TRING SQUASH RACKETS CLUB

Pendley Sports Centre Cow Lane Tring Hertfordshire HP23 5NS

VAT Registration No. 209/4813/63

MINUTES OF TRING SQUASH CLUB AGM HELD AT THE CLUB ON WEDNESDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 7:30 PM

The President opened the meeting. There were 38 full adult members present.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from: Paul and Sue Brennan, Tony Eaude, Nick Emery, Simon Smith, Vernon Hill, Keith Warman, Paul Armstrong, Steve & Kirsten Morley, Stuart Kilroy, Mike Platt, James Walton, Mike Walsham

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS AGM

The minutes of the AGM held on the 20th September 2022 had been circulated by e-mail and posted on the Club notice board in advance of the meeting and were taken as read. Approval was agreed unanimously.

3. MATTERS ARISING

None arising which wouldn't be discussed later in the meeting.

4. OFFICERS' REPORTS

4.1 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Mark Bullard

Thanks to the committee. Following the previous year's AGM when the development plan was discussed, we had a number of issues to be discussed over the last year with some difficult decisions made so thank you to all for their efforts. to make and that's for the effort. Also thanks to the sub-committees who have looked at various parcels of work over the year.

Thanks to Joanne Preston who, having done 5 years in the role of Club Secretary, is standing down due to increasing work commitments.

Thanks also to Joni Duncan who has undertaken the membership secretary role for at least the last 15 years, has been heavily involved in chasing overdue subs, the migration to MMM and chasing down non-payers with diligence.

Thanks to Benny & Derek for their continued work around the club.

Thanks also to Nigel Kerry for his work on the house side, its immensely helpful

Thanks to Andy Booth for taking on the role of membership secretary and to Jan Kerry for taking on the Secretary role.

Its been a busy squash year with the Club Championships, handicap and racketball tournaments having been held, largely overseen by Charles LeFevre. The inaugural Tring Masters event was held recently in September 2023 with 5 Tring members playing – a great success with a great atmosphere at the club during the weekend, and something we would like to hold again.

Guiness World Record attempt has now been formally recognised. Within a few weeks of their attempt, an alternative attempt was made which did not succeed Alex and Mike's time and their record remains valid.

Team squash this season – looking to make some changes and this season we will be 'investing' in the Herts 1st team and paying for some top players. The purpose is to get more people down here watching the squash and while the club was happy to support the effort, we have had some sponsorship received in which will pay for an element of this.

Club participation – leagues remain down and the bar remains quieter. It was an issue last year which remains ongoing. MB is looking at moving the kiosk from the end of the corridor and into the entrance so that content can be displayed on the kiosk to market the team matches / other information. Feedback has been received during the year that its not particularly easy to review the current leagues and we're hoping the movement of the kiosk and changes in MMM will make that information more available.

Further comments have been made about lack of information but the information is sent out in newsletters so please encourage everyone to read the newsletters.

MB noted that we get a lot of new members through the club (from the taster sessions / other means) and there is often not much to back it up. Rob Dunford (Level 3 coach) is back in the area and is running some coaching sessions which are available to book on MMM. MB is hoping that this initiative will grow participation.

Falling bar numbers – we are looking at ways to allow people to have a drink without changing to encourage people to come into the bar. MB requested that everyone encourage people into the bar.

Club-wide golf day is being held on Friday 29th September 2023 which is the first time in a while.

One thing that has declined sadly is the club nights. MB noted that these are being looked at to see what needs to happen to revive these nights.

MB noted that later on in the agenda, the committee was proposing an increase to subscriptions and wanted to provide a general overview. At a committee, we feel that its important that our income covers our expenditure. Over the last few years we are effectively running at breakeven and this is something that the committee felt needed addressing. MB noted that the committee has been looking at various projects and these require the war chest that has been built up over the years. Looking at the cost of these projects, the money in the bank won't go very far.

Additionally, the club has been looking at reducing costs and will soon be changing the card machines over to a epos system – in addition to reducing costs for payments received over the bar, it will provide more flexibility in terms of how members can pay and there will be the potential for differential pricing. One of the unique points of the club is the number of volunteers who run the bar and the epos system should make things easier for all of them.

One ongoing project which is nearly ready to go is keeping the bar keys on site (to avoid the handing over of the 7 sets of keys on a weekly rotation).

Geoff Bray noted that it may be worth seeking the advice of an external marketing company, to avoid the job falling to any one volunteer, to see if they could be engage for a price / package to market.

Anthony Palmer noted that during the year we had installed a new defibrillator and instructions on how to use. MB concurred that the online instructions were very simple and the uptake wasn't great as to the number of people who had clicked on the link. MB stressed the importance of all members knowing how to use the defibrillator and watching the British Heart Foundation training video -

https://www.bhf.org.uk/revivr?gclid=CjwKCAjwu_mSBhAYEiwA5BBmf9nMAfTZ8QBQBFsSZPlxtWLFQL OAe110i5LCHt6COtxr8wS54mV7BoCP7EQAvD BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds

JohnJo McDermott noted that there were often requests for space in Tring for events and had we considered offering up the space. MB noted that it would be discussed but there were challenges due to the lack of staff and members being responsible for use.

Pendley Update – Active for car park hires (about 15 days in the past year) which is useful for revenue. The only other source of revenue is from quarterly contributions from the sports clubs. Pendley spends this mainly on car park maintenance and other minor maintenance. The Pendley committee is conscious that they have been doing a lot of spot repairs so are getting a survey done to review a more permanent solution for the car park resurface.

4.2 SECRETARY'S REPORT – Joanne Preston.

The Committee met on 7 occasions during the year and all meetings were quorate. The issue that we had last year of having one under quorate meeting during the previous 12 months has been addressed by the additional committee members either approved at last year's AGM or co-opted onto the committee during the year. Minutes of the meetings are posted on the website and kept there. A copy of the minutes of the most recent meeting is also posted on the club notice board.

Membership: Joanne Preston reported the membership numbers as follows:

	2022/2023	2021/2022	2020/2021	2019/2020
Adult	239	241	267	259
Juniors / Students	68	55	47	78
Social	32	26	32	28
Life Members	29	28	26	26

Total 368 350 372 391

Anna Ashwell asked what % of the membership were ladies and MB confirmed that it was about 20%.

4.3 TREASURER'S REPORT AND CONSIDERATION OF THE ACCOUNTS – Peter Barham ("PB")

PB noted his thanks to Mark for his significant contribution to the club over the last year and thanks to Joanne Preston for her work as the club Secretary.

Peter Barham presented a summary of the accounts over the last financial year to the 30th June 2023. The accounts are unaudited but they have been reviewed and approved by the external accountants.

The Balance Sheet shows a healthy position, mostly with cash in the bank of £181k at the end of June, and just under £180 as of today

Bar stock of just under £6k reflects an increase from £4k last year which had been estimated in 2022 but a full check done in 2023. This had helped the gross profit as of this year (by £1,950).

P&L:

Full year 2023 numbers resulted in £4k surplus (less if you exclude the effect from the stock take increase). Over the last 2 year period, the financials were not much more than breakeven.

Highlights noted by PB:

- Bar sales £68k vs £53k the prior year period. Cost of sales of £58.5k led to a bar gross profit of £9.5k versus £3.5k the prior year. PB noted that this also includes the effect of a stock check at the end of the year (which hadn't happened the previous year) which had the effect of an increase on the numbers.
- Subscription and entry fees Up to £30.8k from £21k YOY due to the discount on subscriptions given for the 2022 subs.
- Court bookings and tournament fees were £23k which were flat YOY
- Coaching £8.7k up from £6.5k the prior year.

Total costs up to £66k from £57.7k YOY with minor changes in a number of categories.

- Some additional MMM equipment booking systems costs
- £3k increase in repairs and maintenance cost YOY, including the new defibrillator machine.

PB commented on the expected upcoming bar price increases and noted that the beer price increase could not be funded by the savings in the banks.

Nigel Kerry noted that we continue to have a roof repair provision in the accounts but noted that the size was not a realistic cost. PB noted that prudently we should always have it, and perhaps we should increase, but it wouldn't affect the P&L. MB noted that we had undertaken a survey of the roof recently and had been assured that the roof wasn't deteriorating.

Geoff Bray noted that recent years numbers had been affected by covid and cost of living increases and questioned whether PB had a forecast of the future years. PB noted that he didn't.

Anthony Palmer questioned whether the utility price effect had been felt by the club. Mark Bullard confirmed that we were locked into a deal until August next year and were expecting a large increase next year.

Allan Whittow questioned whether PB had reviewed other similar club's financial accounts to get a feel for what sort of income the club should make before exceptional items. PB noted that he didn't but the committee felt that the club needed to make a slight income rather than a loss each year. Chris Langford noted that the club was unique and therefore slightly incomparable to other clubs (due to the number of volunteers). They had attempted to do this in years past but hadn't found a similar club. The court fees and subs needed to pay for themselves, and likewise with the bar income/costs. CL noted that the balance sheet remained strong.

The adoption of the accounts were approved unanimously by the meeting. Allan Whittow proposed, seconded by Chris Langford.

4.4 LADIES CAPTAIN'S REPORT – presented by Joanne Preston

The ladies had an excellent season last season, with both teams performing well. The ladies first team had an outstanding season in the Herts league, winning it for the first time in 22 years! We didn't have quite as strong a performance in the Bucks league, finishing 4th overall generally due to weaker teams being put out on these nights (due to player availability on different match nights).

The 2nd team finished a close second (out of 7) in the Bucks second division which is an excellent result, particularly given that they were struggling for players in the first half of the season.

Well done to both teams and thank you to Kelly Gascoine for running the 2nd team last season, and all the players in both squads who have contributed.

There's no summer leagues for the ladies divisions so we have been looking forward to the 2023/24 season which has recently kicked off. As we did last year, the Tring ladies 1st team is entered into the Herts 1st division and the Bucks 1st division. The Tring ladies 2nd team is entered into the Bucks 2nd division. This year for the first time in a long time, the Bucks ladies have created a third division (which is amazing given that most counties struggle to have even one ladies division) and therefore please let me know if you are interested in playing ladies team squash and not already in the squad - if we have interest in putting in an additional team then it is something we can consider for future years. Kelly Gascoine has retired as the 2nd team captain this season and therefore my thanks go to Ruth Proudfoot and Madeline Hughes who are co-captaining the team this season.

The ladies home matches are mostly held on a Monday evening, with a few matches in the Buck's league for the 1st team to be played on a Wednesday night when there are no men's

matches. I will put a fixtures list up on the club boards when the fixtures are finalised, please come down and support the teams.

Away from the team matches, we have a number of our Tring ladies playing at a county level During the last season the Bucks Ladies team managed to retain their place in the Premier division (having won promotion the prior season), and the Herts Ladies O40s team. We had representation from Tring in both teams and congratulations to those involved.

Bucks county Senior teams 2022/23 season (including 4 past or current Tring players):



Thanks again go to Katie Winterstein who continues to organise events to encourage ladies squash at Tring, including the Ladies events held in April 2023 and most recently last week for Women's Squash Week. Katie has also set up a buddy system for new female members. Thanks also to Rob Dunford for his coaching of the recent ladies team training sessions and to Charles LeFevre for the running of the ladies leagues.

4.5 MEN'S CAPTAIN'S REPORT – by Keith Warman (presented by Joanne Preston in Keith's absence)

This winter season we again split our three teams between Herts and Bucks. The Bucks team in division 1 was run by Alex Preston, they had a much better season than last, finishing a credible third.

We had two Herts teams, one in division 1 and one in division 3. Steve Malduca captained the 1st team and was again under pressure as it was difficult to meet the high standard set by other clubs. The team managed to finish just above the relegation zone!

The 2nd team was run by James Taylor, they also struggled mainly due to a long term injury to their no.1. They also finished just above the relegation zone.

This winter we expect to run a Herts division 1 team, captained by Steve Malduca, where for an initial trial period of one season we are going to try to attract a couple of higher ranked local players to make the team more competitive. There will also be a division 2 team captained by James Taylor, as well as a Bucks team in division 1 captained by Alex Preston.

We did not enter a team in to the Herts summer squash league. However we did enter two teams in the Bucks racketball league. The 1st team in division 1 captained by Steve Malduca had a much stronger team than in previous seasons and managed to finish third. The 2nd

team in division 2 captained by Keith Warman won the division. Congratulations to both teams.

Even more players at the club have seen the benefits of playing racketball, where the number of players seems to grow year on year.

I'd like to thank the team captains again for their efforts this past year and I would also like to thank Charles Lefevre for running many of the tournaments, the squash and racketball internal leagues and the bronze event at the beginning of September, a great job.

4.6 JUNIOR REPORT – presented by Katie Winterstein

A good start to the year with Ethan Duncan winning U 17 and U 19 Herts County Closed championship.

In September the coaching program resumed on Wed and Sat afternoons. Numbers for this were stable and align with previous years. The club continues to offer coaching from 4 years up to 19 years.

The Junior Assistant Coaching Program the club continued with the addition of Ethan Duncan completing his level 1 and assisting with Wed afternoon sessions.

Tring school PE option lessons on Mondays were fully subscribed, taught by Darren Withey and Katie Winterstein. Unfortunately the school has stopped the option of external sports including squash. Feedback from the school staff and the students was positive and we hope to engage them further in offering squash as an afterschool activity.

This year we only fielded an U11 team in the Herts Junior League. The team was in Div 1 coming 5 th /5. Two of the U 11 George Ogden and George Hughes were selected for the U 11 county team. Ethan Duncan was selected for Aspire team (coming second in the country) and played number one for Herts U 17 County Team.

Stronger juniors have been playing for the adult teams. Cai Gascoine, Florence Ashwell and Martha Duncan for ladies second team; Ethan Duncan and Sam Hawkins for mens teams.

The highlight of the year must be the Junior Squashathon. The idea springing from the World record attempt. What a great day it was with 26 juniors taking part in a 12 hour squash challenge and raising, £2721. Definitely one to be repeated in 2024.

Chris Langford noted his thanks to the hard work that goes in behind the junior programme.

5. OTHER REPORTS

5.1 <u>House Management – by Nigel Kerry</u>. Summary presented at the meeting.

A year is a long time in a HM life and trying to remember what has happened during the year can be a bit of a task. I have listed below a few things that did take place but there will be others that I've forgotten.

Extension Roof

After years of complaint the void above the lounge area has now been properly insulated and boarded. This is making a difference although some won't be happy unless able to sit in the

bar in shorts and T-shirt in January. The hot air emanating from those using the bar is now trapped and there is no doubt the heating bill has gone down. This winter will give us a better idea of how effective the insulation is.

Sadly, we still don't seem to be able to stop the leaks. The broken roof tiles were replaced, all the old air-vents removed, and the roof cleaned of moss. A big thank you to Steve Arnold for either doing or arranging this. However, the leaks continue (not Steve's fault).

The problem of branches falling from the over-hanging trees is ongoing and really needs to be sorted out with Pendley Hotel (the owners). I have arranged for a roofer to return and have another look at the areas we think the leaks are coming from to see if anything is obvious.

Heating

With the void above the lounge now insulated the heating appeared to be keeping the area at an appropriate temperature. If there's been a function on a Saturday night and its cold in the bar on a Sunday, or Monday, then I suggest you check the radiators haven't been turned off.

I didn't get that many complaints about the court heating during the year. Fixing the court heaters so they couldn't be turned off made a difference. It allowed the heating on all courts to settle at about the 18* target. It's worth noting that when you play squash you're meant to get hot and sweaty. If you're not, you need to run around more.

The booster heaters on courts 2&4 have become a huge bone of contention. If you play outside of "normal" hours the idea is you put them on 15mins before you start. They will then cut out at the end of your 45mins booking.

We have made some drastic changes over the last 3 years to the amount of electricity the club uses, and we are now able to see clearly the difference these booster heaters make when turned on. They treble the amount of electricity being used across the whole club when in action.

We can also now see when their use is being abused e.g heaters on but courts not booked until an hour later.

The heating system on the courts isn't the most effective available. I did say at the end of April that I would investigate alternatives. Unfortunately, I've had a very busy 6 months so that didn't happen. I'm aware that Beaconsfield are currently upgrading their system to underfloor heating and have asked that enquiries be made as to how much its costing and the name of the supplier. I will report back.

The heating across the Club will be turned on 30th September.

Gutters & Court Roof
These are due to be cleared shortly

Changing rooms & Showers

Haven't had any complaints about these for a while.

Heater in ladies changing room will, I hope, be looked at soon so its ready when needed. Both ladies and men's showers going to be given a "deep" clean every 6 months.

Kitchen

Please leave as you find it and if you've borrowed any of the equipment, please bring it back. Any food left in the fridge will be thrown out every Monday.

The cooker is due its 6-month clean. Please try and use it properly and keep it clean.

Alarms

These go off occasionally. Usually by accident.

The bar is covered by an intruder alarm. If this goes off its because something is probably wrong with the shutters.

Fire alarm is separate and more important. If this is set off by accident, then the procedure for dealing with it is set out on the cupboard in the kitchen and by the alarm control box by the front door. If you don't deal with it promptly the fire brigade will turn up. Not great.

In both cases there is a sequence of people from within the club to call. Simon Smith, Benny, Me. Their numbers will be on display by the alarm box.

New Key System

There is a new key system being installed which will, in theory, make it easier to get the bar open. I think its also due to be used, at some later stage, on the ladies changing room.

Thanks to all those who have helped me deal with all the small things over the last year.

5.2 Social – Mark Bullard

The club is very active with numerous members parties held over the last year or booked in. Thanks to Kelly Gascoine for sorting out the staff for all the various events.

Over the past year we've had a number of club events – Abba, Dung Beatles, One for the Road, Dolly Parton. All entertaining evenings.

A few weeks ago the club held the 40th Anniversary party organised by Chris Langford.

Coming up we have Elvis, the comedy night, the Who, Noasis, George Michael etc.

The current Rugby World Cup matches are available to watch at the club on the TVs.

6.0 Subscriptions and court fees

MB introduced the proposed increases to the subs and court prices, with a future rise in beer prices expected. MB noted that the cash in the bank should be used for club improvements and the operating costs should be covered by the operating income. MB noted that there had not been an increase in fees for a number of years.

The subscription includes the compulsory England Squash (ESRA) membership fees which are currently £12.50 per adult and £10.00 per junior. The committee is aware that England Squash plan to change the payment of these fees from club to individual, but this has been delayed and the club will need to pay the fees for the 2023/2024 season.

<u>Current</u> <u>Proposed</u>

(a) Entry Fees	Adult Junior/Student Family/Husband & Wife	£50.00 £12.00 £50.00	£50.00 £12.00 £50.00		
(b) Subscriptions	ranny/musoand & wife	230.00	250.00		
1. Sing	le Adult Annual	£102.50	£120.00		
	3 year	£275.00	£325.00		
2. Husl	band & Wife Annual	£190.00	£230.00		
	3 year	£510.00	£625.00		
3. Juni	or Annual only	£ 20.00	£20.00		
(Under 19 at time of joining)					
4. Stud	ent Annual only	£35.00	£35.00		
(In full time education)					
5. Fam	ily Annual only	£190.00+	£230.00+		
£10 for each child (Husband, Wife and any children under 19 who are in full time -education) £10 for each child					
6. Play	ing Life Membership	£750.00+	£1250.00+		
		£12.50 p.a.*	£12.50 p.a. *		
7. Soci	al Membership Annual Only	£40.00	£45.00		

^{*} This will always be equivalent to the ESRA Adult membership fee each year.

(c) Court Fees

The committee proposes the following changes to the court fees for the year 2023/2024.

	Current	Proposed
Off peak 1 hour	£3.60	£4.50
Off peak 40 minutes	£2.50	£3.00
Peak 1 hour	£5.60	£6.00
Peak 40 minutes	£3.80	£4.00

Proposed by committee seconded by Nigel Kerry. There was unanimous approval for the proposed fees for 2023/2023.

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2023/2024

The election of the following Officers and Committee members were unanimously approved by the meeting:

Officers

President Chris Langford

Chairman Mark Bullard
Secretary Jan Kerry
Treasurer Peter Barham
Men's Captain Keith Warman
Ladies' Captain Joanne Preston

Committee Members

Matt Duncan, Chas Lefevre, Katie Winterstein, James Walton, Merril Trueman, Anthony Palmer, Kelly Gascoine, Andy Booth

Additionally it was proposed by Keith Warman and seconded by Mark Bullard that Steve Malduca was voted onto the committee.

The meeting approved unanimously with the proposed committee for 2023/2024.

Auditors

The re-appointment of Ad Valorem Group Limited (previously know as ECL Howard Watson Smith) as the Club's auditors, was unanimously approved by the meeting.

8. PRESENTATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S TROPHY

Chris Langford introduced the president's trophy which is given to someone in the club who has contributed something special to the club. This person has been mentioned several times this evening – sorted out utilities, runs the leagues, tournament organised the Masters tournament etc. His wife Barbara also supports the club with cooking food at various events. Thanks and the award goes to Charles LeFevre.

9. PRESENTATION TO CATHY

Cathy Beard has retired from her cleaning duties after many years working for the club. She couldn't attend the meeting tonight but as a way of saying thanks for her many years of service for the club, Mark would be presenting her with a voucher for a meal out for her and Derek, along with a bunch of flowers.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

At last year's meeting there was a big discussion on the development plan that had been presented included the costs. Following that meeting the committee decided that the stretch to the initial costing was too great. A revised cut down plan was also considered by the committee but this also would have costed c. £200k and the decision was taken that the club did not have the appetite to raise the additional funds required.

Mark Bullard noted that while that development proposal was not being pursued, the committee wanted to continue with the aims and objectives for the improvements – notably the ladies changing room and the bar. Mark Bullard noted that the committee wanted to make improvements which would make the club attractive to new and younger members..

Mark Bullard outlined the current work on the project which were current and underway:

- Ladies changing room (being run by Keith Warman)
 - o Largely stay within current footprint. Final details still being determined
 - o Builder found, who is well known to the club
 - New toilet, showers, benches, overhaul of the privacy features, ventilation, heating.
 - o Letter of intent to the builder has been issued in order to get the building slot booked in for May 2024 (at the end of the squash season).
 - Quote £46k plus VAT
 - o Anna Ashwell asked whether ventilation was being considered in the ladies changing room scope and Mark Bullard confirmed it was.
- Men's changing room:
 - o Mark Bullard noted that privacy was a feature in the men's changing room that also needed to be considered in due course.
 - o Also looking at redecoration and heating efficiency improvements.
 - o £26k plus VAT is an initial quote for that work.
- Bar improvements
 - Looking at ways to make the bar area more attractive to younger members / members who don't currently use the bar facilities
 - o Looking to freshen up, make it more modern and lighten the area
 - Work done with one interior designer but the club decided not to pursue for various reasons
 - o Now engaged a club member, Charlie Galsworthy, who is a local interior designer who is currently working on producing a visual plan.
 - The furniture replacement will be included in this work now with costs estimated in the low tens of thousands.

Mark Bullard noted that these works were identifying key areas of improvement which would use up a large proportion of the club funds.

Mark Bullard noted that Charles LeFevre had been undertaking a lot of work looking at energy costs and this was helping to identify other areas of improvements or areas where we can benefit from energy efficiencies. This included the potential of under-floor heating which has recently been installed at Beaconsfield and is working well. Other areas to look at are the ventilation of the club, and the potential installation of solar panels.

Mark Bullard noted in summary that there were a number of areas of improvement that would resolve a number of the issues raised by the member survey.

Geoff Bray noted that as this is a commercial business, we may be able to get free installation for solar panels. There was a similar situation with heat pumps which should be considered and maybe the club should pay for professional advice. Mark Bullard confirmed that various avenues were being looked at and we are open to looking at all ideas presented to committee.

Anthony Palmer noted that its been a very complicated time for the committee and while the progress has been slow, the committee were all volunteers and we now have the right plan for the club which he is supportive of to progress the key development areas.

Martin Bowness noted that there had been a request from Denton Punter as to whether we could use the courts to play padel board which is becoming more popular. Mark Bullard

noted that it was similar to the table tennis discussion a while ago and if it can be played on a squash court then they should provide details for the committee to consider the proposal.

Geoff Bray questioned the availability of courts during the daytime and were there other sports which could rent out the courts during the day (pilates etc) which can be looked into by the committee.

Mick Daines questioned the heating on court 2 and 4 in the winter months due to the outside walls (including sometimes condensation on the walls). It was noted that Nigel Kerry is already looking at alternative solutions.

Chris Langford closed the meeting at 21:18

