



# LEIGHTON-LINSLADE CROQUET CLUB

Secretary:  
Roger Stroud  
Fern Cottage  
Hollybush Close  
Potten End  
Herts.  
HP4 2SN  
Tel: 01442 865700  
Email: rogerstroud302@hotmail.com

Founded 2000

## NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2011 Volume 12 Issue 2

Membership Secretary:  
Judith Cundell  
18 Saxons Close  
Leighton Buzzard  
LU7 3LT  
Tel: 01525 374620  
Email: judith.cundell@btinternet.com

The newsletter Editor is John Cundell. Items for the newsletter can be sent to 18 Saxons Close, Leighton Buzzard, Beds LU7 3LT; or emailed to john.cundell@btinternet.com. Tel: 01525 400512 or 374620

### “Spring and Croquet is Nearly Here!”

Welcome to the second newsletter of 2011 as we look forward to longer and warmer days and the start of our playing season after the very cold winter. The courts are looking good and have benefited by the good work from the Town Council ground staff over the winter months. As long as we don't get too much wet stuff over the next week or so we hope to be able to stick to our scheduled opening date of Saturday 26th March - however as per last year if there is any delay caused by unforeseen circumstances then we will endeavour to let everybody know as soon as possible via email and/or telephone - so check your emails daily as we get nearer to the 26th March.

### License Agreement with Leighton-Linslade Town Council - Security of Tenure - Court Maintenance - Fund Raising and Membership

Members who attended the AGM and who read the first newsletter of 2011 will have been brought up to date as to what had been a momentous 2010 behind the scenes, during which Tom Miller and Richard Keighley were involved in complicated and far reaching meetings with the Town Council concerning the future of our club.

The draft License approved by the membership at the AGM was agreed by Leighton-Linslade Town Council Leisure and Community Committee (L&CC) at a meeting attended by Tom Miller on 14th February - hopefully an appropriate date! Tom is to be congratulated on his excellent presentation to the meeting describing our Club's foundation and activities, followed by the reasons for the formulation of the License. His words are appended to the end of this newsletter and all members are requested to read this as it clearly defines the current and future ramifications for the Club and members.

The License was signed by the Club's three authorised signatories, David Ball, Len Buckingham and John Cundell on 2nd March, then by the TC representatives on 7th March and passed over to Chairman David Ball by the LLTC Town Clerk Pat Kingsnorth on Tuesday 8th March.

The security of tenure for six years is obviously welcome, but as Tom stated, it also gives us the opportunity to look at further development of the courts as awarding bodies look for some certainty of the longevity of investing in our sport.

The fact that we are now responsible for the court treatments - fertilising, weed killing, scarifying and the like - and white lining the marking out of the courts (not the mowing and watering as this will still be handled by the Council), means that we will have to find ways of increasing our revenue. There are a number of innovative proposals in the pipeline which will be outlined to members in due course.

Of course the most beneficial method of raising revenue is to find more members! We will endeavour to obtain some



At The White House on Wednesday, 8th March, Town Clerk Pat Kingsnorth and LLCC Chairman David Ball examine the License following its earlier signing by the Club and the Town Council.

local press publicity both in 'News from The White House' and the local press by reporting on the new License handover; and the Official Opening on 3rd March by the Town Mayor. Also we will be holding our Come & Try day later in the season - 27th August and possibly also the 29th August - Bank Holiday Monday. In the past these C&T days have been early in the season when the weather is not so good, and also it is a substantial commitment to take out a yearly subscription based on a few hours of play. At the end of August the weather and timing may be better, and we could offer interested visitors the chance to join and play during September for a reduced fee, and with luck they will stay with us for 2012.

From reports we have received from a variety of sources, there seems to be a rumour around the area that we have a waiting list for membership. **THIS IS NOT THE CASE.** Please advise anyone you hear making this erroneous statement that we are actively looking for new members.

### Playing Sessions

The Committee agreed that 'official' playing sessions for 2011 will be as follows - no change from 2010:

- 10-12 Tuesday (Singles Handicap)
- 2-4 Tuesday (Singles Handicap)
- 10-1.00 Wednesday
- 10-1.00 Thursday
- 10-12 Saturday
- 2-5 Saturday
- 10-12 Sunday (Singles Handicap)
- 2-5 Sunday

As per 2009/10 our Court Rent arrangements allow for playing sessions to be flexible to work around the weather - either good or bad - e.g., if morning is wet we can regroup pm or even on another day; if good then stay on as required. Also, members are able to go along for practice sessions at will.

The only provisos are that a) if the Council Ground staff or any Contractors we employ are working on the lawns, then they will have priority and members will have to wait until they are finished; and b) certain Mondays and Fridays when League and Friendly matches are scheduled when no club play will be possible.

### 2011 Dates for your Diary

As you can see it looks like another busy season. All fixture dates so far arranged are included below. EACF League and Friendly dates will be posted in the Clubroom as and when these become available from Tony Wells. Tony works hard to get these dates in but obviously depends on prompt response from other clubs.

**PLEASE NOTE THERE ARE SOME DATE CHANGES FROM THOSE PUBLISHED IN OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER IN JANUARY SO PLEASE CHANGE YOUR DIARY ENTRIES NOW!**

#### March

- 12/13 Soham Indoor
- 19 EACF AGM - Bury St. Edmunds
- 25 Annual Dinner - Leighton Buzzard Golf Club
- 26 COURTS OPEN - weather permitting

#### April

**3 Officially open season - Town Mayor - 2.00pm**

#### May

- 10 \*B-Class at Watford. For players with a handicap between 3 and 7. Contact Roger Nicholls on 01923 236068 or email roger.b.nicholls@btinternet.com
- 14/15 Club 'Mix 'n' Match' Handicap Doubles
- 31 Littlehampton Friendly Away. **(There will be an entry cost for this event of £15 which includes the day's play and lunch.)**

#### June

- 4/5 Club Ladies Doubles 'Mix 'n' Match'
- 6 GC Improvers Coaching Day (See below)
- 11 Inter Counties Match at Hunstanton (see below)
- 15 Committee Meeting
- 25 \*B-Level Tournament at Wrest Park. For players with a handicap between 4 and 8. Contact Richard Keighley on 01296 681235 or email the\_keighleys@btopenworld.com

#### July

- 9/10 Club Handicap Singles (See later note)
- 20 \*B-Level Tournament at Nottingham. For players with a handicap between 4 and 8. Contact James Death on 01827 251738 or email james.death1@googlemail.com
- 24 Club Fun Day
- 24 EACF One Day Level Tournament Ipswich - open to all members of EACF clubs - details from Peter Allnutt on 01473 221204 or email: peter.allnutt1@ntlworld.com
- 27 Committee Meeting

**30/31 Hunstanton Friendly Away (See note below)**

#### August

- 6/7 Hunstanton Invitation Weekend (see below)
- 13/14 Club Mens Doubles 'Mix 'n' Match' John Fogg Trophy
- 20 Garden Party
- 27/29 Come & Try Day

#### September

- 6 EACF League Semi-finals - Bury St. Edmunds
- 11 EACF League Finals - Bury St. Edmunds
- 13 \*B-Level at Edgbaston. For players with a handicap between 5 and 8. Contact Richard Thompson on 01527 821821 or email richard.paul.thompson@dsl.pipex.com
- 24/25 Club Doubles
- 28 Committee Meeting

#### October

- 1/2 Club Singles
- 9 Inter-Club Murphy Shield Final

#### November

- 11 AGM & Party

\*B-Class tournaments are organised by clubs on behalf of The Croquet Association. To take part you have to be a CA Tournament member or have never previously played in one of these matches before - in the latter instance you are allowed one entry without being a Tournament member. Details of costs etc., can be obtained from John Cundell, Eve and Len Buckingham, David Ball, Roger Stroud or Richard Keighley. (Please note that the Watford event on 10th May is already full).

Entry lists for League, Friendlies and Inter-Club Murphy Shield events will be posted in the Clubroom as per normal.

### Leighton-Linslade Civic Service of Thanksgiving

Chairman David Ball, Secretary Roger Stroud, Vice-Chairman John Cundell - together with Jean Ball and Judith Cundell attended the above service at St. Barnabas Parish Church Linslade on Sunday 13th February at the invitation of Cllr Gordon Perham, Town Mayor, in aid of the Mayor's Charities, LB & District Branch MS Society and Leighton-Linslade Cancer Support Group.

### Annual Dinner

This year's dinner will be at Leighton Buzzard Golf Club, Plantation Road on Friday 25th March. Forms were distributed at the AGM and by post thereafter. All spaces are now filled.

### Official Opening by LL Town Mayor

All members are warmly invited to attend the official opening of the season by Town Mayor Councillor Gordon Perham and the Mayoress, Mrs Perham at 2.00pm on Sunday 3rd April. Please be in attendance by 1.45pm.

### Golf Croquet Improvers Coaching

Richard Keighley is organising a Golf Croquet Improvers Coaching day on Monday 6th June at Page's Park. This will be open to both LL members and local clubs. There will be a charge of £10 per applicant - tea/coffee and biscuits provided but bring your own lunch. Initially, LL club members interested should apply to John Cundell. Please note that places will be offered in the first instance to players who did not take part in last year's course. The idea of the course is to expand the pool of players who might participate in Friendlies, League and outside tournaments. Those who took part last year will be placed on a reserve list.

## Inter-Counties Tournament

This is a new event and is a team competition between the six counties comprising the EACF, taking place over a single day and including singles and doubles games for all players at level play. The six counties are Beds., Essex, Herts., Norfolk, Suffolk and an EACF Select team led by Terrey Sparks as Cambs. is not able to field a team. Each county team will comprise four players with a total team aggregate handicap of not less than 8. The Team Captain for Beds. is John Cundell. Players must either be born, reside or be registered with a club within Beds., plus the addition of Northampton and Stony Stratford clubs. The tournament will be at Hunstanton CC on 11th June. There will be an entry fee of £26 per team. Any members wishing to be considered are asked to give their name and handicap to John Cundell.

## Club Handicap Events

Members will recall that it was agreed for 2010 that all members who wish to take part in Club Handicap competitions must have played at least 10 handicap games, preferably against a variety of players, in the available sessions prior to the competitions. This policy will continue into 2011 but should not cause the problems that arose in 2010 as most interested members completed their required number of games in 2010.

## Selection Committee

The general consensus from members was that the 'selection committee' arrangement for last year was successful and the committee has agreed that it will continue for 2011. The committee members are Len Buckingham, John Cundell, Eve Buckingham, George Lawson, John Thorp and Tony Wells.

The committee will be responsible for selecting both 'A' and 'B' League Teams plus Inter-Club Murphy Shield Team.

## Hunstanton Friendly Weekend

Please note that the date for this event has been changed from that published in last month's newsletter. It is now 30/31st July - NOT 16/17th July.



At The White House on Wednesday evening 19th January, annual awards were made to local sporting organisations and individuals, presented by Mayor Councillor Gordon Perham. We received a grant towards allowing the Club to further improve their organisational expertise which was collected by Len Buckingham, whilst John Cundell shared the male 'Service Towards Sports Award' given for individuals who have made a significant contribution to their club and their sport in general.

## Hunstanton Invitation Weekend

This is an annual open event at Hunstanton over 6/7th August. Saturday is all Singles in two sections - (A) Level play for lower handicaps; and (B) Handicap play. Sunday is Pro-am Doubles where partners will be allocated by the club as per Handicap. The entry fee is £10 per player per day which includes light refreshments. For an application form go to [www.hunstantoncroquetclub.co.uk](http://www.hunstantoncroquetclub.co.uk).

## World Golf Croquet Championships

Some members may be interested to know that the World Golf Croquet Championships will be held at The Hurlingham Club, London between 18-24th July.

Also, Hunstanton CC is hosting the second Under 21 Golf Croquet World Championship from 12-15th July - which is the reason our Friendly with them has been moved back two weeks. The Championship will also serve as a qualifying event for the WCF Bestinvest Golf Croquet World Championship the following week at the Hurlingham Club. The two highest placed finishers in this event, who are available and who have not already gained places for the GC World Championship, will each be awarded a place in the GC World Championship. From the information above it sounds like a visit to Hunstanton during the week may be worthwhile to watch some of the action - and/or to Hurlingham the following week.

## Archivist no longer required!

You may have noted from the list of roles published within the AGM report in our last newsletter that we were looking for a volunteer to look after our archives. This has been built up over 11 years and records the Club's activities in photographic and the printed word, plus Margaret Brown's history of the Club's first ten years, John Cundell and Richard's booklet on Golf Croquet, and other information. The new Archivist is Malcolm Kirby and we thank him for stepping forward to take on this interesting and important post.

## Good Quality Chairs required

If any member has some spare good quality chairs, preferably stackable, that they no longer require, the Club would be pleased to find a home for them. Some of our existing chairs need to be discarded due to age and weakness. If you can help please let Len or John know. Please note they must be in good condition and have been stored under cover as sunlight degrades the plastic as well as normal wear and tear.

## Telephone List

A list of members' telephone numbers for your use in arranging sessions with other members if you so wish will be available as soon as the season starts. This will be emailed where possible and available to other members in the Clubroom.

## Risk Assessment

Members may recall that at the AGM in 2009 our Chairman informed us that as a condition of our continued use of the Page's Park facilities, we **have** to provide a Health and Safety Risk Assessment for the Club, to be distributed to all members. This has taken some time to complete as it had to go back and forth between the Club



and the Town Council a number of times. We are now in a position to circulate this and a copy will also be displayed in the Clubroom. We are also required to inform visiting clubs and friends and bring it to their attention.

**You will find a copy with this newsletter. You will also find an acknowledgement slip. You are required to read the Risk Assessment and to print out and sign the acknowledgement slip of paper at the end of the newsletter, and to either send that back to**

**our Membership Secretary Judith Cundell or hand same to Judith, John Cundell or David Ball. Signing and returning the acknowledgement form is a condition of membership.**

The committee would like to take this opportunity of thanking all those members who assisted in the drafting of the Risk Assessment, in particular Tom Miller, Richard Keighley, John Cundell, John Thorp and Peter and Irene Stevens.



### **Subscription Reminder - Club Membership**

If you haven't yet paid this year's subscription you will find another membership application form with this newsletter in case you may have mislaid the original copy. Please complete this and send with the appropriate remittance to the Membership Secretary, Judith Cundell, whose contact details are on the form and on the masthead of this newsletter.

If you have an email address please include this as we would like to send as many newsletters and other communications as possible by this method. Postage costs are now very expensive and as club outgoings are going to rise significantly now that we will be doing much of our own court maintenance, then every penny we can save is important.

### **From Tom, not a BAFTA acceptance speech BUT.....**

Elsewhere, John has commented kindly on my presentation to the LLTC L&C Committee. However, it would be very remiss if many other people were not thanked for helping to achieve this latest milestone in the Club's short but illustrious history.

First, we are all indebted to David, Len and John for signing the Licence and, hence, taking on the responsibility for the Club's adherence to its contents. Secondly, Richard Keighley's initial drafting of the Licence proved to be absolutely invaluable. Finally, I have to thank so many more members for giving me such a positive and successful story to convey to the Town Council. To all those who have served: from the scorers and their manager to the players in league and friendly fixtures; from the Fixtures Secretary to the Fun Day organiser; from the General Committee to the Membership Secretary; from the Quartermaster to the Catering Manager and all the ladies who produce those wonderful cakes and last, but definitely not least, from my predecessor Chairmen to those who, time after time, turn out early to set up gazebos and set out the courts etc. so that the rest of us can enjoy ourselves. Thank you!

### **Tom Miller's Address to LLTC L&C**

Chair, Councillors.

My name is Tom Miller and I am Immediate Past Chair of the Leighton-Linslade Croquet Club. I have, of course, addressed the Committee twice before on the subject of the hire of Page's Park pavilion for a Social Club, run by the Croquet Club. However, this evening I am here on a totally separate matter, namely to commend to you the proposed licence between the Town Council and the Croquet Club - item 15 on your agenda.

The Croquet Club was founded in 2000, with the encouragement and agreement of LLTC, with 35 founder members playing on two undersize lawns in Page's Park. Since then, we have been extremely fortunate in the support the Council has afforded us, for which we are most grateful, and we now have nearly 60 members and three full size courts.

For our part, we have contributed nearly £10K to the Council, in rentals and donations, and have put Leighton-Linslade on the croquet map.

We play a version of croquet known as Golf Croquet, which is fully recognised under The Croquet Association, of which we are members. Indeed, last year, two of our members updated the official guide to Golf Croquet, as published by the Association, and one of our members was awarded the Croquet Association Diploma for his contribution to the sport.

We field two teams in the East Anglian Croquet Federation's League. In 2005, we won the League and missed out, last year, by just one hoop in the season long campaign. In 2009, we reached the national final of the Inter Club Plate competition. Unfortunately, we lost to our old rivals Letchworth. However, in the brief speeches afterwards, their chairman said that LLCC is a beacon in the region in respect of membership numbers, the support and enthusiasm of members and general development of the Club.

Two of our members have been recipients of the Leighton-Linslade District Sports Council's Service to Sport awards.

Whenever we are playing and the Leighton Buzzard Railway is operating, you will find members enthusiastically waving to passengers, who reciprocate, just as we specifically made sure we did, resplendent in our "whites", for the judges of Anglia in Bloom.

Until now we have used the courts at Page's Park on a season - that is March to October - by season basis. This lack of security of tenure is now likely to limit the Club's further development, as awarding bodies, including The Croquet Association, look for some certainty of the longevity of, what they see as, investing in our sport.

Hence, we are seeking to formalise what has been the historic situation but with some significant changes, which are to the Council's advantage. During the negotiations with the Council Officers, they indicated that the Council would be looking for cost efficiencies. Therefore, the Club has offered to take over responsibility for the lawn treatments - fertilising, weed killing, scarifying and the like - and white lining the marking out of the courts. However, and significantly, we have offered to maintain the same fee structure based on last year's sum. Your revenue remains the same and increases by 5% per annum, while the Club takes on costs you have previously paid.

This will not be straight forward for us. With a membership whose approximate average age is 72, we do not have a totally elastic market and will have to be innovative with ways of increasing revenues. But we are up for the challenge!

In conclusion, this is, as they say, a win-win proposal. The Croquet Club gets up to six years security of tenure and can continue to play its sport in the town. The Council gets the same revenue, including yearly increments, with less input to the maintenance of the lawns.

In closing, I must pay tribute to the input of the Council Officers.

Chair, Councillors - I commend the proposed licence to you and trust you will agree to it being implemented. Thank you.





## Leighton-Linslade Croquet Club

# Health and Safety Risk Assessment - version 4 at 24th February 2011



**Method of assessment:** Overall risk is assessed as a combination of the Likelihood (L) x Severity (S) to arrive at the Rating shown.

L is assessed with ratings of: 1. Low or seldom; 2. Medium or frequently; 3. High - certain or near certain.

S is assessed with ratings of: 1. Minor - cuts or bruises; 2. Medium - serious injury; 3. High - fatality or serious injuries.

The resulting Risk Rating factors are then categorised as: from 1 to 3 - low priority; from 4 to 6 - medium priority; from 7 to 9 - high priority.

Ref	Location	Hazard	Risk			Control & Precautions
			L	S	Rating	
1	Steps to the Club room	Tripping and slipping.	1	2	2	Use handrails provided.
2	Walkway to/from the lawns.	Tripping and slipping.	1	2	2	Potential hazards to be advised once to all members.
3	Lawn embankment to/from Lawn 3.	Tripping and slipping.	1	2	2	Avoid moving excess equipment on one journey when conditions are wet.
4	Croquet lawns: Setting out and clearance of equipment.	Injury from tools and equipment.	1	2	2	Potential hazards to be advised once to all members.
5	Croquet lawns: Access for play.	Tripping and slipping if stepping over fence.	1	2	2	Fence gate must be open before setting out a lawn and when lawn is in play. This entrance to be used to enter & exit the lawn.
6	Croquet lawns.	Surface chemicals and herbicides	1	2	2	Council staff to notify LLCC when lawns have been treated. Advise members to wash after contact with treatments. Shoes to be worn at all times.
7	Croquet lawns.	UV radiation: short and long term damage to the skin (Melanoma).	2	1	2	Advise members to take necessary precautions. Club room, umbrellas and gazebos available for added shade.
8	Croquet lawns.	Fast moving croquet balls; misdirected croquet mallets.	2	1	2	Members to be aware of and alert any person (including the public) standing in the line of an intended shot. Members to be alert to the play of others, including on other lawns.
9	Croquet lawns.	Tripping; falling over.	2	2	4	Members to be aware of position of hoops, balls, peg and other players, especially when moving backwards.
10	Croquet lawns and surrounding areas	Injury to feet	1	2	2	Shoes to be worn to avoid potential injury from debris, chemicals and equipment.
11	Club room - general area.	a) Chairs collapsing. b) Erecting & collapsing gazebos & folding tables. c) Lifting & carrying gazebos & folding tables.	1	2	2	a) Users to check plastic chairs for wear and tear before use. b) There must be 2 people to erect/dismantle gazebos, one of whom must be familiar with the task. Manufacturer's instructions are on club room notice board. c) Any one erecting or folding a table for the first time must seek advice from a member who is familiar with the task. d) Two people should lift or carry a gazebo or folding table.
12	Club room - general area.	Injury from water heater.	3	2	6	Warning notice "Heat Hazard" attached to the heater.
13	Club room & entry to toilets	Roller shutter	*	*	*	*

- Notes:
- a) \* Under consideration
  - b) "Council" = landlord = Leighton-Linslade Town Council
  - c) This page will be available in the Club room
  - d) Members who bring guests should draw their attention to this document
  - e) Visiting clubs will be advised that it can be consulted in the Club room
  - f) This document is to be reviewed annually by the Club's General Committee.