

# Wickham Community Tennis Club

## Minutes of a meeting held at Wickham Community Centre At 7pm on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016

1. To receive apologies for absence  
**Sue Roger-Jones**
2. To receive declarations of interest on agenda items  
**None received**
3. To consider the following agenda items:
  - 3.1 to review the proposed club structure (attached) distributed by email to the committee by the Chairman on 17/8/16.  
**Chris Hull and Sam Kingdon Marsden were both present representing Active Academy to answer any questions; no questions were forthcoming. Concerns were raised regarding the fact that AA are a commercial entity - Chris attempted to allay concerns by explaining that Simon had put this proposal forward in good faith as the belief was that AA would be able to accelerate the community goals and improve the job done to date by the committee and not 'run the club as a business'. The effectiveness and relevance of the committee were also discussed - concerns were raised by Nick regarding maintaining the status quo. It was noted by Simon that it appeared the proposal had been misrepresented to the PC prior to this meeting and this is the basis of the PC's negative decision regarding the proposal.**
  - 3.2 to review alternative proposed club structures received in writing prior to committee meeting  
**none were received**
  - 3.3 to reach a decision on future club structure by process of a vote on the above proposals  
**Chris Hull and Sam Kingdon Marsden left the meeting.  
Alan called for the vote on the only proposal put forward:  
In favour = 3  
Against = 4  
The proposal is not carried and a committee will therefore remain in place**
  - 3.4 to receive an update from the Parish Recreation Committee representative regarding the PC's position on:
    - the display of temporary and permanent signage  
**No permanent signage allowed currently. An application will have to be made in the future for a relevant sign on the new clubhouse facility - suggested 'WICKHAM RECREATION GROUND HOME TO WICKHAM COMMUNITY TENNIS CLUB'  
Temporary signs are permitted as per PC policy - max 2 weeks prior to an event which is relevant to Wickham. PC Clerk to confirm.**

- Clubhouse development  
**No timescales, no further progress – still in design phase  
Confirmed it will be a shared facility but responsibility for  
upkeep costs vague – discussion in future re tennis club  
contribution. Open Space funding should remain in place as  
plans have started.**
- Condition of courts following repainting work  
**No adverse effects noted**

### 3.5 AOB

- **Request from PT instructor at Knowle to use courts for PT sessions. Turned down by Simon currently – agreement from committee members.**
- **Communication from Simon Johnson from LTA re concerns about juniors' sessions. (echoed by Sue North). Explanation is that Knowle became unviable for a number of reasons: cost/size/surface condition and Wickham is simply unable to cope with the numbers of junior sessions as they have grown significantly without putting pressure on other court users. Situation to be reassessed by committee**
- **Taste of Wickham  
Concerns raised that Active Academy did not represent the club appropriately. Emma noted that despite requests it was disappointing that no one from the committee was able to be on hand to ensure club representation.**
- **Resignations from committee  
Simon resigned as Chairman, Emma resigned as Secretary as previously advised would be the case. A full handover will be affected as soon as possible. Nick Watson also stood down from the committee as he felt that the committee was not empowered to achieve objectives. Thanks received from Sue North and Therese Evans for Simon, Emma and Nick's dedication. Simon suggested that a refocus on club structure and goals is required to meet future challenges. Interim committee members to be co-opted (as permitted by the constitution) until an AGM is called to re-elect committee members.**
- **Simon, Emma and Nick left the meeting at 7:55pm. Alan, Sue, Robert and Therese remained to discuss next steps.**

**Meeting closed 7:55pm**

# Proposal for revised club structure from Chairman forwarded to committee members 17/8/16

## Proposal

1. Wickham Tennis Courts (**The Courts**) to be run as a managed venue
2. Wickham Parish Council (**The Parish**) to seek a new Partnership Agreement with a group, organisation or individual (**The Manager**) with the purpose of managing use and availability of The Courts. The Manager should have experience of managing a tennis venue, including but not restricted to, provision of a program of tennis activities, securing backing and funding for LTA initiatives, ensuring appropriate court time for all players regardless of age or ability, use of various communication media to communicate with players
3. The Manager shall form a Forum of players to represent the requirements of all players; The Manager and the Forum shall meet periodically with the aim of deciding the strategy for the managed venue taking into account the requirements of the players, including setting of fees, allocation of funds for developing and maintaining the venue, organising a program of activities including agreeing the length and frequency of paid activities, agreeing court time for all players including managed "free play" if appropriate, organisation of ad hoc events, etc
4. Existing funds are transferred to a "trust fund type" entity. The trust fund may be held and managed by a third party (The LTA?), with input from The Parish and The Forum regarding the allocation of funds. The sinking fund will be allocated from these funds. New membership fees will be held by the fund. The Manager will be able to apply to the fund holder for funds to maintain and grow the venue; decision to allocate funds to the Manager for the purpose of maintaining and growing the venue and activity program shall rest with The Parish, The Forum and the fund "trustee".
5. In the short and medium term changes for the players, including membership and session fees, are kept to a minimum. Once The Manager is established as venue manager with a regular Forum in place, changes may be proposed and decided by The Forum.

## Recommendations

Active Academy is invited to form a Partnership Agreement with The Parish with the purpose of managing The Courts and a program of tennis activities. Active Academy would adopt the position of The Manager.

## Rationale

A handover of the management of the Wickham venue to Active Academy will be a relatively seamless process that will have minimal impact on the current membership.

Informal consultation with Parish representative of the current club committee has indicated the Parish has no appetite to manage a club or the venue themselves; furthermore, the Parish representative has indicated full support for a new Partnership Agreement with AA should the club wish to support this proposal and agree a hand-over.

## **Active Academy have demonstrated the following capabilities:**

1. Active Academy (**AA**) proprietor Chris Hull and the AA coaches are well known, liked and respected by the current membership.
2. AA know a significant proportion of the current membership, with an appreciation of the needs and requirements of the membership. AA have a good relationship with existing members, ensuring regular contact is maintained resulting in a good take up of volunteer requests, ensuring that players have an active role to play in the running of the venue and program.
3. AA have actively encouraged and mentored junior leaders and coaches from the existing membership.
4. AA already provide organised tennis activities at Wickham.
5. AA have been working closely with Wickham Primary School (WPS) since starting with the club; AA have been asked to support another new term of PE curriculum activity and a lunch club at WPS.
6. In 2016 AA applied for and received funding for the Davis Cup Legacy and provided free coaching/racquets for 30 children from the local area including many from WPS; AA have also previously attracted funding for the GB seniors over 35s scheme resulting in new members.
7. AA are familiar with the Wickham Venue.
8. AA have a proven track record of starting and growing managed programs at tennis venues, having successfully created a new accredited LTA Tennis Mark venue and driven significant new membership from the ground up.
9. AA are proficient in the use of various communication and advertising techniques ensuring new and existing players are aware of court activities.
10. AA have secured backing and funding for LTA initiatives to promote tennis activities for new and existing members. AA enjoy a good relationship with the LTA, having regular interaction with local and regional LTA representatives.
11. AA have the ability to organise and run one off events.

Should AA be successful in forming a new Partnership Agreement with the Parish, it is intention that AA manage the Wickham venue separate to any other venue, with a shared tennis coaching and social program based on local need and LTA support.

AA would ask for volunteers to participate in a players consultation group taking options of this group into account when making venue management decisions. An online survey of players would also be used where appropriate to canvass option.