

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

Biddenden Squash Club.

**Date:** Friday 25th May 2022 at 7:00pm.

**Location:** Biddenden Squash Club,  
Tenterden Road,  
Biddenden,  
Ashford,  
Kent,  
TN27 8BB.

## MEETING MINUTES

### **Attendance In Person:**

Mark Butterworth, Dan Goldsmith, Simon Ashby, Tom Swain, Jo Davies, Elliot Lancashire, Lionel Hammond, Tim Davies, Chris Gorman, Katy Bridges, John Marshall, Sarah Boxhall, Anthony Boxall, Neil Oatway, Ceef Rawlings, Richard Hawkes, Scott Finin, Stuart Welch, Lisa West, Ian Philo, Mary Philo, Karl Jacobs, David Buttel, Lee Burfoot and Jo Ashby.

**Apologies:** Caroline Swain, David Robson, Jackie Jenson.

**Proxy Votes:** None put forward.

## STATEMENT OF AGENDA

- Written report & approval of last years accounts (both shared prior to the meeting).
- Special notices.
- Election of Officers to the Club.
- Open forum / AOB.

Tonight's meeting is chaired by Mark Butterworth.

The minutes from the 2021 AGM were noted as approved 1 month after they were issued.

## WRITTEN REPORTS & ACCOUNTS (From 2021/22 Committee)

### **Chairman's Report (Mark Butterworth)**

Dear Members of Biddenden Squash Club (BSC) and affiliated Village Halls Clubs. Over the last 12 months Biddenden Squash Club (BSC) has recovered quickly from the Covid lockdown period with it now being the busiest, and in the strongest position, it has ever been since opening in 1975. It is a small club in a small village in the middle of Kent. Despite this the current membership stands at over 250 members with a consistent strong use of the courts at all hours of the days and weekends.

There will be bigger clubs in larger areas with bigger numbers, but our club is punching significantly above its weight with one of the largest Junior programmes across Kent and a vibrant ladies membership.

**We have a few notable mentions**

1. Louise Hollamby is a junior member of our club and recently won the England Squash Rising Star of the Year award. Louise sees squash as a happy place for her and makes everyone smile around her. Louise is exactly the kind of person that this club aspires to be here for and is the inspiration for us all. You can read about it on the England Squash link <https://www.englishsquash.com/news/england-squash-awardswinners>

2. Harry Goldsmith is another junior member of our club and was awarded the Biddenden Squash Club Junior achievement award. Harry is can be usually found on court playing / practising regardless of the hour! Harry is a true ambassador for the juniors and the club in general and another great example of the kind of person this club aspires to have in it.

3. It is with sadness to announce the standing down of Dan Goldsmith from the Committee. Dan has been a fabulous member of the committee. His energy, enthusiasm, and overall desire to see the vibrance of the club are testament to the way he has conducted himself on the Committee. Stepping down will allow Dan to focus his attention to enjoying the club and he will remain a great advocate of the spirit and nature of this fine club. 4. The club relies on the strong spirit of the members who give their time generously; the coaching team who work tirelessly in pursuit of an inclusive club and of course the committee who act as temporary stewards of this amazing facility - The Club thanks you all!!

### **Coaching at the Club – Principles for 2022 onwards**

1. The role of Director of Squash is a committee role and will oversee coaching at the club on behalf of the Chairman and the committee.

2. Coaching fits into the principles of the squash club and any coaching should be agreed with the Director of Squash first.

3. This will then be agreed with the Chairman and the Committee consulted, who will ensure alignment with the committee. Once done then any changes to Club approved Coaches will be announced.

4. Group Coaching is set across the week in advance and sponsored & approved by the Club. This is fully organised by the Director of Squash.

5. 1:1 or 1:2 coaching is offered to all members with the following guidance;

- Ideally it is set in off-peak court times. For this period there will be no additional court fee and the approved Coach will have a court key (or equivalent) for use with that lesson
- Where 1:1 or 1:2 coaching does occur in peak court times this reduces the opportunity for other courts to be booked by members, and therefore is subject to the same court fees as other members (currently £4 per 40mins.)

6. At present there are 3 nominated club coaches (with rough areas of focus as follows);

- **Tom Swain** - providing Group Coaching leadership (with support from Lorna Lancashire and Polly Coxeter) and occasional 1:1 coaching.
- **Lorna Lancashire** - generally supporting juniors and entry level players.
- **Gary Marshall** - generally providing mid and experience level coaching.

7. All Coaches are encouraged to be a part of the club and to join in, where feasible, with other events / leagues, etc.

Please note that all Coaches are not employees of the club and thus maintain their own pricing structures, England squash coaching membership, DBS checks, and ensure appropriate health and

safely is adhered to. They are also responsible for any issues that arise with their clients (members).

Club Principles, adopted initially during the first phase of lockdown with some recent tweaking.

- First and foremost, to be an inclusive club that support and promote Squash and Racket ball for everyone and not just the elite.
- To provide multiple opportunities to Club members for strong squash and social interaction at all levels of capability, leveraging the bar facility where possible.
- Continue the outreach into the Community alongside supporting the growth of squash to juniors, ladies and with other VHSC clubs through structured Coaching where applicable.
- Seek and promote strengthened relationships with the other Biddenden Village Clubs – through its relationship with the Biddenden Village Hall & Sports Committee (VHSC) and the Biddenden Parish Council (BPC).
- Ensure that the facilities remain fit for purpose for the future years and that the Club maintains and seeks funding in support of these larger capital expenditures. This is captured in the “Long Term Improvement & Development Plan” (LTIDP) plans brought together by the VHSC.

**Mark Butterworth, Chair** (mark@biddendensquash.co.uk; 07899074763).

### **Club Secretary / Maintenance Report (Dan Goldsmith)**

It has been great to see the club recover so quickly after the pandemic with so many new faces enjoying time on court and the renovated bar facilities! The support from our loyal membership during this difficult period has been immense and the future of the club looks very healthy, with stable finances and a playing membership envied by many clubs across Kent.

I'd like to thank all who have helped organise events in 2022, it's been great to see so many “classic's” back on the calendar, including the quiz night, family tournaments, MATS competitions and the first summer party for quite some time! With many more still to come this year, I encourage all members who have not yet joined in with these social events to come and join the fun, they have been a resounding success.

### **Maintenance**

Not knowing how the pandemic would affect the clubs finances our focus over the past 12 months has been on maintaining the facilities with some ambitious plans in the pipeline for the future.

To date we've improved access to the cellar, oil tank and boiler, repaired much outdated pipework and re-wired the bar to meet with current regulations. We've added child safe door returns to the changing rooms, replaced the entrance locks and door handles and added the soft drink pump system at the bar.

Long term planned improvements, include;

- Taking the club cashless,
- Replacing the court tins,
- Sanding the court floors,
- Re-surfacing / painting the walls of the courts.

**Dan Goldsmith, Club Secretary** ([dan@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:dan@biddendensquash.co.uk))

### **Director of Squash Report (Tom Swain)**

Court usage for Individual member and team/event bookings has steadily increased over the last year;

- 7% increase across all time slots (0840-2120) across a 7 day week.
- 13% increase in the peak time slots (1720-2040 on weeknights).
- In the last 4 months (since Jan 1st) 83% of all peak time slots have been booked (increases to 90% excluding the 2040 courts).
- In the peak slots there has been a 13% increase in individual members bookings whereas team/events/club coaching has remained the same (actually a small drop).
- The above figures do not include any May bookings where the MATS competition starts with allocated Wednesday courts. The club supports a number of sessions across a weekly basis, and this feeds in to the healthy situation the club is currently in. The table below has a breakdown of these sessions.

### **Racket Tots**

Parent and toddler sessions – **18 children** – (figures do not include the link with the local Playschool – one of these sessions now has a ‘spin off’ session with the mums on the other court in a beginner session).

### **Rapid Rackets**

Beginners squash sessions - **27 different children** have had these sessions in the last 10 months.

### **Junior Squash**

This includes the Young adult session for 15-19yr olds - **51 players** (3 of these are in 2 session per week).

### **John Mayne**

Year 5/6 - **4 children**.

### **Monday Night Ladies**

**27 different ladies** have attended the sessions since September (excluding international women’s day) – currently 24 attending weekly, 4 new members as a result (with a few to chase to join).

### **Saturday Morning Training**

Fitness & Training session **29 different players have attended**, with a limit of 16 per week for the squash sessions (8 per session) – we also have some relatives of players joining the fitness session.

### **Wednesday Night Mixed Ability Team Squash (MATS): May-July 2022; and Team Squash**

The take up for MATS has been huge with 47 players registering to play – 30 players involved last time, 15 are women/girls (up from 7 last year). The decision to not enter a team in the Kent Summer Leagues was made amongst the team players to allow for the MATS to take place.

Thank you to Chris Gorman and Simon Ashby for running the teams in the winter and for some MATS matches against other clubs as well.

### **Box Leagues**

Currently 53 players in the leagues (38 in September last year) across the club leagues with completion of matches consistently being 75%+. As a comparison a huge club in Nottingham with 10 courts had 11 leagues with 55 players. Of those players 12 are either current juniors or have come through our junior programme and 11 of them are women/ girls. In September there were 3 that had come through the juniors and 4 women/girls.

### **Club Tournaments**

We have been able to complete a full season of tournaments for the first time since before covid meaning we will be adding some new names and some familiar ones to the club honours boards.

The recent Club Closed competitions were well supported by players and spectators with an awesome afternoon of finals.

### **Tournament Results**

Winners

**Mens Closed** - Chris Gorman

**Ladies Closed** - Polly Coxeter

**Junior Closed** - Earle Pullen

**Mens Plate** - Tony Bateman

**Ladies Plate** - Rachel Oatway

**Junior Plate** - Harry Goldsmith

**Club Handicap** - Tom White

**Club Handicap Plate** - Polly Coxeter

**Ladies Handicap** - Polly Coxeter

**Veterans Handicap** - Simon Ashby

**Junior Handicap** - Polly Coxeter

**Club Handicap** – (from pre lockdown 2020) Simon Ashby

**Tom Swain, Director of Squash** ([tom@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:tom@biddendensquash.co.uk))

### **Membership Secretary Report (David Robson)**

It was difficult to forecast how the club, and the membership, would be affected by the pandemic. In the event, it could not have been more positive, with an astonishing increase in membership numbers. In March 2021, the club had 167 members; since reopening 12 months ago, numbers rose to 214. From then, numbers have increased significantly, with relatively few people not renewing their membership. We currently stand at 264 members, a level not reached before. (Tom - do you agree?). Special mention must go to Tom Swain, recruiting many new members over the last 12 months.

The family base continues to be our strength with 29 family groups. Pleasingly, the increase is reflected across all member groups, especially junior and ladies: both Monday and Wednesday night sessions are extremely popular and are driving more families to join.

Total membership is:

- 146 Adult playing members.
- 9 Young adult playing members (18-25 years).
- 75 juniors.

- 34 Social/Honorary members.

Because the club had been closed for six months, previous year membership fees were discounted by 50%. For the next membership year (July 2022 to June 2023), fees will back to previous rates:

- Adult playing member: £125
- Family: £200
- Young adult: £65
- Junior: 25
- Social member: £15

**David Robson, Membership Secretary** ([david@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:david@biddendensquash.co.uk))

### **Ladies Squash Representative Report (Jo Davies)**

The last year for ladies' squash has been a positive one. Monday Night Ladies coaching continues to be popular with all four sessions being well attended every week. With the support of the Coaches and each other it has given more ladies the confidence to enter box leagues and competitions. On 7th March we celebrated International Women's Day which again was well supported by our female members. Sunday 24th April saw six of our ladies represent Biddenden Squash Club at the first ever London Ladies Squash Festival in Bexley, they all played extremely well and not only did themselves proud but certainly did the club proud.

At the end of July more of our ladies have signed up to take part in The Canterbury Ladies Open 2022 Summer Graded Squash Tournament. It is also amazing to see so many of our ladies join the Biddenden MATS competition this time, especially those that would not normally have the confidence to do so. Without doubt the club's ladies continue to thrive and go from strength to strength.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any suggestions you may have as I'm here to ensure the voice of the Ladies is well represented.

**Jo Davies, Ladies Squash Representative** ([jo@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:jo@biddendensquash.co.uk))

### **Treasurers Report for year 2021/2022** (Elliot Lancashire)

Total revenue for the club amounted to almost £43k for to 21/03/2022 which generated an Operating Profit of £1,3k. Additionally, £12k of grant income (due to COVID 19) produced a total profit of £13k for the year.

Breaking this down, Bar Sales were **£25k** with cost of sales (stock) being approximately £12.5k.

Employee costs were an additional **£12k** leading to the bar breaking even for the Financial Year.

Membership income of **£11k** and light deposits of £6.5k covered the additional costs incurred by the club.

On the balance sheet equity increased **from £11.7k to £25k in the year**. For that reason, and the performance of the club noted above, we can be confident that the club is a going concern for the foreseeable future.

**Elliot Lancashire, Treasurer** ([elliott@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:elliott@biddendensquash.co.uk))

### **Bar & Social Report (Caroline Swain)**

Over the past year we have put some systems in place to bring the bar into the 21st century and these are very much still a work in progress. Although we began taking card via Zettle in September 2018, we were still running off our till of endless receipts.

We are now totally digital, but of course, still taking your cash. Our takings are approximately card 60% and cash 40%, so we are listening to you and will continue to take your 'real' money.

Our new system means that we can monitor sales, events, and work in a much more time efficient way. So, thank you for your patience with this transition.

We have also, as with most places, had to increase our prices slightly in alignment with cost of stock and wage increases. We tried to keep this to a minimum as it is a member's bar. I'm pleased to see that so far this hasn't affected consumption!

### **Social**

2021/22 has certainly seen the return to normality that we've been craving, in fact, I'd say that we are back with a vengeance! Hopefully you have seen our calendar in the entrance, I have a feeling this is only going to get busier...

So far this year we have seen the New Year's Eve party, the Family Day, the Quiz Night and most recently, the Family Fun Day. A very wise person spoke to me at the Fun Day and said, "this is brilliant, it's just like the good old days". If you're a newbie... take a look at the photo collage behind the courts. He's not wrong, the club is a special place to be.

I'd like to say a massive thank you to all the people who volunteer to make these events happen. Just to name a few people, Jo, Tim, Ceef, Simon, Jo, Maya (legend cake baker), Dan, Tanya, Sarah, Anthony, Elliot, Sir David, Paula, Lorna, Emma (sorry about your nail), Ben, Peter, Kiera (Mabel whisperer) .... I know there are people I've missed (if I did, I'm sorry!) but thank you to everyone who mucks in and makes these events happen!

I'd like to say a HUGE thank you to our bar staff. To Flick and Tanya who keep the bar going week in week out. We are so lucky to have them. And to our extras who step in. Charlie (NYE), Jo (Family Day) and Shelley (when we need something from the cellar or a busy night!). I obviously can't not write this and not say a MASSIVE thank you to Tom for organising the squash events: the various trophy tournaments and MATS. Such a lot of work goes into these behind the scenes and there is no doubt that these events kept the bar going during the earlier months after the pandemic.

To all our members, whether squash or social, thank you so much for your support.

**Caroline Swain, Bar** ([caroline@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:caroline@biddendensquash.co.uk))

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

For the 2022/23 period.

**Chairman / Village Halls Trustee** - Mark Butterworth

Nominated: Tom Swain

Seconded: Dan Goldsmith

**Vice Chairman & Membership Secretary** - David Robson

Nominated: Scott Finnan

Seconded: Ian Philo

**Club Secretary** - Mary Philo

Nominated: Mark Butterworth

Seconded: Ian Philo

**Treasurer** - Elliot Lancashire

Nominated: Tim Davies

Seconded: John Marshall

**Director of Squash** - Tom Swain

Nominated: Dan Goldsmith

Seconded: Mary Philo

**Bar Manager** - Caroline Swain

Nominated: Karl Jacobs

Seconded: Dan Goldsmith

**Ladies Representative** - Jo Davies

Nominated: Neil Oatway

Seconded: Ian Philo

**Committee Member** - Simon Ashby

Nominated: Tim Davies

Seconded: Tom Swain

## **OPEN FORUM / A.O.B**

A request was made by Scott Finnan, to reduce the steam in the mens showers.

- This will be added to the committee maintenance list.

A request was made by Ben Austin, that we look into a cashless booking system. A show of hands vote was taken as a guide to allow the committee to further investigate.

- Committee are already looking into this and more information will be published to the members shortly.

Concern about the increased energy cost was raised by Richard Hawkes, asking if membership fees would cover this increased expenditure.



- Committee explained that club reserve funds would be used in 2022-23 to cover these extra costs and any raising of fees would be held back and addressed at the next AGM if necessary.

Finally, a request was made by Sarah Boxall for refreshments to be available when the bar is closed. Such as a coffee machine and/or “slushy” machine in the hallway.

- Committee noted this suggestion to discuss at future meetings.

**MEETING CLOSED AT 7:30pm**