

**Draft**

# East Anglian Croquet Federation

## Minutes of the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting

### 17<sup>th</sup> March 2018

The 31<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting of the East Anglian Croquet Federation was held at 'The Newport Club', Frambury Lane, Newport, Essex, CB11 3PU

The meeting was opened at 14.00pm by the chairman George Collin.

**Present:** George Collin, Terrey Sparks, Arthur Reed, John Noble, Tracy Martin, Brian Havill, Jonathan Toye, Timothy Ham, Marion Goodchild, Roy Darling, Francis Lambert & Andrew Fall.

#### **1. Apologies for absence:**

Duncan Hector, Cliff Jones & Simon Hathrell (Committee), Norwich, Bury St Edmunds, Chelmsford, Northampton, Southchurch, Bodham & Maldon.

#### **2. Minutes of the previous meeting:**

The draft minutes of the 2017 AGM had been circulated and were available on the website. The minutes were proposed by Jonathan Toye & seconded by Arthur Reed which, were approved by the meeting without comment.

#### **3. Annual reports from the Officers:**

##### **3.1 Chairman**

George Collin introduced himself to the meeting and welcomed all those present stating that the previous year had gone well with several clubs performing well nationally as well as locally.

##### **3.2 Treasurer**

Arthur Reed circulated the 2017 accounts and a report to the meeting (Appendix 1). In summary

- \* There is still a healthy balance in the Barclays & National Westminster accounts.
- \* There was a surplus for the year of £895.
- \* He recommended in view of the healthy state of financial affairs the subscriptions for next year stay unchanged at £20 for standard membership & £10 for associate membership.

The **accounts** were agreed following a proposal by John Noble & seconded by Terrey Sparks.

##### **3.3 Secretary**

Terrey Sparks presented to the meeting a written report (Appendix 2) outlining that overall things had gone well during the year and there had been very good co-operation from the clubs.

- \*there were 28 clubs registered, Mid-Suffolk not registered for the second year position to be clarified.
- \* regarding the C.A. Insurance PLC policy are we still covered? And should we be in receipt of the required certificate, Ian Vincent to clarify the matter.
- \* Reports from the Secretary and Simon Hathrell submitted regarding the AC Handicap Leagues. (Appendix 2a & 2b).

\*Congratulations to Watford winning both the Mary Rose and Murphy Shield, also to David Barnicoat, Enfield for winning the GC Handicap Trophy.

### **3.4 Development & Equipment**

Jonathan Toye presented a short written report (Appendix 3) outlining the current position in Regards to Cambridge University (CUCC) and that equipment is now on loan to Alison Jones and New Hall School.

- \* Wrest Park had surplus equipment available – to look into the possibility of including in pool.
- \* Hickling U3A (North Walsham) having four lawns currently holding equipment are in the process of purchasing double set of equipment from the C.A.
- \* He is to visit a group currently meeting at Winterton-on-Sea Village Hall.
- \* Histon Club have applied for a grant to acquire extra storage space.
- \* To encourage recruitment a passport scheme for students is currently under review by The C.A. In which sponsorship of £25 per student per student will be made to clubs. Details to be published at a later date.

### **3.5 Coaching**

Cliff Jones had submitted an apology by e-mail as he was currently away in Dublin.

- \* He reported that all arranged coaching went ahead as planned for 2017 and he will be running more around the country this year. There are two possibly three courses planned for Wrest Park to be arranged.
- \* He is also coaching on a one to one basis also at Wrest Park and so far had several requests.
- \* His health is not all that it could be at the moment, but is improving.

### **3.6 Golf Croquet**

John Noble & Tracy Martin had submitted a comprehensive report (Appendix 4) explaining that 2017 had gone very well with all leagues completing their fixtures on time with no major problems. After consulting all participating clubs they also outlined their proposals for the 2018 leagues which looked to the future and not the past and asked that these new regulations be accepted. Arthur Reed queried the proposed rules for 2018 for the open, B-level and Handicap leagues. He queried the wording in paragraph 2 of the rules for the B-level and it was agreed that this should be amended so that inadvertently declaring the wrong handicap would not carry any penalty unless it affected the eligibility of the player to participate. Subject to this change the rules for all three leagues were agreed, following a proposal by Andrew Fall seconded by Francis Lambert. It was also agreed that a cut-off date of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 for entries be circulated to all clubs.

### **3.7 Indoors (Soham)**

Terrey Sparks reported (Appendix 5) outlining the overall position in regards to the indoor carpet situated at Soham Leisure Centre in which there had been a 94% take of spaces spread over six week-ends over the winter and went very smoothly. However, Golf Croquet was not proving attractive and will be discontinued and replaced by AC next winter. The carpet is wearing well and shows little sign of further deterioration.

### **3.8 C.A. Representative**

Brian Havill reported that he is currently serving on the Publishing Committee, he also had attended two Council Meetings in which not a lot happens apart from agreeing Sub- Committee recommendations were the main work is undertaken.

### **3.9 Webmaster**

Simon Hathrell in his absence had submitted a detailed report (Appendix 6) split into three parts outlining the general running of the site, The Court Booking System and Security. The site had continued to operate last year without any particular problems and with-in a reasonable cost.

### **4. Election of the Committee**

There were no additional nominations for office and following the resignation by Duncan Hector from the Committee the following were elected en-bloc following a proposal by Roy Daring, seconded by Andrew Fall:

\* George Collin - (Chairman), Terrey Sparks (Secretary), Arthur Reed (Treasurer), Jonathan Toye (Development & Equipment), Cliff Jones (Coaching), Simon Hathrell (Webmaster), Brian Havill (C.A. Representative), John Noble & Tracy Martin (G.C. Leagues).

\* Duncan Hector was thanked by the Chairman for his past service.

### **5. Honorary Examiner**

Trevor Hiorns had agreed to act as the Honorary Examiner for one more year and following a Proposal by Arthur Reed, Seconded by Terrey Sparks was unanimously elected.

### **6. Programme of Events**

The Secretary reported that apart from the AC & GC league fixtures which are yet to be formulated all other events which are a repeat of 2017 are published on the web-site. Which include both the AC & GC Club Champions & The Ken Wheeler Shield. The dates for the indoor winter programme are also yet to be finalised.

### **7. C.A. Federation Working Parties**

Dave Gunn the recently appointed C.A. National Development Officer had set up five working parties who's aim is to encourage Federations members to meet to share ideas and practices in a national attempt to increase an interest in croquet and membership in the UK. These comprise a) Direct Support to Clubs, b) Marketing, c) Player Retention & Development, d) Communication & e) Resources. There have already been initial meetings and workshops and it is planned regular reports will be published in both the Gazette and on the web-site.

Members representing the eastern region are George Collin, Cliff Jones, Simon Hathrell & Jonathan Toye.

### **8. Any Other Business**

Following a query from a club it was confirmed that coloured shirts are permitted in league matches providing that they fulfil the conditions laid out in CA Tournament Regulations and each team member wears similar. The GC League Regulations have been amended accordingly.

### **9. Date of Next Meeting**

The Secretary was instructed to determine a suitable date & place for the next AGM in 2019.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 15.50hrs thanking all those Officers who had put in considerable efforts in preparing their annual reports.

# EAST ANGLIAN CROQUET FEDERATION

## Treasurer's Report

AGM and Committee Meeting 17<sup>th</sup> March 2018

### 1. Bank accounts

#### Barclays Bank

The balance as at 14<sup>th</sup> February was **£4,700.57**

#### Nationwide

There have been no deposits or withdrawals during the past year and the present balance is **£3,572.13**.

### 2. 2017 Examined Accounts.

Copies of the accounts have been sent out to clubs and copies of the original signed accounts will be available at the AGM. There was a surplus of **£895.77** on the Income and Expenditure Account compared with £801.62 in the previous year. The number of clubs remained the same but there was a small decrease in subscription income due to one late payment for 2015 being included in the 2016 accounts. Other sources of income were similar to last year apart from a significant improvement in the surplus achieved from the indoor croquet weekends due to more participants. Expenditure remained low although there was an increase since last year. One factor was the need to hire the Ashwell Village Hall for the AGM. The prepayment of £58.35 is for website hosting for 2018 as this is billed for a 2 year period.

The £128 shown under creditors is for lawn hire fees due to Colchester Croquet Club for hosting the AC Champions Day in April. Colchester had overlooked invoicing for this at the time but this has now been corrected and the invoice paid.

In summary it has been a very satisfactory year financially due to the work undertaken by event organisers. The balance carried forward is **£7647.05**.

### 3. Examiner

Trevor Hiorns has examined the 2017 accounts and signed them. He has agreed to continue as examiner for a further year subject to approval at the AGM.

### 4. 2018 Figures

The attached table shows the payments received as at 20<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

A. Reed

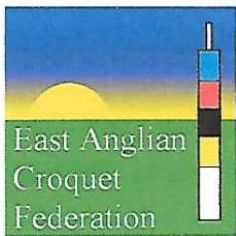
**EAST ANGLIAN CROQUET FEDERATION**  
Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017

	2017	2016
	£	£
<b>Income</b>		
Subscriptions	560.00	580.00
Equipment hire and sales	50.00	50.00
Interest received	3.57	7.57
Net surpluses on playing activities		
GC leagues	99.00	102.00
GC Inter-Counties –Ken Wheeler Shield	32.00	37.00
AC Champions Day –see deficit below	-----	4.00
AC League	54.00	67.00
Indoor Croquet	<u>270.00</u>	<u>42.50</u>
	<b><u>1068.57</u></b>	<b><u>890.07</u></b>
<b>Less Expenditure</b>		
Sundry Expenses	25.75	25.94
AGM Hall Hire	36.00	---
Website	59.00	50.51
Equipment, indoor	20.05	---
Equipment outdoor	-----	---
Net deficits on playing activities		
GC Champions Day	8.00	12.00
AC Champions Day	24.00	---
	<b><u>172.80</u></b>	<b><u>88.45</u></b>
Surplus for the year	<b><u>895.77</u></b>	<b><u>801.62</u></b>
<b>Balance Sheet</b>		
Funds brought forward	6751.28	5949.66
Add surplus for the year	895.77	801.62
Funds carried forward	<b><u>7647.05</u></b>	<b><u>6751.28</u></b>
Represented by:		
Barclays Bank	4144.57	3182.72
Nationwide Building Society	3572.13	3568.56
Debtors and prepayments	58.35	-----
Less creditors	(128.00)	-----
	<b><u>7647.05</u></b>	<b><u>6751.28</u></b>
Arthur Reed .....		
Honorary Treasurer		

I have examined the books and records of The East Anglian Croquet Federation. The above accounts are in accordance therewith and with the information and explanations I have received.

Trevor Hiorns .....

Honorary Examiner



## 2018 Annual General Meeting - Secretary's Report

For the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 membership of the E.A.C.F. totalled 28 clubs. As the majority of the secretarial duties are undertaken during the period January – March preparing for the summer season and as I did not assume office until the March AGM most of this work had been completed by Arthur Reed and Simon Hathrell, which left me very little admin work to do apart from getting my feet under the table.

Overall, co-operation has been very good with all clubs and it has been a quite successful year.

All events on the Calendar were well participated in by the clubs and went well, which shows that a good inter-club spirit exists in the region. The results of these events are fully published on the Federations web-site and thanks go to all those clubs who made their lawns available. I should like to mention that The E.A.C.F. does have a policy of hiring these lawns at the current C.A. Daily rate which stands at £32 per day per lawn which is the reason for the current level of entry fees.

The calendar opened in April with the AC Inter-Club Championship Tournament which was staged at Colchester. Entries were for some reason slightly down this year but still at an acceptable level. The Open 'A' Level Event was won by Jack Wicks of the home club. The 'B' Level by Jonathan Toye of Downham Market and the Handicap event by David Wicks of Ipswich (No Relation).

The next event was 'The Ken Wheeler Shield' Inter-Counties GC 'B' Level again staged at Hunstanton on the clubs five lawns and was narrowly won by Watford for the fourth time in the seven year since the tournament was introduced and still proving very popular.

The GC Inter-Club Championship Tournament was this year played on the newly laid lawns at Wrest Park which are improving rapidly and becoming a must for staging Federation and C.A. events. This attracted a full entry and the Open Level event was won by David Frost of Enfield. Paul Homer of Ipswich was the winner of the Handicap.

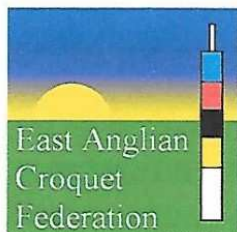
At the national level it has been a very successful years for clubs in our region in particular Watford in that they won both the AC Mary Rose and GC Murphy Shield beating Pendle in both finals. Unfortunately, Wrest Park lost to Pendle in the AC semi's thus preventing a regional final. Hunstanton also losing to Pendle in the Murphy GC semi's likewise, just failing to make it an all eastern area final. However, congratulations to the Watford club on a splendid effort.

In the AC Longman Trophy both Enfield and Hunstanton lost out in the semi's and met in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place play-off for the Longman Tankard won by Hunstanton.

Also worth a special mention is the Peterborough Club who this year became a two lawn club and successfully staged the final of the National GC Inter club final between Ashby and Letchworth attracting well deserved praise for preparing a first class venue. Despite losing to Ashby a valiant effort by another of our eastern based clubs.

Whilst on the subject of venues, I understand that the third lawn at Watford is well on the way to completion and will be ready by 2019 hopefully, another available venue that might open up to a Federation visit.

Finally, the 2018 year will be the first year of the C.A.'s expansion of the membership and this should make UK wide tournaments available to around six thousand new members. It will be interesting to see what effect it has on clubs in our region.



## 2018 Annual General Meeting

### A.C. Handicap league Report

Teams from 15 clubs entered the AC Handicap league during the 2017 year. The Beds/Herts region attracted 7 Entries and was won by Watford. The Essex/Suffolk region attracted 5 entries and was won by Ipswich. The Cambs/ Norfolk region had 3 entries and was won by Norwich.

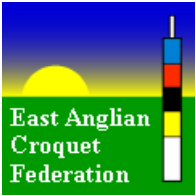
All three successful clubs took part in the regional play-off held at Hunstanton on 1<sup>st</sup> October and which resulted in a three-way tie. Norwich were quickly eliminated as they had more games finish out of time leaving Ipswich and Watford to decide the winning position by a shoot-out which was subsequently won by Watford.

Watford will therefore, represent The Eastern Region during 2018 in the National Event 'The Secretaries Shield'.

It has been decided that in future years that for a tied result in the final The Shoot-Out will be participated in by all team members rather than one nominated player.

Terrey Sparks  
AC League Organiser

March 2018



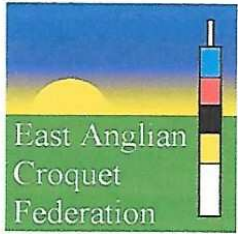
## EACF AGM – Beds & Herts AC League

The Beds & Herts league has been very stable in recent years, with the same 7 clubs or teams participating since 2012, and with only the occasional minor tweak to the league rules to cater for things like the CA's trial of an alternative doubles handicap calculation. The same 7 teams (6 clubs plus one team from two clubs) are expected to participate again in 2018 under exactly the same rules as for 2017.

In 2017 the league was won by Watford, for the first time since 2011, and Watford went on to win the Chairman's Cup in the play-off against Ipswich and Norwich at Hunstanton. Meanwhile the 2016 winners, St. Albans, suffered a surprising reversal of fortunes and came last in 2017. It all goes to show that anything can happen!

Simon Hathrell  
February 2018





## 2018 Annual General Meeting

### Development Officer's Report

Positive developments announced in Cambridge at the inaugural dinner at St Catherine's College on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2018 celebrating the new Cambridge University Croquet Club. CUCC doesn't have a home at present but there are lots of options to explore (as debated at the dinner). These include possible shared facilities with a bowls club, new lawns at Histon, and the slight chance of piggy backing on sports club development proposed nearby. Cocks and Hens seem unfortunately destined to remain solely a tennis Club at their new location near the rugby club.

Equipment loans continue for Alison Jones in Essex and New Hall School

Jonathan Toye  
Development Officer

March 2018

# 2017 GOLF CROQUET REPORT

## LEVEL PLAY

The Final was held at Ipswich on Sunday 16 October between Colchester and Watford: Watford won 12 games to 2. A successful season with a high standard of play throughout. Twelve teams took part: Norwich entering for the first time and finishing fourth in the North&Central Area.

The season was extended to the end of September and unlike previous seasons all 30 block matches were played.

Home team captains have had the responsibility to submit the results for inclusion in CGS since the 2016 season. Submission was, in general, more prompt in 2017 and I received fewer moans and requests to chase home team captains.

## HANDICAP

The Final was held at Newport on Sunday 1 October between Enfield (E) and Stony Stratford and, for the second year, finished as a draw. However, it had been decided beforehand that, rather than a play-off, any draw would be decided on hoop difference – giving Stony Stratford the win at 100 hoops to 93.

26 teams took part in the League this year, with the season kicking off with the first match on 28 April. The last block match was played on 28 August, allowing the semi-finals to be played at Letchworth and Wrest Park on 10 September as scheduled.

Seven matches were played using the one-court format: two each at Sudbury and Thorpeness and three at Meldreth. Feedback continues to be positive.

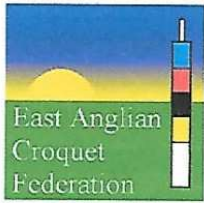
## PLANS FOR 2018

Various ideas were circulated amongst team captains for changes to the GC leagues in 2018 reflecting – and attempting to respond to – the many solicited views and unsolicited comments that the Managers receive each year. Nineteen clubs responded to the consultation note, many were deeply considered responses that reflect the high level of interest and engagement within our region. Some ideas were almost universally welcomed – such as the proposed introduction of a new 3-plus level play league – other less so. As a result of this consultation the plans for 2018 were revised and were subsequently circulated to Club Secretaries together with the application forms for the leagues. The plans are now codified in the attached Rules. [Comment: On the advice of Martin French we have made one amendment to the Rules of the Handicap league, that is, to remove the restriction on players with a handicap below zero.]

## TEAMS

The geographic spread of teams which participated in the two leagues was essentially the same as in 2016 although Enfield was able to field a third handicap team, which was allocated to the Eastern area.

League	Area	Team
Level Play League	North & Central Area	Bury St. Edmunds
		Colchester
		Hunstanton
		Ipswich
		Newport
		Norwich
	East & West Area	Chelmsford
		Enfield
		Leighton Linlade
		Letchworth
2017 Handicap League	Central Area	Enfield (S)
		Enfield (West)
		Letchworth (Blue)
		Letchworth (Red)
		Meldreth
		Newport (Elms)
		Newport (Oaks)
	Eastern Area	Chelmsford (Green)
		Chelmsford (Blue)
		Colchester
		Maldon (Lakeside)
		Maldon (Pavilion)
		Enfield (E)
	North & Mid Area	Southchurch
		Bury St. Edmunds
		Hunstanton
		Ipswich
		Norwich
		Sudbury
		Thorpeness
Western Area	Leighton Linlade	
	Northampton (Hoops)	
	Northampton (Mallets)	
	Stony Stratford	
	Watford	
Wrest Park		



## 2018 Annual General Meeting

### Soham Report Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018

It has been a very successful year indoors at The Soham Sports Centre where the Federation ran 6 week-ends over the winters split by the summer months. Participation was high and we have struck up a good rapport with Claire the manageress who is most accommodating to our requirements.

We have managed to build up a good interest indoors and regularly attract from around 15 of our clubs 37 regular members plus 6 players from outside the region. The standard of play is high and very competitive and continuing to rise that on occasions to reflect this, the regulations have to be updated. The carpet continues to wear well and is still in a reasonable condition.

On each day we can accommodate 16 participants split into 8 pairs and over the period we averaged 94% of this figure, ie 15 per session. This brought in a gross income of £3,150 from which £2880 was extracted in hall hire fees (£480 per week-end) leaving a surplus of £270 to be transferred to Federation funds. From this there has been some small expenditure on items such as clips, computer cables and other miscellaneous items.

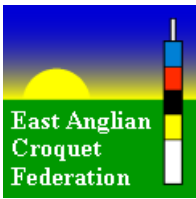
Over the summer months whilst we were playing outside in the sun the Hall Committee undertook some improvements to the hall in that the inefficient fluorescence lights were replaced with LED bulbs which, has much improved the overall vision. In addition work was undertaken on the flooring to relevel the surface. Since when the hall staff set up the carpet they rotate the positioning around the floor to even out wear and prevent future runs.

We have now been using the electronic timers for the last three years and this has proved to be very well received in that players can keep a better view on the clock where time is vital. In addition we now have enough players familiar with the computer equipment too set up and operate which, means I no longer have to arrange for Duncan Hector to be there for an early start at every session. Thanks also go to both Duncan for successfully setting the system up and our webmaster Simon Hathrell for providing the computer programme.

It looks that in the future we shall have to abandon the one session that is put aside for Golf Croquet in January. Due to the difficulty of running the hoops the higher handicap players do not find it enjoyable to play on which, means that we are left with the better lower handicaps playing to a higher standard. To compound matters because of this being on the smaller carpet hoop running positioned balls are regularly cleared from a distance preventing players from scoring so it is proving difficult to finish games in an allotted time span and we are ending with low scoring games which is proving unsatisfactory. It should be possible to fill this space with AC Speed Croquet.

Terrey Sparks  
Indoors Tournament Organiser

March 2018



# EACF AGM - Webmaster's report

The EACF website has continued to operating normally for the last year without any particular problems. The hosting service was renewed a year ago for another 2 years for a fee of £100.57, plus a domain registration fee of £16.78 to cover the same 2-year period.

The website as a whole now contains over 400 distinct pages, over 2,000 assorted photos and images, 350 documents and nearly 17,000 hyperlinks.

To date there have been over 1.25 million “hits”, of which roughly a half appear to come from real users and the other half from web-crawlers or “robots” such as Google or Bing. The most popular page overall is the home page, but only 25% of those visits are from people and 75% from robots. By far the most popular page amongst real people is the Court Booking System “day” view, which is effectively the home page of the CBS; it is now visited by real people about three times as often as the EACF home page. On the other hand few robots visit the CBS because there is some special code to ask them nicely not to (for performance reasons), and well-behaved robots pay attention to that.

There continue to be fairly frequent attempts made to hack into the website. The majority of them are evidently automated and quite elaborate attempts at ‘SQL injection’ in order to get access into the underlying database. The system logs suggest that these attacks come from all over the world, though it is relatively easy for hackers to disguise their location, so they could be anywhere. The website has numerous checks to detect and block these hacking attempts, and fortunately there is no evidence so far that any of them has yet succeeded.

### **Court Booking System**

The CBS has continued to grow in popularity, with Ludlow Castle Croquet Club from the West Midlands Federation recently starting to use it alongside the East Anglian clubs. This brings the total to 10 clubs using the system, with varying degrees of activity. Between them they have over 300 registered users, who have made over 27,000 bookings on 48 “virtual” courts. (Each physical court is commonly represented as two “virtual” courts in order to enable double-banked bookings.) Note that for “repeat” bookings, each repetition is actually stored as a distinct booking and therefore counted separately.

At present the CBS database still only occupies 0.5% of the space available under our hosting contract, and the system appears to have a comfortable capacity for many more clubs should the need arise, though the practical size limit is unknown and may be constrained by other factors.

### **Security**

Both the EACF website and the CBS, which runs within it, still use the old, unencrypted “http” protocol to communicate between server and user. While this lack of security is of little concern for accessing public pages, it is a concern when it comes to users entering sensitive information, notably a password, in order to log in and be able to enter and edit data such as a court booking. Modern browsers typically recognise this deficiency and may warn the user that the website is insecure.

## Appendix 6

The standard way to address this concern is to use the secure “https” protocol instead, which provides two advantages: (1) encryption of any data such as passwords sent by users to the server, and (2) a certification mechanism which ensures that the domain being visited is indeed the genuine domain and not something substituted by an enterprising hacker.

The EACF has now agreed to pay a higher hosting fee in order to be able to use “https” instead of “http”. However, further investigation has revealed that although the necessary security certificates can now be obtained for free, our current hosting service does not offer this as an option, and only offers it as a paid extra, the effect of which would be to more than treble the hosting fee (discounted for the first year to a little more than double our current fee).

Therefore the option of migrating the hosting service to another provider that *does* offer the free security certificates as part of the package is under consideration. Meanwhile, an interim software solution has recently been implemented that provides part of the missing security, i.e. (1) above, encryption of passwords in transit, in the same manner as the https protocol. But browser warnings may still appear.

Simon Hathrell  
February 2018