# Attendance

38 General Members, plus Maggie Lipscombe, President, Chris Grimwood General Manager + Board Director, Andy Isles Chair, Jon Tuppen Club Secretary, Victoria Clements and Steve Brown Board Directors.

# Apologies

Received from Kristian Day, Vice-Chair, Heather Beaton, Ian Bland, Karen Turmel – studio, Doug Sharp, James Southgate Hockey committee, John Williams, Graham Fretwell, Wendy Palmer, Karen Watling

# Welcome to the AGM

The meeting was opened at 7pm by Maggie Lipscombe, President of the club who welcomed everyone. She had reached the end of her tenure and gave a short address.

Ladies and Gentlemen – it is my pleasure to welcome you to our AGM. I would ask that you ensure your mobile phone won’t interrupt the meeting please.

This past year has been a recovery year following the restrictions we had to endure because of Covid. ISC were extremely fortunate to survive as many clubs did not come through that ghastly period and it was due to the hard work of management, the Board, council and of course the loyalty of members. It doesn’t bear thinking about what could have happened, I thank everybody.

The sale of Henley Road hockey pitch has enabled many changes to have taken place which hopefully members have, and will appreciate.

In my fairly long and successful sporting life, I have always been very proud to be associated with ISC as it has always been the envy of many other clubs, not just locally, but nationally and with your help the continued growth will enable us to remain a premier club.

Unfortunately this will be my last AGM as your President. A recent change in what was the Constitution to the Articles of Association has meant I have to reluctantly step down. There are probably some here tonight who may not have been members for very long and don’t know me particularly well, although ISC seems to be my second home. I had the honour of being elected President at the beginning of the millennium so have been around a long time and hopefully many more years to come!

As previously stated I’ve been fortunate to have played all the sports we offer which has enabled me to promote the club wherever I’ve travelled to, nationally or internationally, and I will continue to do so. I’ve always tried to represent the members who may not have felt in a position to volunteer for a committee so their voices will be heard.

Be proud of our club, I thank you for your support.

Following Maggie’s introduction she was presented with a bouquet of flowers in honour of her years as president and all she has done for the club. Andy Isles – Chair asked her to accept the position of Honorary Vice-President and to join the select band of previous illustrious servants of the club. Maggie was pleased to accept.

# Minutes of Last AGM

The minutes of the last AGM were signed as a fair recordwithout question or comment. Matters from the minutes to be covered in the rest of 2023 AGM

# Director’s reports on the clubs activities for 2022

Andy Isles, Chair, addressed the meeting highlighting the many sporting successes, events and exciting plans that ISC have.

This is my first report as Chair of the club and it has been a privilege to work with such an innovative and enthusiastic Board, all of whom are new except Vic . Their energy and desire to improve the members experience has been outstanding. The previous Board navigated their way through some very difficult times with the sale of land, Covid, loss of manager, new (but unsuccessful) external management/consultancy company, and catering issues. The new board, whilst appreciating all the previous hard work, have risen to the ongoing challenges, particularly in providing new facilities, upgrading, compliance, refurbishment and growing the finances.

The **extensive programme of repairs and refurbishment in 2022 is attached and amounts to £280,000**, this does not include the new Hockey pitch and club house upgrade. Further works have been carried out in 2023 - all essential - before we embark on **the next phase** which includes:

* **Landscape outdoor area with Food and Beverage outlet, Pizza oven and BBQ along with Pétanque and table tennis**
* **Refurbish bar area**
* **New reception and access system**
* **Refurbish changing rooms**
* **Solar Panels and storage**
* **Padel at Tuddenham Road**
* **Relay car park and extend car park at Tuddenham Road**
* **Upgrade function room at Tuddenham Road**

All these projects will be completed, hopefully by the end of this year. There have been delays in securing planning permission for the construction of padel courts at Tuddenham Road but these issues are all being resolved, but unfortunately have taken time.

The **re-branding** is almost complete along with the new web site which will integrate with our existing data base giving very useful and important information to management.

We have further visions for the future which include a new Studio for classes and a Sports clinic. These will be considered by Council and the Board as finances permit.

Members will have noted that with Mo now engaged as Chef, the catering has settled and improved. The club is receiving positive feedback after a number of difficulties resulting in catering losses.

Chris Grimwood, our General Manager, has built a strong team of workers around him after so many changes. He has been very fortunate to recruit key personnel to drive the club forward including Lauren who is in charge of membership and club admin and Anna in accounts. Both are very friendly, professional and competent additions to the team. The four Duty Managers Bex (functions), Chloe (reception), Sam (gym) and most recently Jamie (Bar) have all risen to their responsibilities and have worked hard to maintain our high standards and our ethos as a family friendly Club.

We have seen a steady increase in social functions at the club along with regular slots including Comedy nights and Open Mic. Our themed evenings (Burns night and food Thai to name two) have been a huge success along with Mothers Day and Easter Sunday celebrations and such events are set to continue.

**Membership numbers have increased** by 75 this year which show that we are moving forward in the right direction.

The club is primarily a sports club, securing its CASC status through being a non-profit organisation and offering amateur sports to all. The work carried out by the three sections; Tennis; Squash and Hockey has been outstanding this year.

In Tennis we have had six players compete in Grade One and Two national events. Richard Green achieved world ranking of 14 in the Quad wheelchair and represents England. Forty one players are in the Suffolk County squads. Ladies 1’s and mixed 1’s teams won the titles in both Summer and Winter leagues. All credit to Chris and his team.

The Hockeys Mens first team was promoted to the National League this year, (the Ladies are already National League players) a remarkable achievement. We now have five men’s and five women’s teams in the leagues for next season and the section fully subscribed.

The squash junior section now numbers 78 with two England no 1’s ; Bator Bujtar in the U9’s and Will Burton in the U13. Will Burton is also the England captain. The juniors have performed well across the country and have been on two European tours.

Jon Goodrich represented England and won the Eastern Masters event.

We are now firmly placed as the main venue in East Anglia to host prestigious tournaments across both tennis and squash. ISC work in five schools in Ipswich and the team under Emily work tirelessly to improve members enjoyment of Squash and Racketball.

It is, however, primarily the volunteers at the club that enable ISC to achieve such excellent results. There are so many to mention who quietly give their time. I will mention Alec and Ali Livingstone and Rob Marsh-Feiley by name along with the “helping hands members” and there are so many more who voluntarily organise and run teams in the Club.

2023 has started well and with your full support the Club will continue to be one of the top sporting venues in the UK

# Accounts for 2022 and Treasurer’s Report

Andy Isles reminded the meeting that Mark Cracknell had resigned from the Board in November 2022 in order to focus on Padel with Game 4 Padel. Following a competitive process (3 good applicants) he has been replaced as Director on the Board by Stephen Brown. However, Stephen does not have financial expertise, so Andy Isles (an accountant by trade) has taken the interim role. Andy is very ably assisted by Anna as accounts officer. Anna is very experienced and able to complete most day to day transaction and reports herself meaning Andy only has to run through finances weekly with Anna.

There is no disguising that 2022 was a very challenging year and we have posted a loss (after Depreciation of £127,076) of £236,849. This follows a loss in 2021 of £168,977 (depreciation £75,352) and in 2021 the club received covid grants of £78,574.

In 2022 we were still absorbing ongoing free memberships from Covid and encouraging members back to full time enjoyment of the club. The catering stuttered throughout 2022 with a succession of Chefs culminating finally with the current Chef who appears to be a stable member of the staff.

Although we lost Pascale and Cheryl we have been able to replace without increasing our costs. All credit to Chris and his team who have now settled into their roles.

The losses have been addressed. Friel our marketing arm, along with Mosaic/2iC and outside caterers have all gone. We will have significant sponsorship packages in place for September and the number of functions and room hire have increased positively over the last three months.

The outside area with catering outlet, BBQ, Pizza ovens, Pétanque, table tennis and possible play area will hopefully encourage members to use the club more . It is a problem; with approximately 1750 members the spend at the bar is under £2 per week per member.

We will be upgrading the Bar area along with a complete new reception with access control; upgrading the changing rooms and new car park and gates at Tuddenham road . Padel will move to Tuddenham Road this year.

All the sections have had significant improvements to their facilities:

* New gym equipment
* New studio replacing Kidzone
* Refurbished squash courts with 3 & 6 now glass backed, and new ventilation
* Tennis lighting and resurfacing on courts 4-8.
* New Hockey pitch, changing room upgrade, Toilet upgrade and new boilers
* New roof over squash courts
* New Patio and Ground lights
* EV Charging points
* Full re-furbish of function room.
* Re-paintng throughout the club.

# 2023 forecast

I am forecasting a break-even position for 2023, before depreciation.

I have taken into account a 10% increase in minimum wages from April 2023 and the proposed changes to membership rates from September 1st 2023.

The effect of new energy pricing will be offset with the installation of Solar panels.

I have not taken into account expected sponsorship income and a membership increase of approximately 200 by the end of this year. At present we appear to be on track and I am hopeful, barring any major catastrophes we will do well.

We are very fortunate to have Anna in accounts, she has been excellent in providing the board with the information they need to make decisions. She is very analytical and competent.

Lastly, although this does not take away the poor results we are posting, competitors are also struggling. We have been very fortunate to have sold land which has provided the revenue needed to offer top class facilities here at Ipswich Sports Club.

The Board then presented the information in a presentation to illustrate these points – presentation available on 2023 AGM website.

Andy thanked Mick Castleton for the work he had done in helping reduce energy expenditure (and therefore carbon emissions) by 20% month on month since Jan 2023.

Questions from floor,

* What is the payback time for the money spent on the LED lighting?

A: Jon Tuppen – Obviously many variables such as changing cost of energy supply and what the new tariff will be when we set this with the energy broker, but in the order of 5-7 years to payback.

Chris Grimwood gave an update on the Game4Padel project at Tuddenham Road including the delay in getting building warranty for the groundworks to the car park and the alteration from the original plan from 4 courts at the start to 2 this Autumn followed by 2 more in 2024.

The club had noticed the previously documented finding that the biggest number of Padel participants are players new to racquet sports as it is less dependent on immediate skills than tennis or squash. People are coming from far and wide to use the pop-up court – all across Suffolk and North Essex and international ex-pats and visitors. It was also noted that the building of the padel courts would open the doors for further events and sponsorship.

The club had benefitted from £2,000 of income from racket hire.

Questions from floor,

Q The soil investigations took a very long time. Which company was doing it?

A: Chris Grimwood – HB Slaters

Q What has delayed the building permissions?

A: Chris Grimwood – Planning have had concerns about things they saw as outstanding issues from the planning consent given for the Hockey pitch and lighting. Planning have also had complaints and comment from residents close to the Tuddenham Road site.

Q What is the proposed car park going to be constructed from and why have Grass Crates been rejected. What will be the cost?

A: Chris Grimwood – The construction will be Tarmac and will be circa £100,000. Grass crates have been considered and rejected. Advice from experienced companies was that they had poor durability when coaches or heavy vehicles with power assisted steering manoeuvred on them making them more expensive in the long run.

Q With the change in the contract to allow the building phase in 2 phases, is there certainty that the 3rd and 4th courts will be built?

A: Andy Isles – 2 courts allow for the provision of 2 courts this Autumn with a further 2 once usage hits predicted levels

A: Steve Brown – yes there is a solid contract for 4 courts

Q When will they be built?

A: Chris Grimwood – there is a meeting on 29th June (day following AGM) which should sign off the project and give timescales and milestones

# Club Auditors

Dick Partridge proposed a motion that GMS FC Ltd (the Club’s current auditors) should continue for 2023 and this was seconded by Tony Sheldrake. The members present voted unanimously in favour.

# Safeguarding

The ISC Safeguarding lead and Welfare Office, Ali Livingstone gave a verbal briefing on the active role he takes on behalf of ISC. Safeguarding is very much part of ISC culture. Ali works pro-actively by keeping Safeguarding a live agenda item at all committees and in training for staff and committees. There is also the reactive confidential investigatory role that follows up cases brought to either Ali’s attention or Chris Grimwood, General Managers attention.

Ali praised the support he received from staff and especially coaches in raising potential safeguarding issues early before they reached dangerous levels.

Ali wanted the AGM to note the fantastic work on safeguarding that Karen Watling started 12 years ago – way before other clubs or sports introduced it. Karen has retired during the last year. The AGM wanted to thank Karen.

Ali briefly outlined the historical safeguarding troubles that the LTA and Wrexham Tennis Club hit that prompted firstly the LTA, and subsequently other sports to develop safeguarding leads and policies. Ali reported that pleasingly we are viewed as an exemplar for our policy and the way it is implemented.

Ali reminded the AGM that the responsibility and accountability for Safeguarding sat with the Board of Directors, which is where the results of investigation are reported.

The Board thanked Ali for his hard work and leadership.

# The Club Privacy Policy

Jon Tuppen, Club Secretary gave a brief verbal report on changing the club privacy policy in order to better support the Court Schedule reporting tool. At present a significant percentage of identities on the tool are either anonymous, or strange nick-names which are not appropriate. Obviously ISC needs to offer the ability for an individual to shield their name details should they choose. However, there is also a legitimate interest for the club and other members to know if one individual repeatedly has no-shows on bookings.

In order to achieve this, and after audits of legitimate interests within the club, the Board wishes to change the mode of implementation of showing names from the default of being opted out (and thus anonymous) to a default opted in (and thus showing names unless the club is advised otherwise). When an individual opts for anonymity the name field will be populated with the unique membership number by the system and membership administrators. Only staff members with the necessary role-based access will be able to see your linked demographic details.

After some discussion for clarification **the AGM voted with a unanimous vote in favour of adopting the revised Privacy and GDPR Policy**

# The vote on the Special Resolution proposed to the AGM

***THAT the draft articles of association uploaded to the Company’s website with this Notice be approved and adopted as the articles of association of the Company in substitution for, and to the exclusion of, the Company’s existing articles of association.***

Jon Tuppen, Club Secretary reminded members that there had been a working party of members looking at ways to improve on the governance of the club committees with the aim to improve communication of business Board was doing on behalf of the Club, and to improve the critical friend and scrutiny role that Council needed to play. He reminded the AGM of the process leading to the formation of Ipswich Sports Club 2020 Ltd governed by Company Law and the Articles of Association. A paper on the governance history of the club and the report that the Governance Working Party had produced was available on the AGM website. The intent was to energise and empower Council to ensure that all matters of Material Significance be referred to Council for discussion and a recommendation on action be made to Board. The proposal reduced the voting of Board members at Council from a maximum of 6 votes to one whilst boost General Members of the Club from 3 to 6.

A concern was raised that section 49.20 of the proposed changed Articles of Association retained the clause saying *The Board shall have no obligation to follow any recommendation of*

*the Club Council in relation to any Referred Matter*.

Others explained that ultimate decision making had to sit with the accountable directors.

A member hoped that having more general members in the future would make the Council more impartial and less likely to get stuck on individual sports issues.

**Members at the AGM voted with a unanimous vote in favour of changing the Articles of Association**

# Board Director Position

Andy Isles, Chair, reported that Mark Cracknell had resigned from the Board at the end of November 2022. The position had been advertised and there had been 3 high quality applicants. After a process Stephen Brown had been co-opted as a Board Director. Stephen Brown had indicated that he was willing to continue as Board Director and in the absence of any other nominations the AGM appointed him.

# President of Ipswich Sports Club 2020 Ltd

The position of club president had been advertised with the invitation to the AGM. Only one completed nomination had been received and so George Burley was due elected to the role of President of Ipswich Sports Club.

George gave a speech of acceptance, doubting that he could ever be as good as the out-going President, and recalling the long association with Ipswich and the club through his multiple times with IFC as player and manager. George was looking forward to contributing what he could to Ipswich Sports Club.

He noted the importance of getting “people through the door”, making the club a buzzing place to be and the importance of juniors as the club members of the future.

# Update on Rebranding

Steve Brown, Director, (in lieu of Kristian Day Vice-Chair who had been detained at work) gave an update on the rebranding exercise. He spoke about rebranding being a whole process – essentially a re-launch of a new refreshed image for the club and inextricably linked with marketing, sponsorship opportunities and deals and the way the club portrayed itself – internally

and externally. It is far more than just an emblem or new website. He recognised the passion that people felt about the emblem – but that there is also the complete spectrum of opinion being given. Whilst everyone can have an opinion and perspective there will never be a solution that satisfies all and Board has decided that getting on with the job of promoting the club out-weighs yet another cycle of circular debate.

Q - How much had been spent on the project and over what period

A - c.£26,000 which would be paid out this year, which includes the new (yet to be released0 website. A Rebrand should last at least a decade

Several members reminded Board that Council advised against the emblem and were annoyed that their advice was being ignored.

A It was Board’s prerogative to make the final decision as per the Articles of Association and ultimately the Board and the Directors could be held to account based on future performance.

Written Questions received in Advance

The questions were answered before the meeting and posted onto the AGM website

Written questions

**From:** Martyn Leadbetter   
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 13, 2023 7:34 PM  
Q - What benefits are members going to see based on the upcoming 10% increase in fees, planned for Sep 23.  Since the last increase there has been only a few noticeable improvements in any areas of the club. No updates from the rebranding questionnaire that was completed

A – Last year’s increase was the first for 6 years and was playing catch-up along with covering the hole in finances resulting from COVID lockdowns and fee holidays during that period. In addition, there was a backlog of essential maintenance that has cost £150,000 and other essential improvements such as swapping to LED lighting for over 95% of the club which in turn has reduced electricity consumption (from the grid) by 20%.

The planned increase averages 8% and will be used to cover the improvements which will be fully covered at the AGM but include

                        Shower/changing room upgrades and refurb

                        Reception restyle and incorporation of access control

                        Bar and Lounge Refurbs

New Outdoor Bar/Kitchen/Pizza/BBQ area with Pentaque pitches, outdoor table tennis

                        Tuddenham Road site bar and kitchen upgrades

                        Essential Tuddenham Road Car Park works

In addition and not least, minimum wage raised 9.6% recently, electricity costs will rise by over 200% when new tariff comes into play later this year, and many other costs have escalated.

Q - The below was minuted in the meeting from 2022 but there hasn't been any evidence of any changes.

*Q: can we discuss the Booking system? A: we are aware of issues and are hopeful of significant improvements in July.*

A – There has been a significant change with the addition of the Court Schedule tool. This covers the functionality that members have complained was missing. We know this is not fully integrated with booking links but only takes a few clicks.

            ISC is pretty unique with being so multi-sport, studio & gym with sales and over 1700 members. Both the previous Board and this Board have researched option but can find nothing that achieves all requirements.

Q.  The previous minutes mention an expected increase in membership. Has this happened, as it doesn't appear to based on another planned membership fee increase.

A.         Yes –

Q. What is the state of play with the rebrand of the club - again very few changes, if any, have been seen that make it an attractive option to join, or attract new members.

A.         The Rebrand will start with a new website within the next 2 months. The other changes will wait until the above improvements have been completed and will then trumpet all the club offers in terms of inclusive sports from beginner to elite, with top-class coaching and top-quality facilities along with studio and gym, social events, excellent food and bar and social rooms at a price below competitors.

**From:** Keith Palmer   
**Sent:** 22 June 2023 12:52  
**To:** ISC Club Secretary <clubsecretary@ipswichsports.co.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: AGM stuff - QUESTION FOR AGM

It is anticipated that the Club's audited accounts for the last financial year will reveal a very significant overall loss but it is understood that the Board hopes that by the end of 2023 the club will have achieved break even point in cash terms. However, when depreciation is taken into account there will still be an annual loss. What plans does the Board have for the long term sustainability of the club so that its total income will equal or exceed all expenditure and depreciation? Otherwise how does the club maintain or improve its facilities in the future as significant as significant expenditure is called for?

1. **The board is fully aware of the financial situation the club found itself in. This has been the focus of board activity since the last AGM.**

**The Board and the club staff have been working hard to develop an achievable turn-around plan**

* We are predicting breakeven before depreciation by year end = **£120k improvement on this time last year**
* Member numbers are﻿ increasing – we predict/need a further 100 members = **c £32k**

*(potentially more with marketing post the improvements and decorations)*

* Board has been focusing a lot on better sponsorship – with **target for £50-60k in full year**
* Closing F+B deficit and improve *(in particular)* member take up of our bar and food, including the new outdoor kitchen and games area - **potential positive** **£20k change in financial position**
* More events, especially corporate events & memberships **= £10k**
* Continue to be a destination of choice for large, prestigious sports events, attracting bigger sponsors & focusing ISC business to extract secondary income such as F&B and sales **= potential £5-10k**

**All together comes to c£130k = small profit**

* **followed in future years by the flow of Padel profit**

# Verbal questions at the AGM

Q- Is the access control project still going to happen?

A- Yes, the final details of how to implement this were being sorted and it was on the agenda of the next Board meeting. It was needed to ensure people using the facilities are members but Board recognises that this needs to be implemented gently and without loosing the personality and friendliness of the club.

Q- Vanessa Penn, past Chairman wanted to make sure the Board was aware that the sale of the Henley Road hockey pitch included a deal for the developer to lay an extra 16 car parking spaces.

A- Yes Board is fully aware. The exact position of the spaces is being considered.

Q- on the new plans for the men’s changing room the move to cubicles resulted in a nett loss of 3 shower spaces. How could this be justified?

A- The improvements were called for by the results from the members survey at the end of last year. Open showers were no longer considered to be appropriate as the sole option. Members were concerned that the club be seen as providing a child friendly environment. Ali Livingstone, safeguarding officer also confirmed that they were necessary from a safeguarding perspective.

The meeting was closed by the Chair, thanking everyone for their attendance and input at 9.40pm

Attendance Log

 