**BIDDENDEN SQUASH CLUB AGM**

**WEDNESDAY 15TH MAY 2024 19:00**

**Attendees:** David Robson, Jo Ashby, Brad Debona, Flic Brockman, Tim Davies, Stuart Welch, Dale Earle, Charlie Stow, Francis Elliot, Ben Davies, Aimee Butler, Shelley Kerr, Will Pope, Michelle, Joe, Tom White, Tony Scott, Caroline Swain, Lisa West, Tom Swain, Paula Jirgena, Jo Davies

**Apologies:** John Marshall, Tanya Goldsmith, Dan Goldsmith, Katy Bridges

**AGENDA**

1. Written Reports (see below)
2. Approval of last year’s accounts (sent prior)
3. Membership Fees (no changes proposed)
4. Election of Officers to the Club 2024/25.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

**For the 2024/25 period.**

**Chairman - Tom White**

Nominated: David Robson

Seconded: Paula Jirgena

**Membership Secretary - Tony Scott**

Nominated: Charlie Stow

Seconded: Paula Jirgena

**Club Secretary / Village Halls Trustee**

**/ Social Secretary - Caroline Swain**

Nominated: Tom White

Seconded: Paula Jirgena

**Treasurer – Lisa West**

Nominated: Jo Davies

Seconded: Tom Swain

**Director of Squash - Tom Swain**

Nominated: Tom White

Seconded: Charlie Stow

**Bar Manager - Paula Jirgena**

Nominated: Aimee Butler

Seconded: Lisa West

**Ladies Representative – Jo Davies**

Nominated: Lisa West

Seconded: Tim Davies

**Committee Member – Charlie Stow**

Nominated: Charlie Stow

Seconded: Shelley Kerr

**Young Adult Representative -**

Nominated: Committee Vote

Seconded: Committee Vote

1. **AOB.**
   1. ***The 8pm court*** *– will be moving to a peak slot due to usage. This will be in place from 1st June.*
   2. ***Anthony Hackney -*** *I would like to suggest improvements to the squash lounge/bar: Introduce soft furnishings: curtains, carpet, furniture to improve general ambiance and sound reverberation etc. Generally, to make the club more attractive for social use.*
   3. ***Francis Elliot -*** *Streaming games – Charlie and Tony.*

**MEETING CLOSED AT: 19:20**

**WRITTEN REPORTS**

**2023/24 Committee**

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| **Chairman’s Report**  Still riding high on our success as last year’s England Squash Club of the Year, Biddenden Squash Club continues to thrive.  As you will see from the reports from other members of the committee, the number of club members continues to rise, the enthusiasm for playing squash at all levels is ever-increasing and, judging by Paula’s Bar Manager’s report, that seems to have made everyone quite thirsty.  Overall, our club continues to be a shining beacon of positivity, community, and inclusivity.  There have been some changes within the committee over the course of the year.  As well as bidding farewell at the EGM at the end of 2023 to Elliot Lancashire as Treasurer, we have also had to say a sad goodbye to David Robson as Membership Secretary.   David has been a key part of the success of the club in recent years.  He has helped build the membership to its current level, made sure we all pay our subs and, behind the scenes, instilled a good degree of rigour within the committee.  The committee is extremely grateful to David for his huge contribution to the club.  Our new treasurer, Lisa West, is well and truly settled into the role.  You will see from her report that the club’s finances took a bit of a beating last year due to various items of capital expenditure.  The club continues to have substantial reserves though, and overall is in reasonable financial health.  However, as explained in Paula’s Bar Manager’s Report, it is unfortunately necessary to make some changes to the bar prices to deal with inflation.  We have recently been joined on the committee by Tony Scott as Interim Membership Secretary.  Tony has ably continued David’s good work and has also helped deal with various maintenance issues at the club.  In only a short period of time he has been a valuable addition to the committee.  On a personal note, I would like to express my thanks to all of those who have served on the committee over my first year as chairman.  I did not really know what I was letting myself in for when I agreed to put myself forward, but you have made the transition a smooth one and I hope we will be able to continue to work together to help the club flourish.  Thank you all.  On behalf of the committee, thank you also to our fantastic members.  It is your enthusiasm, good humour and community spirit which make this club so special.  Long may it remain that way.  **Proposed committee for 2024/2025**  The proposed committee for the coming year is:  -  Chair:  Tom White  -  Director of Squash:  Tom Swain  -  Treasurer:  Lisa West  -  Membership Secretary:  Tony Scott  -  Club Secretary/VHSC Trustee/Social Secretary:  Caroline Swain  -  Ladies’ Rep:  Jo Davies  -  Bar Manager:  Paula Jirgena  - Committee Member: TBC  **Tom White, Chair**  [tomwhite@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:tomwhite@biddendensquash.co.uk) |

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| **Membership Secretary Report**  Over the past year, our club has experienced steady and commendable growth in membership. Our membership now stands at 322 individuals, a testament to the enduring appeal and vibrancy of our club. This surge in membership can be attributed, in no small part, to the dedicated efforts of Tom and Lorna, whose coaching sessions have drawn in new members and enriched our club with fresh talent and enthusiasm.  Additionally, our social membership category has seen notable growth since our last meeting, climbing from 30 to 47 members. This rise can be attributed, in part, to the temporary closure of the Red Lion. Now that the Red Lion has reopened, we remain hopeful of retaining these valued social members.  Looking ahead to the forthcoming membership year (July 2024-2025), I am pleased to announce that membership fees shall remain unchanged from the current year:  - Adult playing member: £125   * Family membership: £200 * Young Adult: £65 * Junior: £25 * Social member: £15   To ensure the efficient management of our club, I urge all members to take a moment to review and update their profiles on MyCourts. This will enhance the accuracy of our membership records and provide invaluable insights into the composition of our diverse community.  Furthermore, it has come to my attention that discrepancies exist within our membership database, particularly concerning gender and age information. Addressing these discrepancies will greatly enhance our understanding of the demographic makeup of our membership.  **Tony Scott, Membership Secretary** (outgoing David Robson)  [membership@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:membership@biddendensquash.co.uk) |

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| **Treasurers Report**  For those of you that do not know me, I’m Lisa and I became the club treasurer in December.  Hopefully you would have seen the accounts that have recently been sent out to all the members.  The Balance Sheet shows a healthy position for the club to be in, with reserves of over £21k at 31 March 2024. This is down on last year; however this is mainly due to the improvements we have invested in over the last 12 months.  The new court doors have gone in, the club has a new boiler, and the ladies’ changing area has been improved (after some discussions with members). Further improvements that we plan to invest in will be touched on later.  So, we move to the Profit & Loss Account. Turnover from membership, lights and bar sales have totalled over £88k for the year. This is up £20k on last year, the main reasons for this is; the custom from the temporary closure of the local pub but also due to yet another year of increased members (which Tony will have more details on)!  The gross profit is up on last year at nearly £49k, however the gross profit percentage is down. The reason for this is due to the continuing increase of costs that we are all facing (at home and in business). Last year we took the decision to maintain the prices in the bar and for the lights. However, due to the continuing increase in costs we are needing to raise the bar prices, but to freeze the light prices for another year. (this will also be mentioned in more depth by other committee members).  Other key figures in the accounts include:   * Bar sales £<62, Light income £9,400, Membership income £17,300 * Wages up at £20,400 v £17,300. Due to increase in bar activity and events (squash club of the year last year!). * Repair and maintenance increase is in relation to the 3 major costs mentioned earlier. * The bar has covered it’s costs during the year, and the membership and lights have covered the remainder of the general everyday running costs of the club. It is only the 3 major investments in the club that have resulted in the £9k loss. * That being said, the bank balance at the year end remains at £24.5k going forward.   Having not been on the committee long, I would just like to say how hard the committee work (past and present) and to say a big thank you to them, as well as all the staff at the club for running the bar and the people that volunteer their time to make the club better each and every year. But the biggest thanks go to you all for making the club such a fantastic and welcoming place to be a part of.  **Lisa West, Treasurer**  [lisa@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:lisa@biddendensquash.co.uk) |

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| **Secretary Report**  2023/24 has been a year of admin and I think the committee will agree that there is finally light at the end of the tunnel.  **Admin**  Firstly, I am ecstatic to announce that as of the EGM in December, Biddenden Squash Club is officially a ‘Community and Amateur Sports Club’ (CASC) and once the AGM has taken place, I will be able to make the final adjustments to the trustees. Following on from this, items that had been put on the back burner will be able to be implemented. The main one being (copied and pasted from 2023 Report!)…  MYCOURTS  As you are aware we currently use MYCOURTS for membership, booking courts, box leagues and communication. However, we are now starting the process of moving across to the online payment system for court fees and automatic lights.  Tony Scott will be leading on this. There is a lead in time for installation, but we will keep you updated with progress along the way and hopefully make the transition as smooth as possible.  **Committee**  2023/24 has also seen changes to the committee, I’d like to thank Lisa West who was voted in as Treasurer at the EGM in December. The work that she’s done already is incredible and even when she’s laying all the cards on the table, she still manages to put us all at ease!  Sadly, we have to say goodbye to David Robson as he prepares for his move. Thank you, David, for all you’ve done for our award-winning club (we can still milk this can’t we?!). Tony Scott kindly offered to step into these big shoes to get us to this meeting, and we know that we are in safe hands.  **Website**  We are incredibly lucky to have members who step up and volunteer and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dan and Tanya Goldsmith who have been working behind the scenes to update the BSC website. This has not gone live yet, but it looks amazing and will be a great source of information for all your club needs. Including membership, coaching and the squash and social calendar.  Thank you to all our members who continually support our club.  **Caroline Swain, Secretary/VHSC Trustee**  [info@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:info@biddendensquash.co.uk) |

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| **Maintenance Report**  The past year have seen the following changes:   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Squash Courts Updates   * Walls repaired and painted * Floors sanded * Glass doors fitted * Light meter replaced   Ladies Changing Room Reconfiguration (Mark Gorman - Rossmark)   * Door removed from corridor * Stud walls built * door repositioned * New stairs built   Men’s Showers (Tony Scott)   * Repairs | Main Boiler (Britain’s/VHSC)   * Pipes to tank replaced with safety valves * Boiler replaced * Valves added to isolate water supply   Outside Area (Biddenden Parish Council)   * Bank cleared * Trees removed   General DIY… before Tony! (Jez Druce)   * Photos on walls * Hooks * The Glitter Ball (!) |   I would like to say a huge thank you to Tony who has undertaken a lot of the maintenance work since joining the committee and Paula who has taken on the cleaning of the club. Thank you to the members who keep us updated on maintenance issues and those who have sent messages of appreciation for all our efforts.  On our radar for the 2024/25 season are updates to the bar furniture, allowing for more physical seating but also more flexibility. We are also aware that we need to improve the acoustics in the bar area, unfortunately, due to the heavy traffic, carpet isn’t a viable option. However, we are already looking more long term, into how we can develop/use the space we have to meet the needs of our members.  **Caroline Swain, Secretary/VHSC Trustee**  [info@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:info@biddendensquash.co.uk) |

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| **Director of Squash Report**  Court usage for Individual member bookings has steadily increased over the last year with an increase of just under 3%.   * 2.6% increase across all time slots (0840-2120) across a 7-day week – 6% last year (increase 3 years running) * 3% increase in the peak time slots (1720-2040 on weeknights) – this is on top of a 9% increase last year – increase 3 years running * In the last 4 months (since Jan 1st) 88.6% of all peak time slots have been booked – up from 87% last year * In the peak slots there has been an increase in individual members bookings whereas team/events/club coaching has remained similar with a small decrease   The club supports a number of sessions across a weekly basis, and this feeds into the healthy situation the club is currently in. The table below has a breakdown of these sessions.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Type of Session | No. of Sessions per week | Number of Participants | | Racket Tots – parent and toddler sessions – 2-4 year olds | 4 | 39 different children have done racket tots for at least one term this year – from this we have had 6 adults join the club and attend sessions | | Rapid Rackets – Year R-Year 2 beginners squash sessions | 3 – up by 1 | 39 children in the last year have completed at least one term | | Junior Squash – Year 3 upwards – this includes the Young adult session for 17-24yr olds | 7 – 1 extra session | 59 – this number has remained steady compared to last year due to limited spaces | | Monday Night Ladies and Thursdays | 5 – 4 sessions on a Monday – 1 on a Thursday | Over 30 ladies, have attended sessions since September, a number of new players as a result of coming to Racket Tots | | Saturday Morning Training | 2 – plus fitness in between | Over 30 different players have attended, with a limit of 16 per week for the squash sessions (8 per session) | | Squaffee Morning | 1 session on a Friday | Introductory session for new players as well as current members, has got 8 new players on court plus 7 current members have joined in too | | Greenfields School | 2 sessions per week for 2 terms | Children from Greenfields school have attended the sessions as part of their PE curriculum. Approx 20 new children on court playing | | Mount Lodge Care Farm | 1 coaching session and 2/3 playing sessions per week | Mount Lodge have been coming in and participating in sessions, once a week with TS subsidised by England Squash, other sessions led by B.Davies. 20 young people and adults with a range of additional needs on court playing |  Wednesday Night MATS (May-July 2024) and Team Squash and Events The take up for MATS has been huge with over 48 players registering to play, a number of new faces to the format again in addition to our regular supporters of the events  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 Charlie Stow for running the teams in the winter and for some MATS matches against other clubs as well.  Thanks also to those that have assisted and led in the running of events such as the doubles nights/MATS and events (Katy Bridges/Chris Gorman)  Thank you to C.Gorman for running the Karakal Pro Day and stepping in with Mark to replace the injured player. Box Leagues Currently over 70 (up from 67 compared to this time last year) players in the leagues across the club leagues with completion of matches consistently being 70%+.  We now have the monthly Junior Box Leagues Super 7s which has 16+ players each month, thank you to Karl Jacobs for running this on Saturday afternoons and the team of parents that support, plus Paula and Flic for having the bar area open for any refreshments. Club Tournaments We have been able to complete another full season of tournaments 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. We also resurrected the Under 13 competition for the first time in a number of years, due to an increase in interest.  Tournament Results   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Tournament | Winner | | Mens Closed | Mark Crichton | | Ladies Closed | Polly Coxeter | | Junior Closed U18 | Earle Pullen | | Junior Closed U13 | Zachary West | | Mens Plate | Tom White | | Ladies Plate | Rachel Oatway | | Junior Plate U18 | Harry Goldsmith | | Junior Plate U13 | Baxter Corkan | | Club Handicap | Mark Corkan | | Club Handicap Plate | Aimee Butler | | Ladies Handicap | Polly Coxeter | | Ladies Handicap Plate | Kiera Hynes | | Veterans Handicap | Mark Crichton | | Veterans Handicap Plate | Dan Goldsmith | | Junior Handicap | Jack Hammond | | Junior Handicap Plate | Olivia Selby |   **Tom Swain, Director of Squash**  [tom@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:tom@biddendensquash.co.uk) |

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| **Ladies Squash Representative Report**  Firstly, a huge thank you to everyone that contributes to making the Biddenden ladies’ squash so successful - all the ladies, junior girls, mums, dads, husbands, partners and members that continually support this ever-growing section of the club.  The coaching sessions led by Tom and Lorna continue to be popular resulting in a waiting list to join them. These sessions are a source of confidence building and encouragement as well as learning and fun.  Women’s Squash Week was celebrated at the club with the ladies enjoying an evening of squash on the 18th of September followed by nibbles and cocktails in the bar. An event on the 23rd of September was well attended and enjoyed by our junior girls and well supported by parents and other members.  In September a number of our ladies attended a ‘Ladies Camp’ at Bexley with Georgina Kennedy (ranked World number 8 in 2022), they came back feeling inspired and with some really helpful tips.  Monday 11th December saw the ladies getting into the festive spirit with an evening of squash (some in fancy dress), nibbles and Christmas cocktails.  Friday 8th March was International Women’s Day. Again, another evening of squash followed by yet more nibbles and cocktails and supported by a lot of the club’s male members.  During the year there have been several tournaments organised by Joe Magor which have been well attended by Biddenden including the Sundridge Park Ladies Open in February and Rodmersham Ladies Open in March. Well done to all the ladies that have represented the club at these tournaments and to those attending the Canterbury Ladies Open in June.  A special mention really must go to some of our junior girls who have pushed themselves out of their comfort zones and not only played in the club’s recent ladies’ tournament but have also entered competitions held at other clubs, four have already signed up for Canterbury in the F Grade. The improvement in their confidence and level of playing is very apparent so a massive well done to them. Girls, you should all be immensely proud of yourselves!  Lastly thank you to all those involved in the ladies’ events / sessions including the organisers, coaches, mentors, supporters, bar staff, cocktail makers etc.  Please do not hesitate to contact me with any suggestions or ideas you may have that you would like to see implemented.  **Jo Davies, Ladies Representative**  [jo@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:jo@biddendensquash.co.uk) |

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| **Bar Report**  2023/2024 season for the bar has been an incredibly busy one. The bar has seen its busiest year to date, increasing the taking by nearly a third from the year before. Due to the local pub closing we took on a number of social members who we have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know. June was a record breaking month with takings over £7000 in a single month which was down to the ever popular MATS tournament taking place along with our ‘Club Of The Year’ party. Other successful events included the Coronation Cup in association with FOJM PTA, Karakal PRO day, Club handicap tournament and our Christmas party.  We have been very lucky to be able to keep the prices at the bar as low as they have been over the last two years, despite the general cost of living increase along with an increase in bar staff wages. We aim to keep the prices as low as possible as the aim of the bar is not to make a profit, it is to serve the club’s members. However, the decision has been made to increase the prices. The cost of bar stock has seen an increase across the board over the last few months, and we cannot keep running the bar at the current prices. The price increase will be kept as low as possible and I am certain we will still have the lowest prices in the area.  I am hoping that this year we will have an update on bar furniture. We are aware of the lack of seating in the bar and how inconvenient the furniture can be during buys events and parties. With that in mind, we are looking to replace the sofas with benches and replace the remaining chairs with stackable and more manoeuvrable chairs.  Following requests, I will be looking to remove the mixers from the dispensing gun and we will return to bottled mixers and soft drinks. To further learn what everyone really likes to drink at the bar, I am looking to run some ‘guest drinks’ on monthly basis, to vary the offering we have behind the bar. So watch this space – lots of exciting things to come in the next few months!  I would personally like to thank Flic and Tanya for their hard work in keeping everyone hydrated; Charlie for his expertise in cocktails and always stepping in when the bar gets busy; Tom for running all the tournaments; Caroline for sorting out the social calendar and all the other volunteers who never say no when asked for help! Lastly, thank you to each and every one of you who come to support the bar. We are lucky to have such a lovely space to enjoy after squash and it is always nice to see it filled with all of you!  **Paula Jirgena, Bar Manager**  [bar@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:bar@biddendensquash.co.uk) |

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| **Social Report**  Many thanks to all our members who step up to run social events throughout the year and those who volunteer behind the scenes: Paula, Flic, Tanya, Charlie, Jo etc. Obviously, the big one was Club of the Year, we also saw the Christmas Party, Red Lion evening, International Women’s Day, Quiz Night and the trip to Liverpool.  Going into the 2024/25 season we have much to look forward to including: 24/24 (24th May), BBQ and Awards (29th Jun), Bingo Night (5th Oct), BSC Party (16th Nov), Christmas Party (20th Dec), NYE Paty (31st Dec), Quiz Night (22nd Mar) and the BBQ and Awards – THE BSC 50TH BIRTHDAY BASH (28th Jun).  Thank you to Tanya who has designed our ‘What’s On..’ posters for the monthly events until the website goes live. If you would like to run a social event, please email me for our calendar availability.  **Caroline Swain, Social Secretary**  [info@biddendensquash.co.uk](mailto:info@biddendensquash.co.uk) |