

Nailsea & District Croquet Club
Draft Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 19 July 2016

Chair: Andrew Wimshurst
Present: Kathy Wallace, Brigit Clayton, Peter Dyke, Mike Tracy, Linda Shaw
Coral Harrison, Brian Roynon

The meeting opened at 10am

1. Apologies None

2. Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 14 June 2016

The minutes were signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting held on 14 June

3. Matters arising from Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 14 June 2016

Andrew had been unable to contact the neighbours whose boundary was to the west of lawns 2 and 3. It was decided to send them a courtesy letter informing them of our intention to cut the Leylandii. The letter would make it clear that no access on the neighbours' side of the hedge was required and that we would inform them of the date when the work would take place when it was known. Andrew's contact details would be given in the letter KW

Violet had indicated that she would be prepared to continue to supervise the provision of cakes. One of the newer members was also willing to help with this so it was suggested that she and Violet worked together.

Kathy had written the obituary for Ian Telfer. The archivist at the Palace Wells Club had provided some information about Ian's work there.

4. Treasurer's Report (Mike Tracy)

Mike reported a surplus of about £5000; this was lower than stated in his report because an insurance premium of £957.27 had just been paid..

Mike's report:

“Current balance at the bank less unpresented cheques is £19468.53 (minutes note: this is before the insurance premium of £957.27 was paid)

The surplus for the year is £5.968.81 (minus insurance premium of £957.27)

My attempts to get a corrected invoice from the council for our rent have not been successful; in fact I have received a reminder to pay the original invoice. I have spoken to someone on the Accounts Receivable team who was unaware of the situation and has put a note on their system. I followed this with an email to Accounts Receivable and Gareth Withers, this time including my calculation of what I believe to be the correct amount.

Catering for the July tournament was profitable to the tune of £203.00. A visit from the Clevedon 41 club raised £157.50

Bridge income has passed the £900.00 mark.

Quotes for the lawn levelling project have started to materialise, but at the time of writing I have not had a chance to study them. I understand that John is very impressed by one quote which demonstrates that the contractor has a good understanding of what is required and has done similar work for another club (Budleigh Salterton?). The quote is however higher than we had hoped for and we may not be able to afford to do this work in autumn 2017 from our own funds. As we are now running at a regular surplus I would be happy to explore the possibility of a loan from the CA. I understand that Robert Moss has indicated that alternatively another grant from the CA is not out of the question”

Mike is concerned that we are paying for public liability insurance through the CA but also through our own insurance company. He would contact the CA to see if this could be rectified. MT

There was a discussion about the financing of the levelling work and the best way to make up the shortfall. Mike would prefer loans from members to be interest-free. Peter described the system used last time members provided loans. Draws took place to determine who should be repaid next. In practice many members waived the repayment. Mike would contact the CA to see whether it might be possible to have a loan as well as a grant. The forms would be easier to complete this time because we still had the text from the previous application and could use much of it. The business plan could be written with a firmer basis and accurate figures. The detailed bid would also be an excellent piece of additional material. MT

It was suggested that Mike contacted the local Councillor in an effort to sort out the rent problem. MT

5. Membership Report (Coral Harrison)

“The results from the Open Day have been slightly disappointing with 15 people signing up for coaching and only 7 have actually joined the Club. I understand that 2 people who paid were never seen for coaching. In addition to those 7, there have been memberships received for 2 schoolgirls and the possibility of another joining.

The total Club membership is now 96 compared with the 104 at the end of the previous season. This membership is made up as follows:-

<i>Life</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Country</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Student</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Social</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Full</i>	<i>76</i>

The Membership List is being emailed to all members and a revised list will be put up in the Pavilion.”

It was noted that a member had resigned and had not responded to an appeal from Andrew to reconsider his decision

It was noted that there were 96 members at the same time last year.

5a Tournament Secretary's Report (Peter Dyke)

Association Croquet League Positions

League	Team	Played	Won	Lost	Current Position
Parkstone Trophy Div 1	Nailsea	0	0	0	n/a
Parkstone Trophy Div 2	Nailsea 2nd	3	1	2	3
Parkstone Trophy Div 3	Nailsea 3rd	2	0	2	3
Federation League	Nailsea North	3	1	2	4
Federation League	Nailsea Central	5	3	2	1
Intermediate League	Nailsea North	1	1	0	3
Intermediate League	Nailsea Central	2	1	1	3
B League	Nailsea North	3	3	0	2
B League	Nailsea South	2	2	0	2

Golf Croquet League Positions

League	Team	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Current Position
GC Level Play League	Nailsea	5	2	0	3	4
GC Handicap League	Nailsea CN	5	3	0	2	2
GC Handicap League	Nailsea CS	4	4	0	0	1
GC Handicap League	Nailsea SE	4	2	0	2	2

Peter also reported:

“Our two B League teams are doing well, but have still to meet their closest rivals. Nailsea Central South (Steve Durston's GC team) is currently top of their league table and has a chance of reaching the quarter final. Linda's Federation League team is also currently top of the table, but we have finished our games and everyone else has matches to play - it is unlikely that we will remain in top position.

Our Intermediate North team have not played any matches yet, but have been given a walkover by one team, another team has withdrawn altogether, and a third match has to be rearranged.”

Peter would inform John Grimshaw (SWF League Secretary) about the reasons given by some Clubs for defaulting on fixtures.

There was a discussion about Mad Monday, particularly the effect on Handicap Cards of opponents when the very handicapped players repeatedly lost games. It was decided that the Committee would monitor the situation as handicaps might eventually settle down.

PD

Linda was willing to send match reports to the NST but not on a weekly basis. She would accumulate them and send in batches.

LS

6. Property Report (Brian Roynon)

“Car Park.

The matting at the entry /exit to the car park is looking very uneven but still intact but is now worse than before. Some remedial work may be necessary.

Work mornings

*The work morning on the 8th July went well and was led by Geoff
The brush cutter has been repaired.*

The hedges are in need of cutting again. It was agreed at the beginning of the year that we have them cut back in February and trimmed in July. I will arrange this if we are still in agreement.

I have been approached by an older member to ask if some paper towels can be available in both the gents and the ladies. He says that some older members have personal problems that sometimes need more than hot air, or to dry their faces if they wash them.

Social Bookings

There have been two social evenings since the last meeting both lucrative for the club.

The most recent on the 12th July proved very difficult to find members available to run it.

Violet had volunteered but Brenda rightly thought that she should not do it on her own.

*Brenda spoke to, rang or contacted over 30 people before Mary Hogg, a social member, volunteered to help but as she has never played golf croquet her husband David came and assisted Violet with the playing while Mary did the catering.
The evening was very successful and the Nailsea 41 Club said that they will be back next year.*

The social booking that was cancelled due to rain has been re booked for 2nd August.

A big thank you to all those members that help with these evenings which are very valuable to the club.”

It was decided to leave the car park until after the levelling work took place.

It was agreed that Brian should contact the contractor to arrange for the hedges to be cut.

A supply of paper towels would be placed on the window ledges in the toilets.

7. Lawn Maintenance Report (John Wallace)

1. Lawns

As many people have noticed, the grass sward has continued to thicken up. In order to maintain lawn speed, the cutter height has thus been lowered to 4mm (from the normal 5mm). This has restored a lawn speed of about 11 plummets when newly cut. The reasons behind the gradual improvement in lawn quality are not yet fully established. As intended, the lawns have stayed green so far and regular soil moisture sampling suggests that soil moisture levels are consistent right across the lawns. The correct level of moisture, in combination with nutrients and oxygen (via regular sarel spiking) is known to encourage healthy turf.

The above is thought to be due to the Revolution sprays as lawn 5, which is not treated, has developed the usual water repellent local dry patches that the main lawns have experienced in previous years. Duncan Hector's own club lawns at Letchworth have also experienced an improvement after applying Revolution. He reports that the lawns are the best they have ever been. Colchester have applied Revolution to a lawn area that has been troubled with insoluble drainage problems and reported a dramatic improvement. This emphasises how Revolution both facilitates the capture and storage of excess water in the water table and the release of water from the water table in dry conditions.

However, the case for Revolution is not yet fully proven as weather conditions have been less arduous than last year. The graphs attached (updated from last month) show that whilst overall rainfall has been fairly similar to last year we have experienced lower levels of evapotranspiration (ET). Thus the net loss of moisture in June/early July is substantially lower than last year and this may also be contributing to lawn improvement. Time will tell. (The lower ET is thought to be due to abnormally high levels of cloud cover reported by the Met Office)

The North boundary dried out again in early July but again a hosepipe flooding (as previously reported) soon caused the grass to quickly recover. The soil, although dry, was not water repellent and the heavy local surface water rapidly absorbed. This augurs well for the effects of emergency irrigation if we experience prolonged dry conditions that effectively use up the water available from the water table.

2. Hoop Setting

One of the positive side effects of the soil moisture levels is that the hoop resetting process is easier. For the B Class tournament, only minimal pre-watering of the new hoop hole areas was required. In future, probably no pre-watering will be required.

3. Irrigation

With no rainfall predicted, the Revolution, Growth Regulator and Liquid Bio-fertiliser were all applied together in early July. After a two hour drying break to allow the fertiliser and growth regulator to be absorbed the lawns were briefly irrigated to wash in the Revolution. Irrigation stopped when it went dark!

4. Lawn levelling

Three bids were received whilst two smaller contractors decided not to bid because of the impact on their regular client maintenance work. A third contractor chose not to bid because he was worried about being undercut by small contractors who would be cheaper but not do the job properly.

The three bids can be summarised as follows:

	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Quality/Method Statement</i>
<i>Contractor A</i>	<i>Expensive</i>	<i>Poor/Non-existent</i>
<i>Contractor B</i>	<i>Over budget</i>	<i>Excellent/Detailed</i>
<i>Contractor C</i>	<i>Under budget</i>	<i>Weak/brief</i>

I am in the process of arranging an LAG meeting to discuss which contractor to

select prior to making a recommendation to the committee.

In my own view, contractor A can be discounted and therefore the choice will be between contractors B and C. The detailed method statement offered by contractor B addressed the issues raised in the specification and offered some useful advice about the post levelling maintenance regime. Contractor C's offering was well within budget but describes a very basic approach to levelling that would, I suspect, leave us disappointed with the end result.

My preference is to take the contractor B offering but there is work needed to make the bid affordable. This will need to form part of the LAG discussion. Financial options include a further CA grant or loan and the possibility of offering members multi year subscription paid up front. There is the possibility of not incorporating sand into the levelling process. There is also the possibility of trimming the 2017 maintenance budget. There is a balance between maintain decent lawns for play during 2017 and avoiding wasting money on lawns that will be dug up. Needless to say, the Treasurer will be taking a keen interest in the proposals!"

8 WI Croquet Day arrangements

We would need a responsible Club member present throughout the day. Kathy to produce a rota for members to volunteer for hourly or two-hourly slots. She would also inform members by e-mail of its existence

KW

9 Suggestion for a plaque in memory of John Jeffery

It was felt that the Committee needed time to think about this. Other people were also due recognition in getting the Club itself and the Clubhouse into existence. There would be a discussion at the next meeting

ALL

10. DBS checks and Child Protection forms

Alison had been given clearance and was in receipt of her certificate. Peter and Erica needed to proceed with their applications. Linda would contact Fran about the issue of Child Protection

LS

11. Website

Committee members should be putting posts on the website. There was no great enthusiasm for this and Andrew thought that the website was rarely looked at other than for admin forms. Mike continues to add posts; Brigit puts Wild Wednesday results on and Kathy adds minutes and general information including some forthcoming events. Kathy also added information to the Club face book page.

12. 100 Club

As Sandra was currently injured and unable to play croquet and there had not been a summer social event this year, the summer draw had not taken place. It was agreed that Sandra should make the draw at Tuesday evening bridge session.

11. AOB

Kathy reported that members of the public had been on Croquet Club ground looking for Pokémon. This might be good for publicity but we should be vigilant about security.

KW

Kathy had used one of the repair forks very successfully and encouraged the others to use them and recommend them.

Andrew had given a sample of the new type of white line paint to Jim for him to try it.

Peter complained that people opened shutters and left without closing them. It was felt that this was reasonable behaviour but Kathy promised to close them on Friday evenings if she was there!

12. Date of next meeting

This was arranged for Tuesday 23 August at 10am

The meeting closed at 12 17pm

Signed as a true and accurate record

Name.....

Signature..... date.....