

**South West Federation of Croquet Clubs
Draft Minutes of AGM 2023**

Date	19.11.23
Time	10.00 am
Venue	Zoom
Present and apologies	See Appendix 1

1. Welcome and introductions

- a. Tony Mayer (Chair) welcomed delegates to the meeting

2. Zoom polling: rehearsal

- a. Paul outlined how to raise your hand, described the voting process and clarified the number of votes each delegate held

3. Minutes of last meeting

- a. These were previously circulated
 - i. Proposed as a correct record by the Committee
 - ii. Seconded by John McCallum Lym Valley
 - iii. Unanimously agreed

4. Matters arising

- a. Committee noted all action points have been addressed
- b. No matters arising identified

5. Chair's report

- a. Previously circulated – see Appendix 2
- b. Tony highlighted
 - i. Please do respond, and urge your members to respond to requests for help from the committee – this doesn't necessarily entail having to join the committee
 - ii. We're shall need a Development Officer and a League Secretary – there is scope for several people to share the tasks as long as there is clear accountability to the Committee
 - iii. We expect all League results to be submitted electronically in 2024 and the December Zoom meeting will focus on this

6. Treasurer's report

- a. Previously circulated – see Appendix 3
- b. Peter highlighted
 - i. The lower-than-anticipated deficit is basically due to unexpected income in the form of compensation from the bank and interest from a new account
 - ii. It is intended to run a small deficit each year in order to reduce our reserves and thereby return these to the clubs
 - iii. The Judith Moore Bursary has enabled us to support our coaching programme
 - iv. It is proposed that all fees will remain at 2023 rates
- c. The report was proposed by the Committee
 - i. Seconded by Graham McCausland (Nailsea) and unanimously agreed
- d. Chris Williams (Glamorgan) asked if any clubs have banking problems
 - i. This was thought to be quite widespread as generally club accounts are of little value to banks

- ii. The topic will be raised at the Federations Forum **Action: Tony Mayer**

7. Appointment of Independent Examiner

- a. Bob Whiffen (Bristol) examined the accounts for this year and is happy to do this for 2024
- b. The Committee proposed he be appointed
 - i. Seconded by Chris Williams (Glamorgan)
 - ii. Unanimously agreed

8. League Secretary's report

- a. Previously circulated – see Appendix 4 and Stephen particularly highlighted
 - i. From 2024 results forms will only be accepted electronically: correctly spelt, no initials and no photos of badly written forms – which all take a lot of time to sort out
 - 1. The December Zoom meeting will provide guidance on how to do this
Action: Stephen Custance-Baker, Paul Francis
 - ii. The GC Handicap Leagues will be run as extra strokes games, not as Advantage GC as no consensus has emerged in the SW that AGC is any better than extra strokes
 - iii. That he will continue in this role until the next AGM but it is essential a smooth transition occurs for 2025 and it is imperative that volunteers start now so they can learn the ropes and feel confident with the processes
 - 1. The role can be divided into several distinct areas so a team of people could do this with one of them co-ordinating the process and being a member of the committee. **Action: Could this be you?**

9. Short Croquet Team Tournaments report

- a. Previously circulated – see Appendix 5 and presented by Stephen on John Grimshaw's behalf
- b. The meeting expressed thanks to John, with support from Chris Donovan, for running these

10. Regional Coaching Officer's report

- a. Previously circulated – see Appendix 6 and Paul particularly highlighted
 - i. The need to register early for a place on the course as they fill up quickly
 - ii. That SWF coaching will focus on topics that support clubs e.g. coaches, referees and that Budleigh Salterton coaching will focus on individual player skills and tactics

11. Development Officer report

- a. Previously circulated – see Appendix 7 and Paul particularly highlighted
 - i. Croquet England Funding Committee will be more stringent in future and will be particularly looking at security of tenancy and longer term sustainability planning
 - ii. Croquet England will be running monthly Zoom seminars on the last Wednesday of the month – the programme will be circulated but note in particular that on March 27th the Executive Committee will be answering questions on the impact of the new structure on clubs
 - iii. Next Generation (youth) project is looking for more clubs to participate in the next stage of the pilot – contact Paul if your club is interested. **Action: Could this be your club?**

- iv. Paul is standing down as Development Officer with immediate effect and SWF is seeking more people to join the team – contact Paul if you're interested.

Action: Could this be you?

- b. Paul was asked if interest-free loans will continue to be available from Croquet England – with interest rates increasing again this has yet to be decided.

12. Handicapping report

- a. Previously circulated – see Appendix 8 and presented by Tony on Mike's behalf

13. Safeguarding report

- a. Previously circulated – see Appendix 9 and presented by Andru
- b. Sarah Hayes (Cheltenham) asked that we look more closely into bullying which she thinks is becoming more prevalent, particularly against women
 - i. Noted that CA has a bullying policy and other related policies and that these need considering more carefully and how clubs are expected to implement them.
 - ii. Will be followed up via Federation's Forum and with Croquet England.

Action: SWF Committee and Tony Mayer

14. Report from SW Reps to CA Council

- a. Previously circulated – see Appendix 10 and presented by Brian who highlighted
 - i. Croquet England officially starts on 1st January 2024 but the transition process in terms of policies, organization etc, will take some time
 - ii. There will be a reduction in directly elected representatives from 9 to 6 – how this will be achieved is under discussion
- b. Discussion about how the transition will affect individual members – members have received information about this and the March Croquet England webinar will be an opportunity to ask the Executive Committee about this.

15. Election of Officers

- a. Nomination details previously circulated – See Appendix 11
- b. It was agreed to take the vote *en bloc*
 - i. Proposed by the Committee
 - ii. Seconded by Paul Pristavec (Glamorgan)
 - iii. Unanimously agreed

16. Proposals

Proposal 1

Amendments to Constitution and League Rules

Proposed by: SWF Committee

Proposal

That all references to the Croquet Association / CA in the Constitution and League Rules be replaced by Croquet England / CqE

Rationale

These are necessitated by the change of name and status of the Croquet Association to Croquet England on 1st January 2024.

The proposed changes are minor and do not affect any other aspect of the Constitution or League Rules.

Discussion

Dave Kibble (Bristol) asked that the full form - Croquet England – be used at all times rather than using the abbreviation.

This was unanimously agreed and the amended proposal was made by the Committee.

Amended Proposal

That all references to the Croquet Association / CA in the Constitution and League Rules be replaced by Croquet England.

This was proposed by the SWF Committee, seconded by Chris Williams (Glamorgan), and unanimously agreed.

Proposal 2

Amendment to GC League Rules

Proposed by: SWF Committee

Proposal

That the structure of SWF GC League rule 4 is changed to clarify its meaning.

Rationale

Rule 4 defines the eligibility of a player to play in GC matches. The paragraphs are incorrectly constructed in the current version of the rules and this proposal would correct the structure without changing the intended meaning.

Wording - Would change as shown in red.

4. Eligibility

- a. Only current playing members of a club shall be eligible to represent that club. It is the responsibility of the team captain to know the current Rules that apply to the team and to have a copy of them for reference.
- b. Handicaps
 - (1) On the day any match is played, each player shall comply with the appropriate handicap restriction from the following.
 - i. Level Play League. There is no handicap restriction.
 - ii. Level Play 5+ League. All players must have handicaps of 5 or above, subject to (f) below.
 - iii. Handicap League. Players with handicaps of 10 or below, subject to (f) below. In addition, a team may field one player whose handicap is 11 or 12.
 - iv. High Handicap League. Players with handicaps of 8 or above, subject to (f) below.
- c. In the Level Play 5+, Handicap and High Handicap leagues, no player shall play for more than one team during a season. (Note 4(e) below).
- d. In the Level Play League, if a club has entered two or more teams in the League, then:
 - (1) During a season, no player may play in the League:
 - i. for more than one club
 - ii. for more than one Premier block team
 - iii. for more than one regional block team.

Discussion

Reference to Note 4 (e) was confirmed as correct and we will ensure the correct version of the Rules as amended by today's meeting is posted on the website. Action: Stephen Custance-Baker.

It was clarified that while an individual player may not play for more than 1 team in a particular League, they may play for more than one team across the Leagues

The proposal was seconded by Paul Pristavec (Glamorgan) and unanimously agreed.

Proposal 3

Amendment to GC League Rules

Proposed by: SWF Committee

Proposal

That the Premier block of the GC Level Play league should be increased from 5 to 6 teams, starting in 2025.

Rationale

The GC Level Play league was re-structured in 2023 to remove the need for play-offs and finals as many players are not available during September. It was decided to have 3 blocks; a Premier block of the 5 top clubs and, in order to minimise travel distances, two regional blocks, designated North and South. The winners of the regional blocks are to be promoted to the Premier block and the lowest two teams in the Premier block are to be relegated.

This still seems a good structure but relegating two out of five teams is excessive. This proposal is therefore that we keep the same structure in 2024, promoting both of the regional block winners but only relegating one team at the end of the season, thus increasing the Premier block to 6.

Any new entries will join one of the regional blocks, which will have numbers as equal as possible. If a block has 3 or 4 teams then they will play home and away, giving 4 or 6 matches. If a block has 5 or 6 teams then they will play home or away, giving 4 or 5 matches.

Discussion

It was queried what would happen if there were not enough teams and was confirmed that there would just be one secondary block.

This proposal was seconded by Graham McCausland (Nailsea) and unanimously agreed.

Proposal 4

Amendment to AC League Rules

Proposed by: SWF Committee

Proposal

That the wording of SWF AC and SC League rule 12 is changed to clarify its meaning.

Rationale

Rule 12 defines the way in which the final block positions are determined. In both the AC and SC rules there are two references to "hoop points". It is proposed that, to avoid any possible confusion, these are amended to read "hoop and peg points".

Wording – would change as shown in red

12 Final Block Positions

- a. In determining the positions in an all-play-all block after all fixtures have been decided, teams shall be ranked according to the following hierarchy.
 - (1) Match points awarded.
 - (2) "Who beat whom", using the net games where teams have met twice.
 - (3) If two or more teams are still equal then, for a mini-block of the equal teams:
 - i. match points awarded; then
 - ii. "who beat whom", using the net games where teams have met twice; then
 - iii. nett games between the teams in the mini-block.
 - iv. average nett hoop and peg points per game between the teams in the mini-block.
 - (4) If two or more teams are still equal then they shall be ranked by their nett games in the entire block.
 - (5) If two or more teams are still equal then they shall be ranked by the average nett hoop and peg points per game in the entire block.

Discussion

It was confirmed that references to net hoop points should include peg points and the wording amended as highlighted in yellow above.

The amended proposal was made by the SWF Committee, seconded by Paul Pristavec (Glamorgan) and unanimously agreed.

Proposal 5

Amendment to all League Rules

Proposed by: SWF Committee

Proposal

SWF League Rules (AC), (GC) and (SC) should all have an identical modification in Rule 1.e which covers the issue of teams conceding two or more matches.

- e. A team that has conceded two or more matches in the most recent season shall, in the following season, be refused entry to the league in which it has defaulted unless the League Secretary can be convinced that there were extenuating circumstances which prevented the matches in question from being played. **If the team has played less than 50% of its scheduled matches, then the results of those matches that have been played are to be expunged from the block records. Otherwise, any unplayed matches will be treated as conceded to the opponents.**

Rationale

There is concern that a team withdrawing from a league block causes an unfair set of results to be recorded for that block. If the withdrawing team has played most of its matches, then it seems reasonable that its remaining matches should be given as walkovers to the opposing teams but if it has played only one or two matches then these walkovers could unbalance the block results.

Discussion

Dave Kibble (Bristol) noted this differs from CA Regulations – although Chris Williams (Glamorgan) queried this, but in any event it was noted that League rules do not have to be the same as CA Regs.

Peter Kirby (SWF) noted that everyone is present all the time at a Tournament so the circumstances are very different from those in League play.

Keith Southern (Swanage) queried what would happen if exactly 50% of matches were played. It was confirmed that all matches count and only if fewer than 50% were played would the consequences apply.

The proposal was seconded by John McCallum (Lym Valley) and unanimously agreed.

Proposal 6

Amendment to AC League Rules: Intermediate League

Proposed jointly by: Bristol CC, East Dorset CC, Sidmouth CC, SWF Committee

Proposal

That games for the SWF Intermediate League for Association Croquet shall be played according to the CA Laws for Full Bisque Handicapped Play, using a Base Handicap of 6

Rationale

The AC Intermediate league currently uses a standard system for allocating bisques, which is simply the difference between the handicaps. This means that only one side will have bisques, and usually a small number.

This proposal is to change to a full-bisque system, which will mean that both sides have bisques and there will be many more in each game. The number of bisques allocated to a side will be independent of the handicap(s) of the opposition. The aim is to increase the flow of the game and make it more possible for players to set up and achieve 4-ball breaks.

As the lowest handicap allowed in this league is 9, it is proposed that the base should be 6. With this base, a 9-handicapper would get 3 bisques and an 18-handicapper would get 9 bisques.

Where handicap differences are small, as often happens in Intermediate League, games can be frustrating and unsatisfactory with neither player being able to establish or maintain a break and may resort to 'Aunt Emma' tactics. Games are often won on time and not pegged out, which is also unsatisfactory.

Introducing a base handicap would ensure more players get more bisques, which would enable them to develop their break play and improve their tactics and have a more positive experience.

Our experience in the SWF is that, at present, only about one-third of singles matches complete within time, and the doubles matches never do. We feel that the default position should be that the majority of games should expect to finish within time, with a proper peg-out.

In an unfinished game there is an (unfair) advantage for the higher-handicapped player, in that he/she receives bisques for a full game, when a part-game is the more likely reality.

There is no headroom for extending the duration of matches. The most common duration (chosen by the away captain) is 3¼ hours, followed by 3 hours. (We had an example this year of one match requested as 3½ hours, to counter a sizeable bisque discrepancy. It worked, in that the lower-handicap player was trailing at 3¼ hours, but won at 3½ hours.) Allowing for captains to arrange the day's matches on arrival, lunch, tea, and journey times, it's already a long day for the away team.

The alternative, of making matches (e.g.) 18-point, is less favoured, as a corollary would be fewer bisques for the higher-handicapped player, and no bisques for the lower-handicapped player. It is felt that, at this level of competence, all players are still learning to use bisques wisely, and this aspect of the game should be exercised.

A player now has the likely prospect of 6½ hours of involvement in two matches, plus – for the away team – significant journey time; with the added burden of driving for one of that team. This can cause some potential players to make themselves unavailable.

Discussion

Several points were raised about what Base should be used:

- That it should be lower to further encourage break play
- A half bisque would encourage setting up breaks
- That having any base is not helpful
- That full bisque play is allowed within CA rules

Following this discussion, no amendments were proposed and the proposal was passed:

For: 40

Against: 8

Abstentions: 0

Proposal 7

Amendment to AC League Rules: Federation League

Proposed jointly by: East Dorset CC, Sidmouth CC,

Proposal

That games for the SWF Federation League for Association Croquet shall be played according to the CA Laws for Full Bisque Handicapped Play, using a Base Handicap of 6

Rationale

The SWF runs three AC handicap leagues:

- the Federation League (for handicaps 14 and below)
- the Intermediate League (9-18)
- the 'B' League (16-24).

Of these, only the B League uses a base handicap (11.5) while the others use handicap difference.

A base handicap means that - if both players have handicaps that are greater than the base handicap - each player receives a number of bisques equal to the difference between his handicap and the base handicap. If one player's handicap is the same or lower than the base, 'handicap difference' is used.

Where handicap differences are small, as often happens in Federation League, games can be frustrating and unsatisfactory with neither player being able to establish or maintain a break and may resort to 'Aunt Emma' tactics. Games are often won on time and not pegged out, which is also unsatisfactory.

Introducing a base handicap would ensure more players get more bisques, which would enable them to develop their break play and improve their tactics and have a more positive experience.

Discussion

This concerned the need for a base in this League:

- It consisted of more experienced players
- In fact many people play both Intermediate and Federation
- Even more experienced players really benefit from bisques to encourage break play
- A wide range of handicaps is eligible to play in this League
- A base would lead to more games pegging out
- Having full bisques would change the nature of the League

No amendments were suggested and the proposal seconded by John McCallum (Lym Valley).

For: 15

Against: 18

Abstentions: 10

The proposal falls

Proposal 8

Amendment to AC Rules: Federation League

Proposed by Bath CC

Proposal

That rule 9 of the Association Croquet League Rules, (re order of singles play in the Federation League) reverts back to random draws rather than ranked order of play for singles.

Rationale

If the League is about offering competitive play and the opportunity to improve players skills, then mixing things up does this better. As a handicap competition it should allow any player within the specified range to play any other player.

Discussion

- A random draw helps both higher and lower handicaps by playing people at different levels
- One option would be 'Captain's Order'
- Noted this only affects singles games, not doubles
- That random draws are used in other Leagues and work well
- Noted incidentally that random draws would be good in the SC Tournaments as well

No amendments were proposed, the proposal was seconded by Chris Williams (Glamorgan)

For: 32

Against: 6

Abstentions: 10

Proposal passed

Equalities

- a. Statement previously circulated – see Appendix 12
- b. Mark McNair (Exeter) commented that his advice is that the situation may lead to indirect discrimination which is not necessarily illegal if it is managerially difficult.
- c. The issue has been discussed at the Federation's Forum and will be raised with Beatrice McGlen, Chair of CA Executive Committee. **Action: Paul Francis**

17. AOB

- a. None

18. Date of next AGM

- a. Subject to confirmation this will be Sunday 17th November 2024
- b. A Survey Monkey will be undertaken to establish clubs' preferences concerning date and whether the meeting should be on-line or face-to-face. **Action: SWF Committee.**

Appendix 1
Present and apologies

Club	Name	Committee
Bath	Neil Pinker	Tony Mayer
	Lynne Passfield	Peter Kirby
Bradford on Avon	Paul Francis	Linda Shaw
Bristol	Dave Kibble	Paul Francis
	Eric Soakell	Stephen Custance-Baker
Camerton and Peasedown	Fran Ralli	Andrew Blewett
Cheltenham	Sarah Hayes	Brian Wilson
Dowlish Wake	Keith Bryant	
East Dorset	Johnathan Powe	Apologies
Exeter	Mark McNair	Abbey
Fowey		Broadwas
Glamorgan	Paul Pristavec	Charlton Hawthorne
	Chris Williams	Cornwall
Kington Langley	Caroline Tarran	Cripplegate
	Margaret Murray	Llandaff
Lym Valley	John McCallum	Wareham
Moreton-in-Marsh	Christine McCormick	Wellington
	Bob Honey	Worcester Norton
Nailsea	Steve Durston	Mike Rice - Committee
	Graham McCausland	
	<i>Peter Dyke</i>	<i>Names in italics are non-voting delegates</i>
Plymouth	George Lang	
	Linda Lang	
Sidmouth	Ed Dolphin	
St Agnes	Jackie Cotton	
Swanage	Keith Southern	
Swindon	Clive Smith	
	Wendy White	
Taunton Deane	Sue Baker	
	<i>David Jones</i>	
Tisbury	David Morley	
	Jan Kot	

Appendix 2
Chair's Report
Tony Mayer

2023- A very full year

Following the pandemic, last year saw a return to normality in terms of the croquet playing season and this year followed suit. In the SWF area, we were able to promote a full programme of leagues, have supported and encouraged new clubs, provided coaching and other courses and run our monthly Zooms for our member clubs during the off-season.

Congratulations

After a full year of competitive play in our leagues, congratulations to all our winning clubs. It is noteworthy that two clubs dominated the Roll of Honour, Bristol having prevailed in 4 different leagues and Cheltenham in 3. So now the rest of us have been set a challenge for the 2024 season! Congratulations to two of our committee members. Paul Francis, our Federation Development Officer, who is now the Director of Sport Development on the CA/CqE Executive Board and Stephen Custance-Baker, our very hard working League Secretary, who won the GC Open Championship Series (Unrestricted series) amassing 38 points.

We are pleased that the South West region now has a new representative on the CA Council/CqE trustees. Congratulations to Stuart Smith (Sidmouth) for taking on this role. Stuart's excellent performance in the World GC Championship in 2022 won him the Plate competition. He also won the English Singles Championship (GC) in the same year and, this year, he won the Dorset Open GC Championship.

Congratulations also to all 2023 CA Diploma awardees from our region: Barbara Dean (Dowlish Wake), Jim Beach (Glamorgan), Keith Bryant (Dowlish Wake), Margaret Hockett (Taunton Deane) and Mike Parry (Glamorgan).

Remembrance

With sadness we remember Pauline Windle (Swanage - a recent CA Diploma awardee), David Temple (Sidmouth), Greta Stringer (Nailsea and other clubs), Richard Jelly (Bath), David Heffill (Dowlish Wake), Shaun Carter (Glamorgan – Welsh international) and Neil Morrison (Swindon – recent SWF Treasurer).

A Major New Challenge

After the pandemic we now face a different problem as we are seeing the extremes of weather that result from climate change. 2022 saw very high temperatures and a prolonged drought that lasted well into the autumn of that year. After our last AGM, we had periods of extreme conditions – including winter months of very wet, very cold and one very dry month followed by a spring of below average temperatures. This summer then saw a period of dangerous high temperatures as well as a period of unseasonably cool weather and, more recently, a warm autumn. All of this gives us problems in maintaining all our clubs' principal assets – our lawns. Keeping grass in good condition with such extremes of weather (which are now likely to become permanent features in our climate) is becoming a major challenge for all our clubs. Installation of irrigation systems to counter droughts is expensive, although a number of clubs have or are likely to go in this direction.

The CA, soon to be the CqE, is now working with the Grounds Management Association so, hopefully, we can all benefit from its expert advice.

Recruitment

Another recurring problem is that of recruitment. Even though, nationally, the number of croquet players has increased, most of our clubs still struggle to maintain let alone increase membership. Of course there are exceptions and some clubs have been especially successful. One that stands out is Moreton in Marsh, which only opened for play in 2021, now has nearly 60 members. Let's hope that we can all learn from their achievement. However, we need not only to increase our memberships, usually from the older members of society but we need to bring in young players as well as diversify our membership to reflect our society at large.

New Clubs

It is encouraging that Bradford on Avon and Tisbury, clubs that joined last year are now active members. This year we welcome Consortium of Cripplegate, in Worcester, and we hope that a further two clubs will join from the northern part of our region. Thanks to our Development Officers for their work with these clubs. As usual we invite all CA-registered clubs who are not members of SWF to consider joining the Federation to take advantage of all our activities (expert advice, coaching, Zoom meetings, referees courses as well as our competitive leagues) .

Your Committee:

- **Looking back** - I wish to thank all your Committee members for their hard work and support throughout the year.
 - I want to thank *Linda Shaw*, our Secretary. She not only deals with all the administration and contacts with clubs and with the CA/CqE, but she also produces *Cygnets*, our *e* Newsletter, as well as providing us with fully annotated agendas and minutes (which you can download from the SWF website). I am always amazed at how quickly she produces clear minutes from our often complicated discussions!
 - *Peter Kirby*, our Treasurer, keeps the finances under control at all times and I want to thank him for prevailing, so far!, over the problems caused by the inefficiencies of our bank.
 - *Andru Blewett* has taken on the difficult task of Federation Safeguarding Officer, keeping up with all the changes as the CA/CqE has included 'welfare' into the Safeguarding portfolio in relation to vulnerable adults and others.
 - *Brian Wilson*, my predecessor as Chair, is one of the region's representatives on Council and keeps us up to date with all the issues that arise from the change from the CA to CqE. Brian also has responsibility for the central area in our development activities.
 - *Paul Francis* has served as the Federation Development Officer coordinating everything as well as looking after the southern area of our region. Paul has also been responsible for leading our coaching programme in which the SWF has pioneered the use of hybrid instruction (theory components on Zoom and practical courses at various 'hub' clubs). Paul has also organised GC referees' courses and 'refresher' sessions for already qualified people.
 - We were short of a Handicapping Officer and were fortunate when *Mike Rice* volunteered and was quickly co-opted to the committee. Mike has concentrated, so far, on AC but will be taking on all aspects of handicapping at the Federation level in the coming year to ensure that we all work to common standards in both codes.

- Last but not least we have *Stephen Custance- Baker* who carries the heavy load of League Secretary, sorting out all the entries into geographically coherent blocks and arranging finals (dates and host clubs) for all the relevant leagues, getting trophies organised, handling queries and entering results on our web site and also, through Croquet Scores, to the World Croquet Federation individual rankings. This task has been made even more burdensome by people submitting results in hand-written form which then require Stephen to enter on the appropriate forms. **For next season, we are considering making it mandatory for all results to be submitted electronically on the correct form, if not by team captains then by the responsible person in the Club.** The December Zoom will include a session on how to complete the match results forms.
 - I also wish to thank two people, not on the Committee, who contribute to the smooth running of the SWF. That is Alison Maugham who keeps our web site up to date and Klim Seabright who covers the northern region for our Development activities – many thanks for your efforts and support
- **Looking Forward** – Both Stephen and Paul have indicated that they will wish to step down, from their roles as League Secretary and FDO respectively. So we are urgently looking for volunteers to replace them. Given the workload of the League Secretary, we are now debating whether this can be broken up into, say, AC and SC, GC and Finals or some other division of tasks. There is space on our committee (according to the constitution) so **please consider coming forward to take on some of these tasks.** You will find it rewarding and worthwhile. Similarly, please think about taking on the FDO role.

Zoom meetings

New technology has been especially important for SWF given our wide geographical coverage. As above, we have used this for our hybrid coaching courses, for our committee meetings and for the monthly Zoom meetings that we run during the closed season for our member clubs. These have involved break-out sessions where clubs can exchange information about their experiences and learn from each other. In addition, we try to having guest speaker sessions or special topic sessions such as that on Advantage GC and coaching sessions given by Stephen Custance-Baker and Dave Kibble and these were especially welcomed and well attended. The feedback that we have had has been very positive. However, it would be great if all our member clubs could take advantage of these sessions (that last one hour in the evening of the second Tuesday of the month) and send representatives to the meetings and, of course, anyone interested may also attend.

Consultations/Surveys

We have used 'Survey Monkey' to collect information and views on several occasions to inform our discussions and our Zoom meetings. This year we have done so in relation to Advantage GC. We also consulted on dress codes. Please help us by completing these surveys when they occur in the future or are notified in Cygnet.

Federations Forum

The Chairs of all the Federations meet by Zoom once a month during the closed season to exchange information and to discuss key issues which may be raised either centrally or by an individual federation. SWF, together with the South East Federation, are the two largest groupings in terms of number of clubs.

The issue of dress codes was an issue brought to the Forum by SWF and finally ended with the Forum calling for the CA to put out a clear policy statement which is now in progress. Another topic discussed resulted from the change of name from CA to CqE – should the Federations follow suit? The outcome is that we have all, except for Croquet North which has used this name for a long time, decided to retain Federation as this best represented our role as membership organisations of clubs.

Another topic discussed with Beatrice McGlen, the Chair of the CA/CqE Executive Board, was the complex area of safeguarding. It is also useful having people like her, Patricia Duke-Cox (CA President), and Paul Brown, responsible for Development on the Executive Board present to carry messages from the Federations into the CA/CqE centre. Paul Brown acted as 'convenor' but has now stepped down and his place has been taken by our own Paul Francis. So if issues arise from Clubs to the SWF, we have a means of consultation nationwide with our sister Federations and then getting the message to the 'centre'.

Appendix 3
Treasurer's Report
Peter Kirby



South West Federation of Croquet Clubs



Treasurers AGM Report 19th November 2023

Financial Year-End Accounts

There has been a small deficit for the year of £108, compared to the original 2023 projection of a deficit of £467. This was principally due to compensation received from NatWest for poor service of £200, and interest on savings account of £157, see section on Banking below for more details. Neither of these items were anticipated in the budget for 2023.

Reserves in the General Account of approx £5,400 are more than adequate to cover any reasonable short term fluctuations in income and expenditure.

Creditors / Debtors

Debtors of £6 relates to Cygnet Advertising and we are awaiting payment.

Creditors of £140 relates to, £80 in club fees for 2024 received before October 31st, and £60 (estimated) cost of new trophy where we are awaiting the invoice.

Judith Moore Bursary

I said in my 2022 report that "SWF Committee have discussed and agreed in principle that a distribution of approx. £1,000 per annum for the next 3 years is used to develop SWF Coaching Program".

The deficit for 2023 was £250.

In line with the above the budget for 2024 is up to a deficit of £1,000.

Banking

There have been numerous issues with the service received from NatWest during the year, which resulted in the account being locked for a period of time. NatWest acknowledged the poor service and have paid the Federation £200 in compensation.

Due to rising interest rates the Federation opened a 90 day notice Savings Account with NatWest which currently pays 4.25% interest on the balance.

Commentary of Fees & Level of Reserves

I said in my 2020 Treasurers report :-

"At the year-end reserves are just over £5,200 which at 210% of 2019 turnover of c£2,500 (excluding costs of printing SWAN) which in the Treasurer's opinion appears to be rather high. There are further reasons to believe these reserves are high :-

1. Income & Expenditure are comparatively stable.
2. Fixed costs are low
3. Around 50% of expenses are "internal" to member clubs (Lawn Fees), and represent transferring of funds from one group of member clubs to another.

I therefore propose that these surplus reserves are distributed to member clubs over a number of years by setting fees to give a small projected budget loss (a loss of £200 for 2021) and keeping fees suppressed. "

I am therefore proposing no increase in fees compared to 2023 which in the context of underlying inflation of around 6% is consistent with the approach outlined above and agreed at the 2020 AGM and leads to a projected budget loss of £293 for 2024.

A discount for early payment is proposed to ensure that payment is made in a timely manner consistent with the timetable for the organisation and start of League play.

Proposed Fees for 2024

It is therefore proposed that for 2024 the structure of fees shall remain the same as for 2023 and be as follows :-

League Entries £4.40 per team

Short Croquet Team Events £17 per team

Full Members Fee 35p per playing member subject to a maximum fee of £19, and a minimum fee of £9.

If payment is received on or before November 29th 2023 a discount is applied to the rates above and the fees net of discount are as follows :-

League Entries £4 per team

Short Croquet Team Events £15 per team

Full Members Fee 30p per playing member subject to a maximum fee of £17, and a minimum fee of £8



South West Federation of Croquet Clubs



Accounts Year-End 31st October 2023

GENERAL ACCOUNT					
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT					
		2023		2022	
INCOME					
Subscriptions		505		480	
Association league fees		180		204	
Short league fees		72		76	
Golf league fees		268		248	
Short croquet Tournament fees		829		782	
Subscriptions and League Fees (Total)		1854		1790	
Adverts		60		42	
CTC Coaching Course		0		314	
Bank Compensation		200		0	
Bank Interest		157		0	
Donations (Bears Residual Fund)		169		900	
Other Donations		6		0	
Sundries		0		0	
		2447		3046	
EXPENDITURE					
Trophies	308			288	
League finals	704			774	
Short croquet (Tournament)	1056			1056	
Coaching expenses	0			362	
Travel expenses	208			120	
SWF Website	135			135	
Zoom	144			144	
Sundries	0			0	
		2555		2879	
SURPLUS / - DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR			-108		168
ADD OPENING BALANCE			5549		5381
CLOSING BALANCE			5441		5549
BALANCE SHEET					
REPRESENTED BY					
CASH AT BANK			5575		4661
DEBTORS			6		900
CREDITORS			-140		-12
TOTAL NET ASSETS			5441		5549
TOURNAMENT DEVELOPMENT FUND					
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT					
INCOME					
February GC Referees Course	640			0	
October GC Referees Course	300			0	
		940		0	
EXPENDITURE					
February GC Referees Course	841			0	
September Coaching Course	10			0	
October GC Referees Course	210			0	
Travel Expenses - Bursary	128			0	
		1190		0	
SURPLUS / - DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR			-250		0
ADD OPENING BALANCE			5000		5000
CLOSING BALANCE			4750		5000
BALANCE SHEET					
REPRESENTED BY					
CASH AT BANK			4750		5000
DEBTORS			0		0
CREDITORS			0		0
TOTAL NET ASSETS			4750		5000
CONSOLIDATED FUNDS					
BALANCE SHEET					
REPRESENTED BY					
CASH AT BANK			10325		9661
DEBTORS			6		900
CREDITORS			-140		-12
TOTAL NET ASSETS			10191		10549
Peter Kirby Treasurer	Bob Whiffen Examiner				
I have examined the books and records of the South West Federation of Croquet Clubs, and in my opinion the balance sheet and Income and Expenditure Account accord with the books and records for the year ending 31st October 2023.					

Appendix 4

League Secretary's Report Stephen Custance-Baker

Main Report

The leagues in 2023 were similar to 2022 with 129 teams from 29 clubs. There were 303 matches, down on last year because of the smaller block sizes, which was aimed to reduce travel distances. All of the play-offs and finals were completed on schedule. However, in the Short Croquet Open final, one of the finalists was unable to raise a full team and had to play with one ineligible player and concede 4 games out of the 16.

The main changes in team numbers were in the Federation League (down 2) and Intermediate League (down 4). The Short Croquet Open was up 4 but the Short Croquet Restricted was down 5. The new GC Level Play league for players with handicaps 5 and above started with 7 teams, but at a cost of 4 teams in the GC Handicap league. Overall, AC was down 5, SC down 1 and GC up 5.

2023 League Results

Congratulations to all the winners:

- Advanced League Division 1: Cheltenham A (Glamorgan relegated)
- Advanced League Division 2: Bristol B (Nailsea B relegated)
- Advanced League Division 3: Cheltenham B
- Federation: East Dorset
- Intermediate: Cheltenham
- B League: Nailsea
- Short Croquet (Open): Nailsea
- Short Croquet (Restricted): Bristol
- GC Level Play: Bristol A
- GC Handicap: Budleigh Salterton
- GC 5+: Bristol
- GC High Handicap: Llandaff

All the trophies and award plaques were presented at the finals and have been left with the winners to be engraved.

Altogether, 290 block matches were scheduled, plus 13 play-offs and finals, giving a grand total of 303. Of these, 294 were actually played, 8 were conceded and 1 was cancelled. The conceded matches were spread across several blocks and no teams have been barred from entering the league in 2024.

East Dorset, Nailsea and Budleigh Salterton have been invited to represent the south west in 2024 in the national AC Handicap Secretary's Shield, SC Knockout and GC Federation Shield tournaments. I wish them all the best of good fortune.

Submitting results

There is an important issue that I would like to mention. Many team captains have been good about sending the results in promptly, properly typed on the official forms and attached to emails. However,

I have received many handwritten ones, sometimes poorly photographed and difficult to decipher. Also, names are often incomplete or incorrectly spelt. Please get the opponent's names right, and don't just use initials.

In future, it will be mandatory for all results to be submitted in typed format on the correct form for the league concerned. Ones that are hand-written or photographed will not be accepted. I have updated the pdf, Excel and Word versions on the SWF website and added a set in Open Document format.

Leagues in 2024

There are some proposals for changes in the leagues:

- The GC Level Play Premier block to be increased in 2025 from 5 to 6, to be achieved by having two promotions and only one relegation at the end of the 2024 season.
- The AC Intermediate League to be a full-bisque league (like the B League).
- The AC Federation League to be a full-bisque league (like the B League).

If one, or both, of these latter proposals are approved, then the base level for bisques will be decided after discussion.

As you know, the SWF committee is not proposing to change the GC Handicap leagues to Advantage GC in 2024. Several clubs in the south west and several other federations have trialled it but there is still no general agreement that it is an improvement.

Anecdotal evidence and our own survey indicate that most players are ambivalent about it. Some wholeheartedly support it but many others totally disagree with it. Given the lack of consensus, it is better to continue with what we know to be a popular version of GC.

Complaints in 2023

There was a complaint in 2023 about uncivil behaviour at a match. It involved a very experienced player's attitude towards the much less experienced captain from a new club.

The SWF Chair has spoken to the players concerned and to the Chairs of the clubs and the matter is now resolved. It needs to be pointed out, however, that part of the problem was an attempt by the visiting captain to insist on a particular format for the day's play, when this is actually the prerogative of the home captain. The visitor was therefore at fault both in the style and substance of their action. I will point out again that all team captains should make themselves familiar with the relevant SWF League rules, which are on the website.

I am very grateful to all the clubs who made their facilities available for the league finals. This always involves several members at each host club giving up their time to prepare the lawns and set them out. Many also provided a referee and a report on these matches.

The Role of League Secretary

I will be retiring as League Secretary and I have proposed that there should be a change in the way in which the leagues are organised.

Rather than having a single person responsible for all aspects of the leagues and finals, I believe that there should be a team, each with their own area of responsibility, chaired by someone who will represent the team on the SWF Committee.

Other divisions of the overall task are possible, but one set of seven responsibilities could be: Chair and Coordinator, Finals, Advanced AC, Handicap AC, Short Croquet, Level Play GC, Handicap GC. Other, minor, tasks could be handled by one of these team members.

Volunteers are urgently needed to take on these roles. Please consider whether you could offer some of your time and get in touch with me or with any member of the SWF committee to find out more. I am prepared to continue for one further season, but I will not be continuing after the 2024 AGM, so it is very important that I have others working with me during the 2024 season to ensure a smooth transition.

Appendix 5

Short Croquet Tournaments Report

John Grimshaw

Spring

The spring tournament at Nailsea gives everyone a chance to dust off their mallets and enjoy an early-season day of Short Croquet. Well, that is all except those who were scheduled to play in Division 5 on Friday. April showers turned in to an April deluge and I am afraid that no play was possible in Division 5. All teams turned up, only to be disappointed, and I am especially sorry for Lym Valley who had by far the longest journey, and a potential late start, and for Bradford on Avon who were due to make their first excursion into competitive play.

Saturday and Sunday were fine days and the other divisions proceeded without problems.

- Division 1. A Nailsea team returned to winning ways, but this time it was the Nailsea team and not Trendlewood, who were serial winners a few seasons ago. Camerton and Peasedown A were relegated.
- Division 2. Swindon continue their rush through the divisions. Having won Division 3 last year, they triumphed again. Budleigh Salterton Roquets were relegated.
- Division 3. East Dorset are also leaping up the divisions. They won Division 4 last year and were triumphant here, with 14 wins from 16 games. Bath Buns were relegated.
- Division 4. Exeter A won after a shoot-out with Glamorgan, who had only three shooters after one player had left early. Budleigh Salterton Rushes, who came bottom, will not be relegated due to the abandonment of Division 5, and therefore no team was promoted from there.

Many thanks to Nailsea for their hospitality and preparation of the lawns.

Autumn

We were blessed with one of the finest week-ends of the year for the Autumn tournament at Budleigh Salterton. There were 26 teams competing, so we had a six-team Division 5 with all-play all in five rounds.

- Division 1. It was Nailsea's year. After their club team won the Spring tournament, Nailsea Trendlewood were the winners here. A 4-0 win in the last round won it by one game. Sidmouth Fortfield, who were the unfortunate recipients of that 4-0 defeat, were relegated by one game.
- Division 2. Kington Langley Aardvarks were the winners. Budleigh Salterton Roquets were relegated.
- Division 3. After being denied in a shoot-out last year, Bath Salts made no mistake this time winning 14 out of 16. Exeter were relegated.
- Division 4. East Dorset were champions of this division. Sidmouth Connaught were relegated in a shoot-out with Nailsea, despite having beaten that same team 4-0 in the final round to haul themselves level.
- Division 5. Bath Buns were the winners in a very close competition, with Bradford on Avon and Camerton and Peasedown B just one game behind.

Many thanks to Budleigh Salterton for their hospitality and superb lawns. Chris Donovan managed the tournament very ably, and has made a number of changes to the paperwork, which makes it much easier to report the scores and to keep track of the position of the teams relative to each other as the competition progresses.

Appendix 6 Coaching Report Paul Francis

2023

This year we have returned to offering coaching course after a two-year gap. There is no doubt that the Judith Moore bursaries have enabled the SWF to carry out these courses in a range of club venues. In addition, future prospective coaches will continue to benefit from the Judith Moore legacy.

In August, 11 participants started their hybrid courses (six club level and five Grade 1). At the time of writing, the following have qualified.

Club Level Coach

- Philip de Glanville (Bath)
- Grade 1 GC
- Gill Hindshaw (Moreton in Marsh)
- Naomi Whitehead (Cheltenham)

Grade 1 AC/GC

- Darryl Whitehead (Cheltenham)

The other five Club level Coaches have passed their practical assessments and will qualify upon completion of their five coaching sessions.

These are:

- Christine Rice and Mike Rice (East Dorset)
- Makis Aperghis (Cheltenham)
- Tony Strickett (St. Agnes)
- David Veal (Bath)

The final two Grade 1 AC candidates (Eric Soakell and Bob Whiffen) will be assessed at their home club, Bristol in the near future.

Zoom Coaching

Many thanks to the regular coaching/refereeing Zooms from Stephen Custance-Baker and Dave Kibble. Pleased to report that these will return for the 2023/24 series of Zooms. Please look out for Cygnet articles and emails advertising these events.

2024

Next year's programme will start in March/April. This will enable Club Level Coaches to complete their five coaching sessions within the season.

Applications for places will begin post-AGM.

AC/GC Referees

2023

With the support of Ian Shore from the Chiltern Academy, the SWF has run two weekend courses at Bath CC.

If you ask any of the participants, they will report that the course was thorough and demanding but a worthwhile experience. Congratulations to the following new GC referees.

- Tony Curson (Bath)
- Steve Durston (Nailsea)
- Neil Fillery (Taunton Deane)
- Tony Green (Swanage)
- Chris Ham (Bude)
- Bob Hart (Bath)
- Felicity Owen (Cornwall)
- Rob Stirling (St. Agnes)
- Brian Wilson (Camerton and Peasedown)

There was also a Refresher Course for existing GC referees.

2024

GC Referees Course

- February 24/25 at Bath CC
- At the time of writing, there are five places available, for further information please contact:
- paulwfrancis@icloud.com

Half Day Refresher Course

- February 23 at Bath CC.
- At the time of writing there are eight places available, for further information please contact:
- paulwfrancis@icloud.com

AC Referees Course

- Dave Kibble has kindly offered to run an AC referees course, details to follow.

Appendix 7

Development Officer's Report

Paul Francis

All three FDOs (Klim Seabright, Brian Wilson and Paul Francis) have been kept busy helping clubs with a various range of issues including support with CA grants.

CA Grants

The following CA grants have been awarded to SWF clubs since the last AGM.

- Kington Langley (Wiltshire) £5 000 towards their new club house project.
- Charlton (Somerset) £1 000 towards improvements to their lawn.

In addition, Bude in Cornwall (awarded £5000 in 2022) has completed its club house project.

Grants across other federations have been abundant and are tending to focus on the installation of irrigation systems.

Next Generation (NG) Pilot 2023

Whilst Worcester Norton has participated in the NG pilot, Lym Valley has had an impressive year working with children from the local primary school and scout groups. Special mention must be made to Mike Prince who has been responsible for driving forward the pilot programme at Lym Valley.

The CA is very likely to continue its support in 2024 and will be looking for other clubs to join the project. Places will be limited and clubs are advised to contact Paul Francis at paulwfrancis@icloud.com as soon as possible to discuss the NG programme for 2024.

Monthly Zooms

Around 15 to 20 SWF clubs regularly attend our winter/off season Zooms. We aim to offer topics linked with club management and provide an opportunity for clubs to share their successes and seek advice on club management issues. The 2023 season of Zoom meetings has started and we would encourage more clubs to attend.

Vacancy for FDO

There is one vacancy for our FDO for the South and West of our federation. For more information, please contact Paul Francis via email at paulwfrancis@icloud.com

Appendix 8

Handicapping Report

Mike Rice

I took on this role part way through the year and I see my job in two parts.

Firstly, to be a point of contact for any club or individual who has any query or issue with handicaps.

Secondly, working with our committee to let the CqE Handicapping Committee know of any issues that we have come across that we feel need addressing. There have been two of these that we have referred up this year.

The first is where GC players with low handicaps are playing AC with high (often unfairly so) handicaps. This usually occurs where they play very few AC games and the Club Handicapper is not proactive. Our solution was to have a maximum number of steps between the two handicaps.

Our second concern is the Section headed The Tournament Handicapper within Tournament Regulations. The guidelines here are often not followed and we feel the checking of handicaps before each tournament is important.

Appendix 9

Safeguarding Report

Andru Blewett

My year as Federation Safeguarding Officer has been relatively quiet in respect of actual safeguarding issues, but has had quite a bit going on as the CA redefines the role of Safeguarding Officer to that of Welfare Officer.

The CA will soon become CqE, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. As such it will be subject to the guidelines set out by the Charity Commission, and so is required to make the overall welfare of its membership an integral part of its overarching responsibilities. This will be delivered under the banner of "Welfare Matters" which means "promoting the welfare and well-being of every participant" involved in our activities.

To facilitate this, the role of Safeguarding Officer will evolve to that of Welfare Officer. Safeguarding will remain an essential element of this new role, recognising that: "Anyone, anywhere, any-time can need Safeguarding."

Developing "safeguarding awareness" and a welcoming culture in every Club is not just about protecting the two high risk groups: it's making sure everyone is OK.

A recent email from Ron Carter delves into this a little deeper than I will now. Hopefully all Club Safeguarding / Welfare Officers will have received this more detailed explanation of the changes by now.

On a positive note, an on-line training package for Child Safeguarding was rolled out in the Spring which all Club Safeguarding Officers should by now have completed and a further training package for Adults at Risk was promised for the Autumn. No news on this yet.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Committee members for their support during this past year.

Appendix 10
SW Representative to CA Council Report
Brian Wilson & Peter Nelson

CA Council and CqE Trustees

Summary

Croquet England (CqE) has been established and has gained Charitable status as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

At the recent CA's AGM it was virtually unanimously agreed that:

1. The CA's assets and liabilities would be transferred to CqE and:
 - a. Existing Individual Members of the Association be accepted as Associates of CqE (CIO) on the same, or materially similar terms, save as to voting rights; and
 - b. All Associates of Croquet England will be invited to apply to become Members of Croquet England to acquire the right to vote; and
 - c. All existing Member Clubs and Member Federations of the Association will be registered as Affiliate Clubs and Affiliate Federations of Croquet England CIO upon the same terms
2. The CA's 4 Executive Officers would dissolve the CA when all necessary actions had been completed to their satisfaction and when they consider it prudent to do so
3. Pending the CA's dissolution, the 4 Executive Officers will carry out all necessary actions to complete the dissolution

So where are we now?

In the forthcoming few months the CA will be dissolved and all the CA assets and activities will be taken over by the CqE

CA Council and CqE Trustees

Who is who?

- During 2022/23 your Council members were Peter Nelson and Brian Wilson
- As Peter was not standing for re-election, Stuart Smith has been elected as a CA Council member (thank you Peter and welcome Stuart)

CA Council and CqE Trustees

- These two organisations have been running concurrently
- In the first year of CqE (CIO), all current CA Council members will be CqE Trustees
- In the near future, in line with CqE's Constitution as a Charity (CIO), the number of Trustees, elected by the membership, will decrease' but will still form the majority of all Trustees

What has Council achieved this year?

A hell of a lot of work has been completed including:

- Establishing Croquet England (CqE)
- Collating all the documentation necessary to apply for CIO status for CqE
- Present this to the Charity Commission

- After some time, the Charity Commission agreed to CqE becoming a CIO
- A considerable amount of work was necessary to review and revamp, where necessary, the current CA procedures to meet our new 'status'
- All the above was also linked to CqE and the sport of croquet to be eligible for Sport England support
- Working with other Council members we now have targets for membership for the next 5 years. We are establishing a Monitoring and Evaluation process
- We are working to include other aspects e.g. competitive play

Looking ahead

- So, it's 'goodbye and thanks' to the CA and here's to the future of croquet and CqE.
- Trustees will be working:
 - To 'cement' a strong relationship with Sport England to raise the 'status' of croquet, but to identify and source grants and other long term funding
 - Complete the review and update of all current CA Policies and Objectives to define the way forward introducing new ones as deemed necessary to secure croquet's future
 - Extend the Monitoring and Evaluation process
 - Complete the work to reduce the number of Trustees elected by the membership (although they will still be in the majority)

Appendix 11
Nominations to SWF Committee

Proposal	That the nominations for Committee be approved		
Post	Name	Proposer	Seconder
Chair	Tony Mayer Swindon CC	Clive Smith Chair Swindon CC	Wendy White Secretary Swindon CC
League Secretary	Stephen Custance-Baker	Andru Blewett Safeguarding Officer SWF	Paul Francis Development Officer SWF
Secretary	Linda Shaw Bristol CC	Chris Frew Secretary Bristol CC	Erica Malaiperuman Secretary Nailsea CC
Treasurer	Peter Kirby Bristol CC	Chris Frew Secretary Bristol CC	Neil Kingston Treasurer Bristol CC
Development Officer	No nominations received		
Coaching Officer	Paul Francis Bradford-on-Avon CC	Fran Ralli Chair Camerton & Peasedown CC	Derrick Hunt Secretary Bradford on Avon CC
Handicapping Officer	Mike Rice East Dorset LT&CC	Jonathan Powe Chair East Dorset LT&CC	David Fuller Secretary East Dorset LT&CC
Safeguarding Officer	Andru Blewett St Agnes CC	Mike Rowe Chair St Agnes CC	Sharman Rowe Secretary St Agnes CC
Committee member	Brian Wilson Camerton & Peasedown CC	Fran Ralli Chair Camerton & Peasedown CC	Angela Crofts Secretary Camerton & Peasedown CC

Appendix 12

Non-discriminatory behaviour

The potential for decisions being made that discriminate against people with Protected Characteristics as defined by the Equalities Act, was raised by Exeter CC. This arose as a result of three of their team members not being able to play in the Final SC Open match which was held on a Sunday. They proposed that a finalist team be able to request a change of date if such a situation were to arise.

In discussing this, the SWF Committee realised neither they nor the AGM would be in a position to make a decision that was both legal and fair to all. They also noted that such a request could only be firmly made a short time before the match date (fixed at the beginning of the season) and would entail significant work rearranging this to the satisfaction of both teams and the host club, or to find another host club if the original club was unable to accommodate this request.

The SWF Committee agreed to raise this with the Croquet Association via the Federations' Forum and ask for clear and legally robust guidance.

This was put to Exeter CC and they were asked if they still wanted to table the proposal or if a statement to the AGM setting out the issues and waiting for further guidance would be sufficient.

They decided to withdraw the proposal, hence this statement.

The SWF wants to ensure that its decisions do not discriminate against its member clubs and their members who take part in SWF events.

We recognise the concerns expressed by Exeter and will be exploring with them and the Croquet Association /Croquet England to ensure this does not happen.