

**YORKSHIRE LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION (YLTA)  
Annual General Meeting and Awards Evening  
Via Zoom on Monday 6 December 2021**

**Minutes of the 128th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Yorkshire  
Lawn Tennis Association, held via Zoom on 6 December 2021,  
commencing at 7.00pm**

**Present:**

<b>President</b>	Geoff Newton
<b>Chairman</b>	John Crowther
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ian Hargreaves

<b>Councillors</b>	Nicola Mooney, Carolyn Rothwell, Sue Stent, Adrian Waite	
<b>Staff</b>	Alison Steel (County Administrator), Jess Redfearn (Project Administrator), Ann Rushworth (Initiative Administrator)	
<b>Trustees</b>	John Ramsbottom, Peter Wilkes, Stephen Freegard	
<b>Vice Presidents</b>	Philip Brook, Wendy Hurworth, Karen Mitchell, Geoff Newton, Liz Wilson	
<b>Patrons and Life Patrons</b>		
<b>Other Attendees</b>	Paul Bennett, Laurie Haines, Richard Crabtree	
<b>Representatives from Registered Venues</b>	Chris Booth	Adel TC
	Barbara Macaulay	Almscliffe TC
	Sally Harris	Alwoodley TC
	Kate Hoggard	Armley TC
	Chris Day**	Barnsley LTC
	Lynne Morton	Batley TC
	Solna Burnham	Beckfoot and Bingley TC
	Karl Green	Bradfield TC
	Trevor Stent*	Chapel Allerton LTC
	Martin Mearns	Doncaster TC
	Kevin Beaton	Doncaster TC
	Martin Gilmour*	Ecclesall LTC
	Stuart Hurworth	Eskdale School TC
	Nigel Bentley	Harrogate Spa TC
	Don Stewart*	Heaton T&SC
	Becky Lee	Huddersfield TC
	Adam Della Rocca	Ilkley T&SC
	Ian Hargreaves**	Knarborough King James TC
	Brian Smith*	Linton TC
	Bob Lamb*	Mexborough TC
	Chris French*	Pocklington TC
	Sally Bickerton	Rawdon LTC
	Lauren Whitaker	Roundhay TC
	Martina Daly	Rustlings LTC
	Howard Copley	Sandal LTC
	Katharine Siddons	Sandal LTC
	Jill Stephenson	Shadwell TC
	Tee Moyo	Shadwell TC

	Jonny Moore Claire Wood Suzette Booth Angela Crossley* Ann Rushworth Caroline Harding John Linfoot**	Skipton TC Stocksbridge TC Thornhill TC Wetherby Castlegarth TC Wellholme TC Whitkirk TC York TC
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**Yorkshire representatives with additional roles**

\* Also Vice Presidents or YLTA Councillors

\*\* Also Vice President and YLTA Councillor

Mr Geoff Newton welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the 128<sup>th</sup> YLTA AGM and explained that unfortunately once again it was another virtual AGM meeting and covered the admin procedures for everyone attending the meeting.

Despite the challenges of last year, Mr Newton said he was amazed at the resilience and commitment of volunteers, clubs, coaches and the performance strand of the County. This is testament to all the people who make up Yorkshire Tennis and the Annual Report reflects how well the County is doing.

Mr Newton thanked Paul Bennett and his team for their support and thanked everyone present for all their efforts and said that without everyone's contribution the County wouldn't be in such a good position.

**1. Apologies for Absence:**

<b>Councillors</b>	Margaret Whitehead
<b>Trustees</b>	
<b>Vice Presidents</b>	Mike Hann, Sue Mappin, Mike Rogers, Ken Sainty, Colin Tuffs
<b>Registered Venues</b>	Lorraine Bishop                      Cawood TC Jane Robinson                         Dacre TC Diane Hutchinson                      Ripon TC
<b>Patrons and Life Patrons</b>	Giles Bilton, Diane Hutchinson, Eva Lambert, Jo Smedley, Jonathan Tuffs
<b>Other Apologies</b>	Elliot Chang, Dave Kitchen, Rod Macaulay, Sam Salt

**2. Minutes of the 127th AGM, held on 7 December 2020**

The Minutes of the 127<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting were accepted as an accurate record.

Mr Chris Day proposed the approval of the minutes which was seconded by Ms Angela Crossley.

There were no abstentions or objections and the minutes were accepted on a show of hands.

**3. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**4. Chairman's Address**

Mr Crowther started by thanking everyone for attending the virtual 2021 AGM and explained that the Yorkshire Tennis booking at the Holiday Inn in Garforth had been displaced at short notice as the Hotel was housing Afghan refugees. After careful consideration and given the pandemic restrictions can change overnight, it was felt too risky to book another venue at short notice and stage an in-person AGM.

Mr Crowther highlighted that once again 2021 had been a challenging but positive year despite Covid restrictions and conveyed his best wishes to anyone who has had Covid or is suffering from Covid.

Mr Crowther referenced the Annual Report and made the meeting aware that this year's report included a short report on Safeguarding and took the opportunity to emphasise that Yorkshire Tennis along with the LTA place a great deal of importance in ensuring that Tennis is a safe sport. The County underwent a Safeguarding audit at the end of last year and was given a 'clean bill of health'. Mr Crowther passed his thanks to Karen Mitchell and Rosie Nicholl for all their hard work in preparing for the audit.

As a County we must remain vigilant, a single incident can cost dearly in terms of an individual's career and tennis's reputation in Yorkshire. The recent furore in Cricket also evidences that the LTA strategy of "Opening Up Tennis" is vital for the success of the sport and unless tennis can demonstrate inclusivity and diversity then potential players will go elsewhere and commercial opportunities will be reduced. Mr Crowther stressed the importance of venue's processes which include the ability to handle complaints and discipline issues in a proper and independent way. Many registered clubs have undergone safeguarding support visits by the LTA and with Karen Mitchell and Rosie Nicholl in post, we remain ready to help clubs and venues who want some guidance.

Clubs and venues across the County have had to show imagination and ingenuity to overcome the impact of the pandemic and Tennis was fortunate in that it remains one of the first sports to emerge from a lockdown and sanctioned for play, attracting many new players into the sport. Clubs with indoor courts have had a more difficult time but with help from the government and the LTA, they too have come through it. Given the uncertainty 'Advantage Yorkshire', a scheme of loans and grants that enabled over half a million pounds to be invested in the Yorkshire club sector was suspended, but hopefully with less uncertainty in 2022, a new funding programme will be launched.

Mr Crowther confirmed that the launch by the LTA of 'LTA Youth' has been very well received by the primary school sector and 251 schools across Yorkshire are registered. Getting kids playing tennis in primary schools is absolutely essential; the trick now is getting them to transfer to clubs and venues to take up regular playing outside school hours and this will help in the quest for talent that will drive county training over the coming years. The emergence of Emma Raducanu is also amazing and hopefully will be an immense draw for our game alongside Cameron Norrie delivering on the world stage and achieving an in-year ranking of 12.

Yorkshire has had tremendous success on the court across all age groups including our senior Men's and Ladies' teams. The Ladies' team staying in Division 1 at Eastbourne was truly outstanding and this means that both the Men and Women will be at Eastbourne, the last time this was achieved was in 1992. Yorkshire has national winners both in singles, doubles and team events and it was great to see Joe Mazingham winning the Boy's U14 and Sevil Parviz the Girls' U11 singles national titles. The summary of results can be found in the Annual Report and Mr Crowther sent congratulations to everyone involved, the players, the captains and the coaches. Mr Crowther also acknowledged Andrew Hutchinson who completed the British Grand Slam of Men's Doubles at 55 and over and John Andrews who retained the 80 and over singles title at Wrexham.

Yorkshire is currently 2<sup>nd</sup> on the LTA County Leader Board which is an excellent position and meets our objective of being consistently in the top 3. The Winter County Cup for Men and Women will play in just over a week's time and it's going to be a very tight finish.

Mr Crowther was delighted to report that Yorkshire Tennis was able to stage an excellent Yorkshire Championships this year but given the previous lockdown decided there was insufficient time to hold the regional qualifying events so numbers

were down as a result. The standard remained high and there were some excellent matches played including Senior events. Mr Crowther passed thanks as ever to Dave Kitchen and his support team of court supervisors, officials and centre personnel.

Mr Crowther reported that in September the management of County Training and the Leeds Regional Player Development Centre was merged, the latter looking after the best 10 to 14-year-olds in the region. Richard Crabtree was asked to take the leadership role of the Yorkshire Director of Tennis and Tom Loughton, the Leeds RPDC Head Coach. The purpose of this reorganisation is to provide a seamless path for our young players from entry to 14 years old. In addition, and after the withdrawal of funding for Yorkshire's four Local Player Development Centres at Ilkley, Thongsbridge, Graves and Nuffield Hull, Yorkshire Tennis employed a high quality coach to run our county 10&U programme on a 2/3 days a week basis and Mr Crowther was happy to report that this would happen through the services of Sam Salt. The appointments have been made possible by a very generous donation from one of our long-standing partners.

Mr Crowther reported that at the beginning of the year, the LTA launched a review of County Association Governance and funding. This is a project that affects every island & county association and referenced the recently circulated letter to registered clubs across the County. This will have a major impact on the County and supported by colleagues, Yorkshire has been making their views heard at the LTA. Over the next year, Yorkshire Tennis will return to members for discussion and agreement on the way forward which is likely to include a recommendation that we should adopt a form of legal entity such as a charitable incorporated organisation. The LTA are also looking at themselves and will be making changes to the way the association is managed which will include removing the LTA Council as a decision-making body and turning it into a consultative one. Some of the changes are required by Sport England if the LTA is to continue receiving public funding in the future. A similar requirement regarding turning the Yorkshire Council into purely a consultative body is also likely. Suffice to say, there will be a lot of governance work over the next year and Mr Crowther thanked Mr Day in shouldering some of the other work load in a new role of Deputy Chairman of the Management Committee. Yorkshire Tennis was established over 140 years ago by volunteer tennis enthusiasts and it is still in robust existence today but only exists because of the selfless dedication of volunteers at club and county. The amount of time given and commitment is completely outstanding and Mr Crowther passed thanks to Management Committee colleagues, Councillors, Trustees, officials and club volunteers for all their dedication and hard work.

The Yorkshire 2021 Awards were celebrated virtually and it was hoped that the 2022 awards could have been done in person, however as mentioned earlier it was decided to postpone the award ceremony until the first quarter of next year. Hopefully it will be in person but if Covid conditions prevent it, then Yorkshire Tennis will stage the most professional virtual ceremony possible.

Yorkshire Tennis interfaces with the LTA largely through the Regional Office led by Paul Bennett and Mr Crowther thanked them as well for being first class partners and great to work with. We work as one team sharing information and concerns so that our actions are co-ordinated. Mr Crowther highlighted the growth of Padel, with new courts at Rawdon and in Harrogate and there is a lot of interest in building courts not only at our venues and clubs but also as stand-alone facilities. Padel is a sport that has attracted commercial operators as it can pay for itself in a relatively short time.

Mr Crowther concluded by confirming that, next year will be his final year as Chairman and he will take the opportunity then to review what has been achieved in the last 8 years. Mr Crowther said that it has and remains a privilege to serve the

Association and he will strive to leave tennis in Yorkshire in a better position than when he took up office.

Mr Hargreaves will present the Financial Report next, but it is important to stress that our Finances remain robust, and we plan to keep it that way but hopefully return to funding clubs and venues next year.

Mr Crowther invited questions:

Mr Tee Moyo (Shadwell TC) referenced Yorkshire Cricket Club and the recent Safeguarding and Inclusivity issues and highlighted the great work Yorkshire has done from a Safeguarding perspective and asked for reassurance that Yorkshire Tennis will not get in to the same difficulty. Mr Crowther assured Mr Moyo that Yorkshire Tennis takes Safeguarding seriously, however there is always more that can be done and he is currently looking to access further Safeguarding Training for the Management Committee. Safeguarding will also be discussed further at the Management Committee Away Day and County Associations are also awaiting an LTA directive. County Associations are dependent on support from clubs and venues. With regard to Inclusivity issues, Mr Paul Bennett echoed what Mr Crowther had said and confirmed that the LTA have launched an inclusive strategy and been more representative at board level and filtering down how the LTA can work with County Associations. Mr Bennett stressed the importance of being more representative and confirmed that Tennis is talking to other sports.

Mr Newton highlighted the commitment to inclusivity from a Yorkshire Tennis perspective and highlighted the SERVES programme. Mr Newton reiterated that inclusivity is an important subject and Tennis is in a better position compared to some other sports, however this is very much the start of the journey and is extremely important for the sustainability of the Sport and this in turn will enable Yorkshire Tennis to take the sport forward. This will be a priority for the Management Committee going forward.

Mr Newton took the opportunity to highlight the significant work undertaken by colleagues over the last twelve months and said he was very proud to be President of Yorkshire Tennis and thanked Mr Crowther for his leadership of the committee.

Mr Newton confirmed that Mr Hargreaves had agreed to propose the adoption of the Annual Report which was seconded by Mr Day. There were no abstentions or objections and the Annual Report was adopted.

**5. To receive, consider and adopt the independently examined financial statements of the Association for the previous year, and the Treasurers report as to the financial position of the Association**

Mr Ian Hargreaves referenced the financial statement circulated ahead of the meeting and available in the Annual Report.

The Financial Statement has been examined and approved by the Independent Examiner, Rod Macaulay.

Mr Hargreaves confirmed that the Covid 19 pandemic continued to affect the activities of Yorkshire Tennis, with many either cancelled or reduced in size and with that in mind the net affect was financially advantageous in that a surplus was achieved. At the end of the financial year the balance sheet shows net assets of £694,499 at the end of the year and £297,968 of this balance is out on loan to twenty five venues. Consideration of further loans was halted at the onset of the pandemic and the loan fund is replenished through loan repayments of around £25,000 every six months. At the end of the financial year Yorkshire Tennis was holding £62,500 on behalf of the Leeds RPDC. £390,000 is available to manage the day to day operation of the business, however Yorkshire Tennis is awaiting the outcome of the LTA's new County Funding model before committing further funds.

Income and expenditure showed a surplus of £37,016 and venue registration fees totalled £77,720 from 159 registered venues.

Mr Hargreaves confirmed that the collaboration with Leeds City Council in exchange for the use of the courts at John Charles Centre for Sport agreed in 2018 to provide £20,000 of revenue funding each year for three years, however as a result of the pandemic this year's fee of £20,000 wasn't paid and the £12,000 surplus not used last year was used for the hire of facilities this year.

On local projects (Advantage Yorkshire) and in view of the uncertain future, no new loan or grants were paid and loan rebates were paid at 20% on maturing loans as set up in the Advantage Yorkshire project.

On competitions the County Championships were held successfully at John Charles and showed a small surplus given the aforementioned arrangement for courts with Leeds City Council.

On performance most of the County Cups were held but predominantly on a regional basis which resulted in a reduction of hotel expenditure. County training restarted making use of the 'free' courts at John Charles which resulted in a deficit of £27,963 on performance compared with a deficit of £68,145 in the last normal year of 2018/2019.

On the Yorkshire Initiative, Wimbledon did go ahead last year, however the late availability of a small allocation of tickets made it impossible to arrange hospitality for Initiative members and Patrons. In addition, Patrons have been offered free membership this year and as a result the Initiative income was £12,544 and £8,015 lower than last year and £90,000 lower than the level in a 'normal' year.

Marketing and Communication was at normal levels although the Awards evening was cancelled.

Administration costs were lower than normal due to reduced activity and meetings being held online which resulted in lower room hire and petrol costs.

Mr Hargreaves explained that the RPDC funding comes from the LTA and from Yorkshire Tennis partners and the money is handled by Yorkshire Tennis, but the net effect on Yorkshire Tennis finances is zero.

Questions were invited. There were no questions.

Mr Newton confirmed that Mr Adrian Waite agreed to propose the adoption of the financial statements which was seconded by Mr Don Stewart.

There were no abstentions or objections and the accounts and financial statement were approved.

Mr Newton thanked Mr Hargreaves for all his hard work over the course of what has been another difficult year.

## **6. Adoption of Rule Changes**

No proposed Rule changes.

## **7. Election of Officers for 2022**

Mr Newton confirmed the three-year appointments two years ago and therefore officer elections are not required.

## **8. Election of Area Representatives and Councillors for 2022**

Mr Newton confirmed the three-year appointments two years ago and therefore area representatives and Councillors elections are not required.

Mr Newton did make the meeting aware of the resignations of John Linfoot and Margaret Whitehead. Mr Newton thanked John Linfoot for his support over the last 13 years and thanked Margaret Whitehead for the work she has undertaken as a Councillor over the last couple of years.

## **9. Election of Vice presidents for 2022**

### **New Vice Presidents**

Mr Newton confirmed that there is a Vice President proposal and provided an overview of Mr Crowther's contribution and said he is a very worthy candidate, given his track record and said that Yorkshire Tennis has been very fortunate to have Mr Crowther's services over the last eight years, he is extremely dedicated and committed to the County and he works extremely hard. Yorkshire Tennis is very fortunate to have Mr Crowther on board especially in light of what the County is facing over the next 12 months.

Mr Don Stewart proposed the re-election of Vice Presidents as a group with the addition of Mr Crowther seconded by Ms Carolyn Rothwell.

There were no abstentions or objections and the re-election of Vice Presidents were approved.

### **10. Election of Independent Examiner in 2022**

Mr Newton highlighted the election of the Independent Examiner.

Mr Crowther proposed the election of Mr Rod Macaulay as Independent Examiner seconded by Mrs Mitchell.

There were no abstentions or objections and the election of Mr Rod Macaulay for another year was approved.

Mr Newton thanked Mr Rod Macaulay for his assistance and congratulated him on his re-election.

Mr Newton invited any other items of business.

Ms Claire Wood from Stocksbridge Tennis Club commented on the Inclusion point discussed earlier and observed that women and girls inclusion has done well, however, she feels there isn't much else happening at present and hopes that inclusive training is something that will start to be more readily available online.

Paul Bennett confirmed that the 'Open Your Doors' programme is planned to be extended and made the meeting aware that the North Region are actively working with more partners including Sporting Equals and that across the Region there are 75 SERVES venues, and coaches are delivering not only in Tennis venues but also in other community settings.

Paul Bennett acknowledged there is more to do and support for volunteers is integral not only on Inclusivity but Governance for clubs to access. Ms Wood highlighted a lot of the LTA timings for training which are quite challenging for volunteers when they are working full time.

Mr Newton thanked Ms Wood for raising her concerns and Paul Bennett agreed to chat to Claire outside the meeting.

There were no further questions or points.

Mr Newton thanked everyone again for attending and their continued hard work and wished everyone a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year.

The meeting closed at 19:55hrs.