



Minutes of the Bowdon Croquet Club Committee Meeting

Monday 08 June 2020 at 7.30pm

Meeting conducted via Zoom

The committee was sad to learn of the death of John Wilkinson on 27th May. John joined the club in 1993 and was a regular player in both internal and external competitions. He won the Reed Cup and the Wild Handicap Ladder in 2002 and in 2008 won the Silver Challenge Box. He was also captain of the Firs for several years and led the team to victory in the Secretary's Shield in 2002. From 2000 to 2006 John was the NW Federation League Manager. Details of the funeral arrangements will be placed on the website.

1. Attendance

Adrian Apps; Ken Cooper; Leo Fletcher; Lorna Frost (chair); Charles Harding; Barry Keen; Kay Martin (minutes); Alan Mayne; Steve Reynolds; Cas Sinclair ; David Walters.

2. Apologies for Absence

None

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Agreed.

4. Matters Arising

None.

5. Secretary's Report (circulated prior to the meeting)

The car park - the Court proceedings have been stayed until 5th June and a further extension to early July has been requested. TBC raised a couple of points on the Trustee's response to the draft Heads of Terms. These have been addressed and a further response from TBC is awaited. DW will make enquiries with the new owners of the Cinnamon Club regarding their expectation in respect of car parking spaces.

Limited Re-opening of the club was agreed via email following receipt of initial guidance from the CA - effective from 14th May. Further guidance has now been issued which we need to decide whether to adopt:-

- Allowing up to 4 players on a lawn either for doubles or double banked.
- Coaching to resume with up to 5 students and one coach on a lawn.
- Guests, visitors and spectators allowed as long as social distancing is observed and they do not gather in groups greater than six.
- Records of attendance should be kept to facilitate contact tracing.

(Decisions regarding the above dealt with later in the minutes)

CA Correspondence

- Nominations invited by the end of the month for a new CA Honour - Bernard Neal Award for exceptional services to croquet.

- Two on line booking systems were demonstrated on 30th May - discussion later in the meeting.
- Gazette issue 385 has been received and placed in the binder.

6. Treasurer's Report

The Receipts and Payments Account for the period from 1st October 2019 to 7th June 2020 was circulated prior to the meeting.

Since the last Committee Meeting there has been very little activity through the bank account. The **bank balance** has now reduced to **£23,749**.

We were not considered eligible by Trafford Council for the £10,000 Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant mentioned at the last Committee Meeting. However, we have been awarded **£1,000 from Sport England** from their Community Emergency Fund to "support your organisation through the COVID19 crisis" This has not yet been received and so does not appear in the Receipts and Payments Account.

I now forecast that with this additional £1,000 income we will be reasonably close to balancing the year financially by the end of the year to 30th September. The item of expenditure that is hard to forecast is the **cost of the roof repair**. - BK reported that he was unable to progress this at present but expected the cost to be in the region of £3,000. He will obtain details for the next meeting.

7. Croquet Secretary's Report

2020 Inter-Club Competitions

The Bowdon team captains have contacted the relevant CA Competition Directors to inform them that Bowdon CC has withdrawn its Inter-Club AC, Mary Rose and Longman Cup teams from this year's events because of the present COVID-19 situation; about half of the other teams entered have also withdrawn. A redrawn competition will be organised for the remaining teams. A full refund from all 3 events has been sought.

Open Championships

GC postponed until 13-16 August and AC postponed until 1-6 September

GC & AC Home Internationals cancelled

CA Letter re Club Handicappers

We conform to the CA directive that each club should have an appointed Club Handicapper in place; BK fulfils this role.

Tournaments

The committee decided that the **Short & B Class** events scheduled for July should be cancelled.

A decision in respect of the **North of England Championships** will be left until the July committee meeting.

Club Events

Social Croquet

As detailed earlier, the **lawns have reopened** and a booking system set up run by AM to allow club members restrictive play amongst themselves as long as they adhere to the set out procedure to help ensure protection of members and staff.

AM circulated the following report regarding progress.

53 Members have come to play since the lawns re-opened :

As of 5pm Tuesday 2nd June there have been **293 visits** over the 26 days with an average of **11.25 members per day**.

The most popular sessions are the 12.30 - 2.30 (on two occasions all five lawns were in use) and 3.00-5.00 (on four occasions all five lawns were in use). Members asking for these times were able to be accommodated earlier, or later, in the day.

The evening slot is the least used and members coming regularly at that time could soon be told there was no need to make a prior booking.

Initially the re-opening involved me :-

- Taking bookings by phone or text - the number of calls has gradually decreased as some members have booked the same slot for each week.
- Opening the gate each morning and putting balls out onto the lawns
- At the end of the day washing the balls and replacing them into the sheds.
- The above has gradually reduced as those playing last have assumed this responsibility and locked the gate upon departure.
- Opening up the newly locked clubhouse on first visits for members to retrieve mallets.
- There has been no problem with congestion with members arriving as instructed.

The above has **not proved too onerous a task** and I am pleased to see the lawns in use and members able to enjoy playing. Unless there is an alternative system that can work as simply and well I am happy to continue for the duration until more normal times return.

For the immediate future I suggest that the clubhouse could now be unlocked to allow limited **use of the toilets**. This could work with a blocked off passageway through to the two toilets. The doors could remain fixed open to avoid needing to be touched. A system of one in one out (place your key in the door lock, leave it there for retrieval when you exit, i.e. if there is a key in the door wait outside !) Members to bring their own towels, hand sanitizer and gloves.

I would expect that the provision of toilets would only result in an increase of 6 or 7 members attending and given that the five lawns have not been oversubscribed do not consider that there is any need to move to double banking or doubles play.

Discussion by the committee in respect of the above and the CA directive :-

- no need for double banking as lawns not oversubscribed.
- Group coaching is not practical at present but individual assistance/coaching is already taking place.
- Guests/visitors to be reviewed at a later date.
- Record of attendance is being maintained by AM.

Further discussion endorsed AM's recommendation that **toilets be re-opened**. The cleaner will come in three mornings a week. LF and CS to obtain toilet rolls and sanitizer. Instruction notice to be placed on the door and details placed on the website.

8. Ground Manager's Report (circulated prior to meeting)

Most of the month has centred upon keeping the lawns alive during the hot, dry weather. This has involved treatment with a **wetting agent** and regular **early morning watering**.

All the lawns have been **fed with 14.4.8**.

Following the decision to re-open for play the lawns were first cut with the old Allett and then cut with the new Allett to 5mm. Hoops were then replaced using the holes cut earlier in the year.

The surrounds to the lawns have been cut and debris removed.

Finally, the **hedge** alongside The Firs has been cut also the inside of the hedge by the carpark.

9. Membership

Nothing to report

10. Recruitment/Publicity

Following an approach by John Dawson, Mike Hall from **Granada Reports** visited the club on 2nd June. Hopefully a positive report will be aired in the next week or so.

11. Social Committee Report

Nothing to report.

12. Catering

Nothing to report.

13. House Manager's Report

Nothing to report.

14. Equipment Officer's Report

The supplier of **Dawson balls** has advised that a mild dishwashing detergent and water should be used to clean balls as anything stronger may damage and discolour them. Nothing to report.

15. AOB

AA had attended the zoom meeting in respect of **on-line booking systems** - he had already shared details with AM, KM and SR and now sought the committee's agreement to take things further.

AA explained that a number of clubs were already using one of the systems which did not incur any cost and were reported to work well. He considered that there was an opportunity to **vet and trial a system** ready to set up in the future. Whilst we do not know how long it will be necessary to book prior to attending the club it would provide management for lawn use that was not **reliant on one person** and therefore vulnerable. Whilst AM was happy to continue he would be supportive if such a system could be demonstrated to work.

BK expressed strong objections to what was clearly suggested as a long-term booking system rather than a short-term measure to assist AM. He did not consider that our club needed **booking restrictions** given the number of lawns available. Other difficulties would be those members who were not technically able to use the system. AA explained that administrators would be available to take telephone calls and advise.

Finally agreed that AA should set up a **technical working party** to analyse which system is best suited and how it could be trialed, possibly alongside AM's present management. To **report back** at the next meeting.

Meeting closed at 9.00pm - Date of Next Meeting – Monday 13 July 2020 at 7.30pm

**Agenda for next Committee Meeting on
Monday 13 July 2020 at 7.30pm**

- 1. Attendance**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**
- 4. Matters Arising**
- 5. Secretary's Report**
- 6. Treasurer's report**
- 7. Croquet Secretary's Report**
- 8. Ground manager's Report**
- 9. Membership Report**
- 10. Recruitment/Publicity**
- 11. Social Sub-committee Report**
- 12. Catering Coordinator's Report**
- 13. House Manager's Report**
- 14. Equipment Officer's Report**
- 15. Any Other Business (including items in Suggestion Book)**

Date of next Meeting - Monday 10 August at 7.30pm