating before being subsumed by a thunder of applause and a rush of enthusiasm for the bar (and the remaining slices of delicious cake).

Meeting ended 7.03pm