

Royal Tunbridge Wells Croquet Club

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 11 March 2026

Present: Chris Barham, Dave Grimshaw, Kate Sander, David Pratt & Jon Savage.

Apologies: Mike Gentry, Paul Gamba, Jeff Chapman

1. Minutes of the meetings of 2nd December 2025

1.1 The minutes of the 2nd December 2025 meeting were approved.

2. Matters arising

4.4 of 24/3/24 DP said the outside of the club house could be treated by members (black creosote type material) as had been done in the past. More attention was to be given to the white cladding which was plywood and was beginning to deteriorate. DP suggested cement board as a long lasting solution but identified the problem of inserting it into the recesses of the oak frame.

CB distributed list of those who had volunteered to assist (based on questionnaire).

Continuing action

(Action JC and DP)

4.1 of 2/12/24 CCTV was ruled out due to lack of internet but the suggestion to install PIR floodlights was again proposed. The intention is to install movement activated lights and CCTV sign.

The suggestion that the cameras could be used to assess the weather was made and the CCTV cameras on nearby "Great Hall" could be used as a proxy.

Continuing action.

(Action JC)

4.3 of 10/6/25 KS is to update the cleaning rota and will now look for volunteers. Based on the list of volunteers from the questionnaire.

(Action KS)

2.1 of 2/12/25 Would try find details of previous purchases of sew-on club badges. There was a brief discussion, but no decision made, on the size of the badges to be ordered. PT would contact John Greenwood on progress on this matter.

(Action PT)

6.1 of 13/8/25 The transfer of the club accounts from Santander to HSBC was proceeding but had been delayed to mismatches in our details at the two banks. DG will complete the transfer, probably by a manual transfer.

The bank accounts with the HSBC have been set up but the Santander accounts remain operational. (See Treasure's report)

(Matter closed)

7.1 of 13/8/25 DG will propose a suitable amendment to extend the constitution to cover payment authorisations, generally, not simply cheque transactions.

Continuing action.

(Action DG)

9.1 of 13/8/25 DG noted that the club also has a savings account with Santander, which pays interest (albeit at a relatively low rate currently). He does not think that this will incur fees in the short term, but will look into moving to a higher-yielding account in due course. Continuing action. (See treasurers report)

(Action DG)

10.1 of 13/8/25 It was agreed that any change in bank should be communicated to members promptly, once the new account is set up, to avoid any members making payments to the Santander account. DG agreed to draft such a communication.

This has been done but about 25% of payments are still made to the old account. When the old account is closed it will not be possible to make payments to that account. (See treasurer's report)

(Action DG)

3. Treasurer's report

3.1 DG provided the committee with a financial update at the end of February 2026 prior to the meeting.

In summary: Very similar financial position to this time last year. Approx £12,000 in the HSBC account.

The bulk of income is from subscriptions and numbers are compatible but 30 people had still not paid but had not indicated they are leaving the club.

It was considered important that the lawn booking system and the membership lists were aligned. CB, PT both have administrative authority over the booking system.

The questionnaire put out by CB indicated that more younger members were required. However DG pointed out that croquet was a time consuming sport and not easily incorporated into a working life and that a constant flow of newly retired people was sustainable. CB to ask Thomas Cullis how the club could attract more genuinely young people.

(Action CB)

3.2 New Santander accounts have been set up but was not an easy process. The club currently has 4 accounts two with Santander (current and savings) and two with HSBC (current and savings). The HSBC accounts are the ones being used for direct debits and the Santander accounts are to be closed.

3.3 It was suggested that money could be put into a higher interest savings account and DG was asked to lead on this suggestion by CB

3.4 There is a need to change the constitution to remove the need for **WHAT** as the club no longer receives payment by cheque.

3.5 There is a requirement to have a checker to oversee the accounts so as to prevent any fraudulent behaviour, a job currently done by Jon Diamond but it was agreed that Jon Savage should also have this role. Jon Diamond to be asked if he would like to retain this permission.

(Action DG)

4. Facilities

4.1 It was pointed out that Ray had not been using the new mower due to it being very wet and the presence of GC clips on the lawn that could damage the mower. CB to send reminder to be careful not to leave clips on the lawn.

(Action CB)

4.2 It was considered that decisions and dissemination of information regarding the closing of lawns was haphazard. It was noted that Tim Luke does a good job at reporting on the condition of the lawns and was due thanks. It was decided that he should be given the authority to announce the closure of a lawn if necessary. CB is to put the lawn status open/closed on the lawn booking system. Whilst this was considered a step in the right direction it was acknowledged that many people do not use the lawn booking system and therefore it was decided that the WhatsApp messaging system alerting people to lawn closures would remain.

(Action CB)

4.3 Due to the excessive rainfall there was ongoing frustration at the lack of drainage of the lawns. The drainage system is present but does not appear to be working and is probably silted up. It was suggested that the possibility of cleaning the drainage system could be investigated.

(Action DP)

4.4 Whereas there had been mice infestation in previous years inside the clubhouse the baiting done by KS appears to have limited their activity this year. JC had baited outside to limit the rat population but was not present to give an update. To keep numbers down it was considered essential to limit the surplus bird food distributed by well meaning members of the public, this should be done via the council.

4.5 There had been complaints over the state of the clubhouse after use by as yet unidentified members. The expectation is that used cups would be put in the dishwasher and not rinsed out in cold water.

(Action CB)

4.6 Due to the difficulties of recycling protocols the two bin systems was not working. The emptying of the bins is to be incorporated as part of the cleaning rota with those responsible for the cleaning to take the waste home, however it was acknowledged that this could be difficult for those travelling by public transport.

5. Charity one ball

5.1 It was decided that the season would open with the Charity one ball competition on the 19th April. £10 entry fee with the money going to Save the Children Charity.

A coaching session One ball play to be provided by PT ahead of the tournament.

(Action PT)

6. Social

6.1 It was considered that the AC social system was working well with Tim and John Greenwood taking the lead to ensure that someone would be present at the Thursday afternoon or Saturday morning sessions. This was done through WhatsApp messages.

It was noted that there was no one who filled this role in the GC community.

It was suggested that Paul Gamba could be asked to be present at or at least coordinate the GC sessions (through WhatsApp) on Wednesday and Sunday however It was noted that DP always attends a Wednesday social GC session and could serve this role for Wednesdays.

CB to instigate a **WHAT** on the lawn booking system so that people to see who was intending to go to the social sessions.

7. Internal competitions

7.1 It was acknowledged that often the internal competitions drag on and are not completed according to the schedule. Therefore it was decided to appoint Jon Savage as someone to chivvy competitors along who are tardy in their AC matches. Trevor Houghton Berry is to be asked to fulfil this role for GC. It will be emphasised that competitors are expected to stick to the timescale.

It is anticipated that people will cooperate but in the event of non compliance the first name on the list will be deemed as the winner provided they have made reasonable attempts to provide convenient dates. If the second competitor has done the chasing then they will prevail. JS and TH-B to the arbitrators if required.

7.2 The requirement to be available for Finals day if you reach the final was not made mandatory allowing those with commitments in September to enter. Finals day on the 27th September was selected as compromise between the inclement autumnal weather and those wishing to enjoy a late summer break.

8. External matches & tournaments

8.1 It was recognised that Tim Luke does a good job at organising the AC leagues.

8.2 DG pointed out that there are 3 GC leagues. Handicap Restricted and Level. The organisation of the handicap league is going to be taken on by DG. It was suggested that Peter Player would be asked to organise the RTWCC entry in the Level league however as he is a relatively high handicap player this may not be appropriate. It was then decided that DP would ask Trevor H-B if he would take this on.

(Action DP)

9. Private events

9.1 It was acknowledged that John Moore ran the U3A and Micheal Sander the Probus. The fees for the use of the club are to remain the same.

10. Coaching

10.1 PT has recently been on a coaching course for both GC and AC at the Academy in Southwick and has to complete (and submit a report for) 5 training sessions in the next 18months (as of March 2026). This permits him to coach at RTWCC only and not to those under 18 years.

Various coaching events have been arranged by Jon Diamond but further coaching for One ball and Short croquet have been requested by those in the meeting. The suggestion of a short croquet tournament was made.

(Action PT)

11. AOB

11.1 The broken bench in front of clubhouse was considered beyond repair and DP was tasked with sourcing a replacement. Jon Savage spoke of the potential for a memorial bench to be installed as a donation.

(Action JS and DP)

11.2 **(point left verbatim from previous meeting minutes)** Handicap cards. DG has reported that a number of members refuse to fill in a handicap card. It was agreed that an up to date handicap would be a requirement for entering any club or inter-club competition whose matches qualify for use in the automatic handicap system.

11.4. The storage of the lawn dividers below the benches has proved unpopular by some members and the use of 4 inch flexible plastic drainage pipe is to be investigated. The storage could be an issue but if no room is available inside it could be stored outside as the material has little value.

11.5 The amount of personal items left in the club house was comment on. Some of this appears to be long term lost property but some items are just clutter. It was decided that they should be gathered, photos taken of the items and then if no one comes forward they will be disposed of.

11.3 AGM. Scheduled for the 13th February 2026. The Stables, Frant, to be booked. KS has kindly agreed to organise the catering. [The cost for lunch will be as last year: £10 to include one drink.](#)

11.4 Date of the next meeting was set as the 24th June.

Phil Taylor

11th March 2026