



**Minutes of the Tennis Committee Meeting  
held on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March at 6:30pm**

**Present:**

Ollie Golding (Chair)  
Emily Monson  
Mark Young (on zoom)  
Andy Gilbert  
Anastasia Rentoulli  
Lorna Bhasin  
Michael Hill (Board Liaison)  
Lily Brown (Ladies Captain)  
Serena Norgren (Pickleball Rep)

**In Attendance:**

Marc Newey (CEO)  
Dan Lott (Racquets Director)  
Nik Snapes (Tennis Manager)

**Apologies**

John Sinik (Men's Captain)

# 1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

## 1.1 Fast Track Membership Criteria

- MH confirmed Maximum of **2 candidates per year** for the tennis section.
  - **DL suggested Probationary requirements for those candidates:**
    - 2–3-year commitment
    - First/Second team level
    - 75% match availability (28 fixtures/year)
    - Participation in junior mentoring
    - Club championship involvement
  - **Status:**
    - 1 male candidate approved
    - Female candidate pending
  - **MN and MH confirmed challenges :**
    - Heavy scrutiny from Membership Committee
    - Extensive vetting (including playing with existing members)
    - OG, LB and NS noted difficulty recruiting female candidates (noted in Golf section too), which needs to be prioritised for future recruitment
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## 1.2 MH Membership Capacity Constraints

- 2026 annual intake reduced to **70 new members (including juniors)**
  - Waiting list: **5+ years (potentially rising to 8 years)**
  - Junior membership decline: **1300 → 900** over last 10 years
  - DL and NS Need to **manage expectations** of new members (e.g. access to lessons)
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## 1.3 Court Booking & Late Cancellation Policy

- DL presented Jan–March data:
  - 117 members recorded no-shows
  - About 150–160 incidents
- Committee Proposal:
  - Initial suggestion: £40 fine
  - Committee agreed preference: **£20 fine (to start)**

- Payment system: Must pay before booking future courts (via Stripe) all funds go to the Roehampton Club Foundation fund supporting local charities
- **Timeline:**
  - Trial: October half-term → December
  - Review: January implementation
- **Considerations:**
  - League matches
  - Opponent cancellations

**Action:**

- DL to develop detailed implementation plan
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## 1.4 Off-Peak Coaching Incentives

- DL presented current off-peak usage:
  - Approx. 25 lessons/month (1–4pm)
  - Approx. £900 revenue impact
- MH agreed this loss is minimal and acceptable
- **Committee proposals:**
  - Reduced court fee at off-peak times, making lessons cheaper
  - Package deals (e.g. 5 lessons + 1 free)
  - Move live ball sessions to off-peak (efficient use of courts)
- Constraint: Booking system limitations

**Action:**

- DL to produce implementation plan and present at next meeting
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## 2. Strategic Scope: Padel & Pickleball

### 2.1 Pickleball Court Allocation

- Current use: Court 1 (Thursday & Friday afternoons)
- DL noted Racquets team have adjusted the Pickleball afternoon timings to avoid dead court time. Pickleball will finish at 4pm instead of 5pm from the summer term.
- **TC Agreed for summer term:**
  - Pickleball to remain indoors on Court 1
  - Lines remain Friday morning until used for pickleball at 12pm
  - Friday morning for tennis use

- Live ball sessions to use Court 1 with lines → frees another court
- **Summer holidays:**
  - No permanent line marking (low historical usage: 4%)
  - Maintain current allocation instead – Thursday morning and Friday from 12pm till 4pm
- **Long-term:**
  - Need for a **separate dedicated facility**

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### 3. Padel Court Development Planning

- MN talked through proposal: **5 padel courts** on existing Courts 4–6
- Planning feedback:
  - Supportive in principle as “modest impact on MOL openness”
  - Key concern: **noise impact on residents (Woking Close)**
  - Council said increase of use on courts 19-21 or 22-24 by changing the surface to clay and installing floodlights resulting in extra noise would be unacceptable. Planning consultant (LUC) notes attached.
- Required for approval:
  - Noise assessment study
  - Lighting study
  - Transport plan
  - Biodiversity effect plan
- Estimated approval likelihood: **60–70%** (with proper documentation) for just padel courts
- Glass panels may reduce noise vs netting and will be see through for WC residents.

**Action:** Board has approved MN to submit padel planning application for 5 covered padel courts on court 4-6. MH commented that if planning permission is received the Board has up to 3 years to decide when to begin building the padel courts. Tennis Committee noted that this gives time to explore replacement of 4-6 before work on padel commences

### 4. Tennis Court Replacement Options

(If Courts 4–6 converted to 5 padel courts)

- NS noted that 25-28 could be considered on the basis that they’re closer to main facilities and better for coaching/operations
- NS also noted that replacing courts 25–28 should be considered as it creates 4 floodlit clay courts, offering greater long-term benefit for members and family activities.

- Converting courts 19–21 would result in only 3 non-floodlit courts, limiting year-round use and future tennis growth.
- Choosing 19–21 would reduce winter evening coaching capacity and may require use of indoor courts.
- OG countered this with data presented by NS at previous meeting that shows real pinch points would occur on summer weekend mornings, where lights are not required. Overall court usage is only 57%, meaning there is slack to accommodate this and operationally we should consider how we could alleviate negative impacts of 3 less floodlit courts with minimal impact
- OG noted the Committee previously debated this extensively and voted unanimously in favour of converting courts 19–21, if feasible.
- Strong view that protecting courts 25–28 is in the club’s long-term interests as key heritage assets.
- Emphasis that a key part of the club’s identity is having premier grass courts in a special setting, making preservation of them important.
- Courts 19–21 have known baseline deficiencies, are considered the poorest quality grass courts and are the least played on courts in the club, making them more suitable for replacement.
- Converting 19–21 could support planning approval due to potential for direct external access and community use during low-demand periods
- Committee agreed to ask the Board to proceed with planning application for courts 19–21 (no floodlights); alternative options to be reconsidered if not approved.
- Concern raised (OG) that mentioning courts 25–28 option to planners could have negatively influenced the 19–21 application.
- **Action: Prepare and submit a standalone planning application for courts 19–21; MN to seek Board approval and ensure TC involvement (and thus tennis-specific expertise/views) in the process with council.**
- Note: If 19-21 is rejected, committee would then re-convene to discuss and recommend alternative strategy to board.

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## 5. Any Other Business (AOB)

- LB put forward comment from Brenda Nixon asking why on a Saturday morning 4 courts were booked for junior coaching and only 2 were used? DL stated it was the last session before easter so numbers must have been low as members have gone

away. The places had all been paid for and could have turned up on the day. DL confirmed that all courts are needed if all players turn up.

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## **6. Date of Next Meeting**

**Tuesday 19 May, 6:30 PM**