

EAST DORSET LAWN TENNIS & CROQUET CLUB

Club Newsletter February 2022

First of all, warm wishes to all our Members. This newsletter summarises a selection of recent topics debated at various meetings of the club's Board comprising nine Directors of the limited company who are also Trustees of the Charity. The club's Directors are all volunteers, giving up many hours of their own time. A notice with photos of the Board will be going up in the clubhouse shortly.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

You should have all received your renewal notices for the coming year (1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023), which we have sent using the ClubSpark membership system we introduced 2 years ago. In the short space of time since sending out the notices we have seen a flurry of renewals, so hopefully the ClubSpark process is working for the members. It has certainly greatly simplified the process for our volunteers. Ans Dickie, our new membership secretary has spent a considerable amount of time working diligently through this process, supported by our Treasurer, Andy Crowe and Simon Gribbin.

The rates were set by the Board, taking account of recommendations from each of the section committees. This is always a delicate topic but as a Board we were in unanimous agreement about the need to increase our rates to offset increasing costs and protect the long term interests of our club.

CLUB FINANCES

You may recall we communicated our full year results for the year ending 30 April 2021 in our December newsletter, in which we reported a healthy profit of £72k which was entirely down to one off donations without which the club would have delivered a net loss of £20k.

For the 9 months to 31 December 2021 our net profit is slightly behind the prior year. Donations are down £45k but this has been offset by a strong increase in subscriptions of £20k and a fantastic profit of £17k from our Fireworks evening. On the flip side our costs have increased by just over 30% across grounds, clubhouse and admin.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS

In the Spring, the café and bar will introduce differential pricing between members and visitors; member prices will be similar to those currently in force and prices for visitors will be at a slight premium. This is a common practice at many local clubs. Members will be able to access member prices using a membership card which will be distributed shortly following renewals and to new members.

NEW GROUNDSMAN

Following a national advertising process the Board are delighted to announce that Kirin Asher has been appointed as our new Head Groundsman. Kirin joins us with a strong background of quality turf management having worked at Bryanston School and Winterbourne Stickland Croquet Club.

CAFÉ/BAR SURVEY

A total of 90 forms were completed representing 12% of total membership.

Overall use of and satisfaction with the general facilities, the bar area and the cafe were high. Those who used the function room were generally happy with the use and the activities offered.

There were some suggestions for improvement of the cafe/bar area at crowded times. These included more and improved seating for dining and many suggested using the function room at lunch time for

extra dining tables and chairs.

The veranda area was another cause for concern particularly amongst the croquet players who feel it needs updating and refurbishment.

The other main suggestion for improvement, especially for tennis players, was the outside seating area with calls for a larger area and better seating.

A number of members came up with suggestions for a new clubhouse. General agreement was a 2 storey building with viewing over tennis and croquet courts.

We are now producing an action plan to address the areas identified and we will keep you updated.

Thank you for your feedback.

AGM

The last Annual General Meeting of the company took place on 30 March 2021 and the Directors are required to arrange the next meeting by 30 June 2022. Members will be notified of the date in due course. Hopefully this year we will be able to hold it in the Function Room and not on zoom!

FORUMS

Do you have any questions for your Board Members? The Board is arranging two informal, drop-in forums where some of us will be present to answer any questions you have over a cup of tea. These will be held in the Function Room. The proposed dates are:

Saturday 5th March – 2.00 to 3.00pm

Monday 7th March – 3.30 to 4.30pm

SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

As well as the Club and the sections having Safeguarding Officers, each member must take responsibility for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of other members. There is a safeguarding video that can be accessed via our website (Club Info/Club Policies) which we would advise all members to view.

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

1. **Complaints Secretary** – this role involves registering any complaints and passing them on to either the chair of the relevant section, for less serious offences, or the Investigating Officer if it is a serious complaint or against a section chair. Once a decision is made it would come back to the Complaints Secretary. Should the decision be to take it to a disciplinary committee then they would set up this committee.
2. **Complaints Investigating Officer** – this role involves investigating more serious complaints.
3. We are looking for someone to take **responsibility for the function and meeting room bookings**. This is currently being carried out by Diane Brierley who is also Chair of the House Committee. A full overview of what's involved is available on request, alternatively have a word with Diane or contact her via eastdorsetvenuehire@gmail.com
4. We are looking for someone to keep an eye on the stationery and equipment in the office. The office is used very little so this would just involve intermittent check-ups to ensure that we have adequate supplies for when they are needed.
5. Volunteers within both Tennis and Croquet are also being sought. Please see under the relevant sections below.

Full details of all roles are available on request

SPEED LIMIT

A reminder that the speed limit in the Club grounds is 5mph, please stick to this limit for the safety of all our members and visitors, many of whom are children.

NON-SMOKING SITE

Another reminder! We are a non-smoking site. Cigarette ends have been found around the Clubhouse. Please be respectful of others.

GROUNDS

Wire mesh fence repairs have been completed on the artificial grass courts and a new gate has been built to improve pedestrian and machinery access to the Worthington Crescent grass courts.

Also, a specialist arboriculturist has been approved to clear scrub from behind the tennis pavilion, prune overhanging oak trees, and remove any diseased ash trees. This work will commence on Monday 7th March. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

The Grounds Committee is made up of Paul Nation (Chair), Graham Bevan (Tennis) and Steve Leonard (Croquet). If you have any questions or comments to make regarding the grounds, please speak to your representative and not directly to the Groundsman.

TENNIS SECTION

The provision of the Club Day Lite and Main sessions remains under constant review. Whilst the Lite session seems to be flourishing, the Main sessions would benefit from greater attendance, especially on a Wednesday evening from 6.30pm and on Saturday afternoon. Perhaps when the more favourable Spring weather at last arrives more members will be inclined to attend.

The new format of Box Leagues, with play to the first of nine games, have proved very popular and are progressing well.

News about the Tennis Club Championships will be shared soon. We need a couple of volunteers to help with some of the admin and share the running of the event, so please do get in touch if you can help.

We are looking forward to hosting a number of events with visitors to the club over the summer; the LTA U11 Boys County Cup in June, our own Tennis Club Championship Finals on 16 July, LTA Summer County Week this year for visiting men's counties in the week commencing 18 July and the Frost Dorset Open Tournament in the week commencing 25 July. We are also hoping to hold a grass court tournament over the summer but need volunteers to help share in organising and arrangement. Any Offers please?

League matches have continued throughout the winter months and will finish at the end of April.

The Tennis committee are keen to enhance the current tennis facilities, as well as considering the addition of Padel tennis as a new sport. Padel is an increasing and sought after variation of tennis, which is wholly supported by the LTA. A small team is investigating the options and will in due course provide updates. Conversion of the three grass courts in the Cage to an all weather surface for all year play is also being investigated with the added possibility of covering the courts to allow play in inclement weather.

CROQUET SECTION

The croquet section is having a very successful Winter season with far more playable days than usual. This does of course have its down side in that the lawns are being used much more resulting in a deterioration in their condition. 'Jawsing' did not help and will not be repeated next Winter.

It has been decided that the Winter croquet season would end on Saturday 12th March. This will give a maximum of three weeks for the courts to be prepared for the Summer season. It is likely, subject to the weather conditions, to be less than this with perhaps a staggered reintroduction. However, the whole season will depend on having a sufficient number of hoop setters to carry out the required work. Basically, no hoop setters, no croquet. So therefore, if any member feels that they could help [training given] please contact our grounds representative Steve Leonard. Thank you.

Another task which would be useful to have a team for is the cleaning and tidying of our three croquet huts. A hut monitor [no badge] is therefore required plus a team to assist. Please contact John Clode if you feel this is something which would be of interest.

In the meantime, enjoy the rest of the Winter season.

BRIDGE SECTION

Now that we are well into the start of 2022 and covid restrictions have eased, we would like to remind people of the bridge sessions currently on offer at the club or online.

- **Monday** evenings at 6.45pm we offer Chicago Bridge, which we alternate with soft Duplicate Bridge every 2nd and 4th Monday of the month (6.30pm for a 6.45pm start).
- **Tuesday** afternoons Pat Oxley offers a "Back to Bridge" session, for new bridge players, or those that want to get back to bridge play after an absence. It starts at 2pm.
- **Wednesday** evenings (6.30pm for a 6.45pm start) we offer Duplicate Bridge.
- **Thursday** evenings (6.30pm for a 6.45pm start) John Cluley and his team offer competitive online Duplicate Bridge using **BridgeBase Online**. It requires internet access from either a desktop, laptop, tablet or mobile. John is able to offer training on how to use BBO so that you can join in on a Thursday evening.
- **Friday** afternoons we offer Cut-in Chicago Bridge - you don't need a partner - just come along and play. Currently this is our most popular session.

Tables are well spaced out, windows are kept open, and there is hand sanitiser available.

If you fancy having a go, you'll be sure of a warm welcome.

EDLTCC Board of Directors and Trustees:

[Vacancy](#) (Club Chair); [Simon Gribbin](#) (Company Secretary); [Andy Crowe](#) (Treasurer); [Penny Simmonds](#) (Board Secretary); [Clive Richardson](#) (President); [Sue Hobden](#) (Tennis Chair); [Diane Brierley](#) (Chair, House Committee); [John Clode](#) (Croquet Chair); [Lynn Webb](#) (Bridge Representative); [Paul Nation](#) (Grounds Committee).