

**Arscott Golf Club**  
**AGM**  
**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

**1 Welcome and Introductory Remarks**

The President, Nick Jones, welcomed all to the meeting, including Captains, past Captains, past Presidents and members, the second annual general meeting of the new members' Club.

**2 Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Yvonne and Tom Beaumont, Alan France, Stewart and Margaret Cumming, Martin Evans, Jenny Brace, Brian Barrow, Phil Sinclair, Colin Butterworth, Don Wallington, Graham Fox, Helen Pearson, Fran Jamieson, Mick Cowlshaw, Tim Evans, Mike and Lynne Riley, Ros and Paul Evans, Bob and Liz Griffiths.

**3 Introduction of Club President 2019 - 2021**

Nick Jones introduced Stuart Thomas to the meeting as the new Club President for a two year term of office and Stuart took the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

The incoming President, Stuart Thomas, addressed Captains, past captains and friends stating the tremendous honour and pride he took in standing in front of them as the Club's new president. Stuart informed the meeting that he joined this club at the tender age of 13 and watched the building and course being built week by week with some of his happiest childhood memories at this club spending time with friends and family. Subsequently Stuart noted that he had the honour of being junior captain, club captain and now president.

Stuart thanked past President, Nick Jones for the job he had done steering the ship in the role of President and Managing Director and hoped that he may emulate the feats and contributions of those gone before in the role. Additionally Stuart thanked all of the directors, committees and members of the Club for all their hard work and commitment to our club him being extremely proud to represent all and carry the good name of Arscott around the region and country.

Summing up the President noted that we are at the beginning of a really exciting time for our club with one year of being a member run club under our belts. The golf industry is facing an extremely challenging time and in his view our objective and success as a club lies in getting as many people through our doors as possible. The President highlighted need to be creative and passionate and continue to come up with new ways of attracting

members, visiting golfers or for those simply wanting a pie and a pint stating that “When we get it right there is simply no better place to be, no better scenery, no better golf course and fundamentally no better people. Hopefully I can play my small part in our collective future success.”

#### **4 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 6<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

The minutes of the last meeting had been circulated and it was proposed by Mick Doster, seconded by Mark Lewis and agreed by the meeting that these be approved as a correct record. There were no matters arising.

#### **5 Reports of the Board of Directors**

Director’s Reports were circulated prior to the meeting and copies made available in the room. Nick Jones, Managing Director gave an overview of the Club’s progress over the preceding year, the first full year as a member’s club.

The promise made to stabilise the business was achieved hand in hand with many improvements made on the course.

Financially our aims were achieved which allowed us to invest money in the course and on machinery. We have purchased major items of equipment including a leaf blower, a new greens mower and a greens iron which go towards the improvement of the course.

Green fees have increased over the year with more visitors and societies visiting us. Feedback from visitors was very good.

There has been some investment in the club house and we will shortly be sending out a further survey about the club house, bar and catering to find out from the members what they want to see in this area.

Members completed a course survey and we are carrying out many of the improvements suggested. Many of these are included in our winter improvement programme with new practise nets to be installed and the worn out winter mats being replaced. Footpath and tree work will also be undertaken.

The Managing Director thanked those volunteers who have been helping on and off the course and have provided equipment and materials free of charge namely Paul Owen, Nick Evans, Mark Kudarenko, Martin Oakley.

Nick reported on the purchase of new tee signs, of which 2 have already been installed, the others to be installed over the next few weeks. With offers of sponsorship for certain tees already made Nick is looking for further sponsors for the tees still available. The sponsors name plates will be put on from April 2020 with sponsorship to run for two years.

Other matters of note include our achievement of Golf Mark and Safe Golf.

The very successful Golden Ticket campaign, suggested by our Pro Glynn Sadd, raised funds for club development.

Communication with the sections through monthly meetings with the Captains, welcoming and responding to their input and feedback.

In summary the Managing Director reported that the first year had been a lot of hard work for the Board with some challenges, it has been a learning curve with lessons learnt along the way. He thanked all members of the Board for their input and dedication.

Nick particularly thanked Claire Evans who is standing down from the board due to work and family commitments. As Director of Marketing Claire produced our marketing and business plan and we will be looking for someone with marketing experience to come on board and help us take this forward.

The Managing Director gave a vote of thanks to the staff of Arscott Golf Club acknowledging them as the bedrock of Arscott Golf Club. Beth, Dan, Sian, Glynn, Max, and Dave in the Clubhouse and shop and our Green Keepers Andrew, Jarrod and John on the course, all at times going above and beyond their roles for the benefit of the Club.

Nick was pleased to announce the recent appointment of Nia Pierce-Jones to manage the bar and catering and that he looks forward to us all seeing improvements in this area.

In light of no Written Questions received Nick announced that a Short Q & A will be held at the end of the Meeting.

- **Finance Report**

Trish Harding, Finance Director updated members on the financial state of the Club.

The new Company started on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2018. In the first month 284 members rejoined the club providing the start up income and cash flow required to pay the staff wages, course expenses, overheads and club house stock. Initially a prudent and cautious approach to spending was instigated. All essential spending was allowed but closely monitored to ensure the income stretched over the forthcoming year.

The board reviewed cash flow at every monthly meeting to keep control on income and expenditure, especially during the early months.

After six months trading our cash flow projections indicated that there could be an excess of funds available to be reinvested in the club. The course had already been improved by increased spending on seeds and sprays and the green keepers were keen for the club to invest in a new mower and greens iron. This was finally achieved in June both items of machinery are purchased on finance. Also the new signage for all 18 holes has been purchased and the board is now actively seeking sponsorship.

A major hurdle was the rate rise in April 2019, due to the council removing the rates sports relief from 2019. The only way the company can now obtain any relief from a large rates

bill is to become a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC). Unfortunately the rules of CASC determine that the club must have 12 months trading before we can apply.

Therefore this August the company applied for CASC and with GolfMark the company will receive at least 80% rate reduction. At present whilst our application is submitted it will not be ratified until the Annual Accounts are finalised which will be done this week. This CASC status, if achieved, will save the club 17K a year and this money will be reinvested in the club.

The work carried out by the volunteers at this club in the clubhouse, gardens and course has proved invaluable, saving both time and money. Donations of stakes, flags, life buoys, practice ground signage and tee boxes also contribute to reduction of expenditure. There has been great financial support from all sections for flags, winter mats and curtains.

My thanks go to Sian for all her work and her proactive attitude to change. She has had to adapt to a different work environment dealing with an enormous amount of queries from the board and membership. Also my thanks to Sue Ecclestone for her membership spreadsheet work and entering the bar top ups in August.

In the new financial year we have had 292 members renew their subscriptions. The income and membership figures compare well with last years membership income at the same time. Our objective as a new company and board in its first year was to ensure a smooth transition from proprietor run club to a members run club. I feel that this has been successfully achieved. The next year is set to be a consolidation of our experience in managing the business for the benefit of all members. It will include budgets set for the course, clubhouse and marketing.

All in all it has been a successful 12 months. You should all have had sight of the Annual accounts via email which show a small surplus of £500.

- **Greens Report**

Geoff Harding, Greens Director

Firstly my thanks to all those members who have volunteered to work on the course over the last twelve months. Helping with hollow tining (twice), bunker repair and raking through the summer, bank strimming, weeding and tidying around the clubhouse surrounds and flower bed, plus the memorial garden. This has released the green staff to carry their main jobs of keeping the course in good shape. Some of this work would not have got done without this help.

Course expenditure has mainly been focussed on improving the greens, hence when the Board felt it appropriate we purchased the new greens mower and iron. This has improved the speed and roll of the ball on all the greens through the summer but without the necessity of cutting them shorter. Funding for weed and feed has been increased this year and has provided healthier turf and prevented most weed infestation. This will continue next year and should help the greens fight the ever changing environmental challenges we are facing year on year. The purchase of the leaf blower has also proved invaluable, it's already back in use this year and will clear leaves as they fall, please show patience whilst

this is ongoing, we will clear the course as soon as possible and far quicker than hand blowing as use to happen.

The winter programme has already started and details are in the November newsletter. The five new winter mats will be out shortly on the front nine and we are looking at financing seven more to complete all eighteen holes. The new practice nets (two) and tee markers (all 47) will go out over the course of the winter. Bunkers will be looked at in the spring and some paths renovated, most importantly the path from the car park to the 15th tee. Some tree work will be carried out which might cause some short term disruption, so apologies if this happens. We intend to keep this to a minimum on days when the course has limited use or is closed.

Finally, my specific thanks which I also pass on on your behalf to Andrew, Jarrod and John for all their hard work throughout the year, much of which I've viewed behind the scenes and which is much much more than just grass cutting! Their experience and expertise has been invaluable to me in this first year of the new club, and is the main reason for the improvements we've seen in the last twelve months.

We intend to continue with further improvement over the next twelve months.

Director of Course Development - Geoff Harding

- **House Report for AGM**

Chris Brace, Director of House

The first year of operation as a Members Club has been challenging. Staffing remains a key issue. Over twenty staff have been used through the year and two managers left the operation.

Following an initial set of audits a set action plans were developed to address identified deficiencies in the areas of health and safety, kitchen operations, security, storage, and building maintenance. All critical requirements have been implemented and the remainder documented for ongoing review and attention.

Some redecoration of the Clubhouse was completed in the winter months and additional storage created. An ongoing fault with toilet drainage was finally rectified and minor plumbing issues rectified.

The Clubhouse structure and layout has been architecturally reviewed and possible improvements identified as funds become available to make changes.

A sub committee has been formed to review ongoing operations and oversee changes.

- **Joint Report of Director for Business Compliance and Company Secretary**

John Simpson, Director of Business Compliance and Paul Buckley, Company Secretary

Compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) achieved with individual sign up in first year and subsequently incorporated into the membership application and renewal forms with the addition of a positive consent question included on each form.

All Directors have been registered with Companies House and the annual accounts will be forwarded to Companies House once signed off by the AGM.

A Security and Safety Audit has been carried out and urgent issues identified. Items requiring attention have been rectified under the direction of the appropriate Director and include the provision of lifebuoys around the ponds, clubhouse security and kitchen gas and electrical services.

Shropshire Council have issued the premises licence for supply of alcohol

Our commitment to continually developing and progressing and providing a safe and positive experience to children and young people whilst playing golf at Arscott Golf Club has been recognised by the award of the Golf Mark/Safe Golf award.

#### ■ **Marketing & PR report for AGM**

Claire Evans, Director of Marketing

A key outcome of the activity over the last 12 months has been the creation of Arscott's Marketing Plan identifying market research, competitor analysis, key messages, target markets and associated marketing campaigns alongside short, medium and long term objectives over the next 5 years.

This has enabled the Board to agree the strategic direction and ensure that all marketing activity is aligned. It was also included as the Recruitment & Retention Plan which formed part of the Golf Mark & Safe Golf awarded to the Club in August 2019. We are one of only three clubs in Shropshire to achieve this accolade since its inception in April 2019.

Examples of marketing activity have included:

- A number of articles published within the Shropshire Star / Shrewsbury Chronicle and Midlands Golf Magazine.
- Visitor satisfaction with the course, and increased pride in the course from members creating a 'buzz' and interest in the activity of the Club (selling the Club by word of mouth is the most valuable marketing tool we have).
- Increased engagement through the Club's Facebook & Twitter accounts.
- A 'members only' section of the website was created to provide further information and create a sense of exclusivity.
- The 'Golden Ticket' campaign, orchestrated by our Club Pro, was hugely successful with an increased reach into other Shropshire Clubs.

These all focused on the short term objective of raising awareness of the Club and attracting new members.

Working with England Golf, and undertaking a 'Know your Market' study alongside the first stage of the Member survey has ensured that there is evidence to underpin activity. Both highlighted a key driver is the attraction of 'younger traditionalists' – where the focus is on competing and playing well in a social setting alongside ensuring the needs of the current members continue to be met.

Analysis of the 41 members who joined on 'deals' outside of the annual renewal in August revealed over 59% joined between mid-Feb to mid-April and 39% of the total were under 35. Whilst many didn't identify previous Shropshire Club membership 8 had been at Conover, 3 from Mile End and others stating Hawkestone, Wrekin and Hill Valley. Importantly, over 40% joined as full members at the August renewal. Key next steps for the marketing activity includes the creation of a Marketing Sub-Committee with representatives from all Sections, alongside the Club Pro to drive further activity and start to implement further campaigns to attract other key markets.

## **6 Reports from Captains**

The President introduced the 2018/19 Captains to report on their year in office:

### Past Seniors' Captain – Keith Morris

The Seniors Section has continued to thrive, and the Section membership remains in the nineties with over 50 playing regularly in our weekly competitions.

During the year we have welcomed members some from the Mens section who have attained maturity at 60 as well as newly joined members to the club. In contrast we have unfortunately said goodbye to a number of members, mainly due to ill health which I am afraid is the norm for being a Senior.

The weather caused the postponement of two of our major competitions this year, the Senior Pairs Open, and the Seniors Championship. With hard work from the organisers, particularly Dave Rowson in respect of the Open, they were both successfully rescheduled.

Our Friendly matches were also disrupted by the weather but we managed to salvage all but one. As usual we won some and lost some.

During the year the Seniors, along with the other Sections, have raised funds to support the club finances as it begins its life as a Members rather than an Owners Club. These funds have been allocated to the purchase of a number of new Winter Mats, to replace those that were well past their best.

The Seniors Captain for the coming year is Joe Rimmer.

### Past Ladies' Captain – Jacqui Mullineux

Jacqui expressed her honour to have been Lady Captain and had enjoyed her time in office. On her Drive-in the sun shone on a beautiful day and Jacqui was overwhelmed with the number of members who attended making it a memorable day. Good memories and golf followed throughout the year with successful away days at Henlle Park and Three Hammers and a weekend away with the ladies at Calderfields Golf Club.

Jacqui reported that the annual fun day again brightened up the course with very colorful loud-proud-glow-golf outfits that could be seen from far away.

Lady Captain and Captain Paul Owen arranged a much needed social evening in August with BBQ and Band. The highlight of the evening being the draw for the Golden Ticket Draw, Jacqui is hopefully that this will become an annual event.

Jacqui thanked all the Ladies on her committee for their help and all the lady members who made her year special. Jacqui expressed her hope that this support continue to new Lady Captain Sue Lane who Jacqui wished her good luck for her year.

Finally Jacqui thanked the directors for all their time and efforts in keeping our club moving in the right direction as she sees the Club continue to go from strength to strength, with the continued help from all who volunteer.

### Men's Captain – Paul Owen

The Captain announced that the proceeds from the joint efforts of the three sections fundraising for course development was £//// he congratulated all of the sections on raising this amount.

Outgoing Captain, Paul Owen, addressed the meeting and expressed mixed emotions at the end of his year in office having enjoyed his time, with some memorable moments to look back on.

Particularly the Captain's away day at Ingestre GC, the Opens and Ryder Cup event at Arscott all played in great spirit and eliciting many complements for our course from visiting golfers. The summer BBQ, jointly hosted with Lady Captain, provided the abiding memory with Mark Kudarenko winning the draw for annual membership, his daughter drawing out his ticket.

Paul thanked all those who had supported him through the year with a big thanks to past Lady Captain Jacqui Mullineux for all her help, incoming Captain Dave Wallace and the Men's Committee.

Paul highlighted the positives arising from the first year of the Club being member run with improving course condition, the acquisition of green keeping machinery, new flags and tee mats and was pleased to announce that these efforts had in part been supported by £2588.42 raised by the Men's section towards the Course Development Fund. Paul thanked the Directors of the Company for their hard work and guidance throughout the year.

Paul proudly acknowledged a particularly successful season for our Junior section under the guidance of Phil Sinclair and his team of volunteers.

Wishing all incoming captains the very best for their year in office Paul introduced Dave Wallace as Captain of the Club for 2019 / 2020 and presented Dave with his captain's jacket.



The incoming Captain thanked the Past Captain and the Board for giving him the opportunity and honour of Captaining the Club. He explained how much he enjoyed being a member of Arscott Golf Club and why he thought that it was a great Club to belong to, especially in the current times as a Members' Club and with continuing improvements being made, with the Club being in the very good hands of the Board and staff of the Club. He urged members to do what they could to support the Club, with the theme of 'all working together'.

He formally thanked the Past Captain for his year's service, presenting him with an engraved glass tankard. The Captain then introduced his Vice-Captain for the year - John Morris, and also announced that his Captain's Away Day was booked for The Staffordshire on 26th June, that he was combining efforts with the Lady Captain to raise funds for a Joint Captains' Charity - the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, and referred to plans to raise funds for Club Improvements too, including by holding another Club Development Golf Day in the summer.

The President then asked PB to present a report on the Juniors Section on behalf of Phil Sinclair

#### Junior Section

Phil Sinclair, Junior Organiser, sent his apologies as unable to attend the meeting and Paul Buckley presented the following report on Phil's behalf.

The Junior Organiser reported that several newcomers joined our junior coaching evenings bringing the total to over thirty. Phil is pleased to report that remarkable improvements are seen in individual juniors ability through the activities of summer coaching programme. However winter attendance is a little inconsistent failing to generate sufficient income to be able to pay George Boden, our junior coach. To this end it may be necessary to reduce the frequency of the winter club nights. It is hoped numbers will return for the summer programme that will start again in May 2020.

Phil congratulated the Junior Club Champion, Bentick Trophy Winner and Order of Merit winner for 2019, Will Bird along with runner up Jessica Roberts and Owen Sadd who received the Pearl Dyas Shield for the most improved player in the Junior Team Squad for 2019. Congratulations also for The Academy Cup Champion for 2019 Teddie Smith who also received the Oakley Shield as the most improved player.

The girls section, under the leadership of Kerry Roberts has had a hugely successful and significant year. At the Greensome event at Hill Valley GC Arscott won the 9 hole competition again this year and have done for the last 4 years! Lottie Pryce & Jessica Roberts have both represented Shropshire County in league matches and events throughout the year. Jess has also featured in Arscott's Junior League Team this year.

Arscott's Junior League Team made it to the semi-finals of the County Junior Handicap League which resulted in an invitation to enter the Junior Team Golf ® Home Nations Championships progressing through the Regional finals to the England Semi- finals but unable to progress further.

Phil is very pleased to announce Junior Club Captain for 2019/20 will be Carter Sayce, with Will Bird appointed as the vice Captain and look sforward to them having a successful year ahead. Both are as well, regular selections for the county team, both U18 and U16, their continued selections reflect well on he club, and the boys really do fly the flag on our behalf.

Arscott have been awarded the golf mark & Safeguarding award by England Golf this year, well done to everyone involved with gaining this. It was commented at one of the meetings we are the only club in Shropshire & Herefordshire to have a dedicated junior girls organiser as well as a junior organiser!

Phil announced his forthcoming retirement from the role of Junior Organiser having been in role for 11 years and in that time, taking club's junior section from strength to strength giving notice that he shall stand down at the AGM in 2020. Phil will have completed 12 years, and has thoroughly enjoyed every moment and been incredibly proud of the achievements and development of so many junior players over that period, Phil hopes there is someone amongst the growing club membership that will volunteer to step forward and take over.

Finally Phil thanks his volunteers, Kerry Roberts, Helen Pearson and Anthony and Jacqui Mullineaux, for their support, particularly Kerry, without whose help, the role of Junior Organiser would be so much more difficult.

Captain Dave Wallace presented Carter Sayce with the customary Junior Captain sweater congratulating him on his appointment and wishing him well for the year. Carter responded by thanking members and junior organisers for their support and encouragement and thanks also Owen Sadd the past Junior Captain for his leadership over the past year.

## **7 Any Other Business**

Although no formal questions had been received by 30<sup>th</sup> October, informal questions were invited none raised.

## **8 Date of Next Meeting**

The next AGM would be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020.

Paul Buckley (Company Secretary) thanked all for their attendance and their approval of all matters, and closed the meeting at 7.45 p.m.