RYE LAWN TENNIS CLUB

Minutes of the 95th Annual General Meeting
of Rye Lawn Tennis Club
held at the Clubhouse, 115 Military Road, Rye
on Saturday 26th September 2026 at 7.15pm

1. **THE MINUTES** of the previous AGM held on Saturday 27th September 2025 were taken as read and agreed as a correct and proper record.

2. **Report from the Chair of the Executive Committee, Amanda Hoffman**
   Thank you all for coming out to support your club.

   Looking back over the year, an enormous amount has happened, so let me take you through the highlights.

   Membership and playing opportunities for padel and tennis

- We've seen strong growth in membership, particularly in padel (perhaps not surprising in the current climate with the ever-increasing popularity of padel in the UK).
- We've also seen a welcome increase in younger members joining the Club, which hopefully bodes well for the future.
- Mark has helped us run more coaching sessions across both tennis and padel for adults and juniors alike, so please do support him; and
- Volunteers have added more mix-ins, Mexicanos, tournaments and social opportunities for members to get to know one another.

   Facilities

- The clubhouse has recently been renovated (thank you to Georgina Holt and Jonathan Dunn) and I hope you all like the improved layout of the meeting room and bar area;
- The grass courts have never looked better - Mark Ferguson (who runs the courts at the AELTC) himself told us they were the best he's seen outside of SW19, which is quite something (thank you to Adam and Freddie).
- We've also submitted planning permission for the exciting new project in the Poole Field of two additional covered padel courts and two outdoor tennis courts, which we hope will benefit both the Club and the wider local community.

   New developments

- The Club has gone fully cashless this year. This has made Sharon's job significantly easier and has helped us all look more carefully at what generates money and what is costing too much, which in time will hopefully lead to savings.
- We've also added archery to our offering, thank you to David Ryan, we have about 30 members which is a fantastic start.

Community initiative

We'd like to say a huge thank you to The George for their sponsorship of our first community initiative at Rye Primary School, where Mark has gone to coach one year group once a week - it's made a real difference and is exactly the kind of support that helps us extend what we do beyond the Club itself and hopefully provide access to children who wouldn't perhaps be playing tennis or padel.

We'd love to grow this further, so if any of you know of other local businesses who might be interested in sponsoring sessions, or if you're involved with community groups - schools, care homes, disability groups, or similar - who could benefit from this kind of initiative, please do come and talk to us. We'd really value the introductions.

Thank you and a request for more helping hands

None of this happens without our volunteers. Some of our members give a huge amount of their time for the benefit of everyone here, and while you may not always agree with every decision we make, please know that we're doing our best - and your support means a great deal.

We are a Community Amateur Sports Club, run entirely by volunteers, and as we take on more - from the community initiative to the Poole Field project - we're increasingly reliant on people willing to give their time. We're specifically looking for help with things like organising social events and tournaments, supporting our finance and communication functions, helping with grounds and maintenance, and lending a hand with sponsorship and fundraising for the Poole Field development.

You don't need any special experience - just enthusiasm and a bit of time. If you have an idea, or feel you could help us enhance what we offer in any way, please come and speak to one of us. Every bit of help makes a real difference.

Looking ahead

Over the next year, our aim is to build on everything above. In particular, if we want the Poole Field development to become a reality, we as a club need to get behind it - and start thinking seriously about further fundraising initiatives to make it happen.

Thank you.

3. **Report from the Treasurer, David Nelson**

David Nelson reported that our financial situation is much improved since Covid as born out by the audited accounts. David has changed our bank so that we will be using Nationwide both for the Rother Meads Tennis & Games Club Ltd and for the Rother Meads Enterprises Ltd, the new company needed to be formed to ensure we continue to comply with CASC regulations. We have had to cope with

cost inflation in terms of wages and, in particular, utilities. We had a record surplus of over £60,000 from our various Tennis Tournaments and have some £350,000 in the bank at the moment, but from now until the year end 31.03.27 some £60,000 to £100,000 of this will be needed as there will be little income during this period. The new company will take the revenue from the bars during the main tournament week and from events which involve non-members. The turnover for this should be £40,000 to £60,000 per annum.

4. **Update on Planning Issues for the New Field from Jonny Dunn**

POOLE FIELD - Planning Ref: RR/2026/0611/FULL
a) Katie Wheeler is the planning officer delegated to process our application and my dealings with her in the past have been positive. She has requested that the height of the padel court hall be reduced. So, by agreement with Ewan and others, I have reduced the height of the building to 7.5m and 10.5m internal heights with 11m ridge height (previously 11.6m ridge height). The height of the building is what Rye Town Council and Playden Parish Council objected to.
b) This planning decision is ''delegated'' and at present will not go to committee, which in my view is positive. There have been two or three local objections, but nothing of particular validity. I met with Willy Everett who is on Rye Town Council and explained the scheme to him. RT Council had misunderstood the drawings. Willy was confident he would persuade the committee to withdraw the objection, I have heard nothing to this effect and the objection is still on Rother website/portal. I am chasing this.
c) Rother planning portal states a decision is due by 21/08/26, patently this is running late. Kirsty and I have prepared the planning case so that we can go to Appeal if the planning is refused. We have included a history of the previous Outline Planning Consent in 2019, which was for a much larger indoor tennis building.
d) Should we be lucky enough to acquire planning consent in the next two months, then I need to prepare detailed drawings and a schedule of work for Phase 1 - padel hall & infrastructure. I will need the input of a drainage and structural engineer. These drawings and documents will be used to acquire tenders and quotes from contractors and utility companies. This whole process is known as Pre-Contract and usually takes three months minimum. The engineers will require a fee, but other than that there are no costs. I may have to deal with Planning Conditions set by Rother.
e) In other words the Pre-Contract work can continue whilst fundraising develops the cash to carry out Phase 1. The earliest RTC could start building work is March 2027 (subject to finance).

5. **Elect as necessary Members of the Executive Committee**

There were no new nominations.

6. **Vote of Thanks**

Jonathan Jempson thanked in particular Amanda Hoffman, David Nelson and Jonny Dunn for their hard work, the benefits of which are now plain to see. Jonathan also thanked all the other members, both on committees and not, who

have helped in many different ways with various events and competitions. However, Jonathan did single out one member whose support has been tremendous, namely Sarah Walsh, whose Skin Clinic netted in excess of £5,000 bottom line profit for the Club.

7. **Any Other Business**

- Jonathan Jempson reminded those present that the Opera Evening will take place on 28th November 2026, the details of which have been sent to all members. He exhorted those already coming to the concert to bring more friends along with them and those who have not yet applied to do so. He has so far sold 150 tickets and is trying to sell 250.
- Could the Club install a coffee machine? This has been addressed in the past without success. If anyone has any ideas as to how this could be done efficiently, please let the Executive Committee know.

8. No further business so Jonathan Jempson declared the meeting closed.