

Chairmans Report February 2024

The past year has been a successful one in many respects. It was our Fiftieth year and was celebrated by three events. The first an evening Dinner dance followed by a special afternoon tea and then a match against a team from The English Indoor Bowls Association lead by its President Mr. Steve Boughton.

All of these events were superbly and meticulously organised by Peter and Elizabeth and their efforts were much appreciated by all. Also Peter and Judi have painstakingly researched the club's history and compiled this into a booklet which has been on display and is available for all to all buy.

This was the first time since Covid that we have felt confident enough to have a programme of social events. The Coffee Morning has been an outstanding success. It is becoming increasingly popular and is attracting excellent numbers and is providing an opportunity for our less able members to be brought along and meet up with their friends again. The Ploughman's lunch and quiz has proved to be another popular innovation.

A big vote of thanks must go to our Social Committee and their helpers for their efforts that made this progress possible.

On the bowls front the Weekend Matches have once again been well supported and attracted several of the newer bowlers and our thanks go to Bob Pomeroy for all his hard work. Similarly the Day leagues and competitions have been great fun with Grahame taking over the Day League and Joyce continuing with the competitions.

The evening leagues have been a struggle for Graham and we need members to give these games more support for next season.

Also under Graham's guidance and the coaching teams support, the club has regained a presence in the County League winning one of their games and finishing sixth in a league of seven.

The Tuesday evening combo. of coaching and playing built on the success of last year with a good attendance every week and our thanks go to JohnT and his coaches for the energy, freshness and fun they manage to bring to these evenings.

We have also seen an increase in the number of younger bowlers joining us in the evenings which is very encouraging and this has lead to *The Big Bash* event becoming a feature of Friday evenings. This has brought a short competitive game to these evenings with food being provided and a lot of fun being had by all. We must thank Chris and Janet for their efforts in getting this programme off the ground and growing our evening activities.

I hope that with the right support this will start a move back to the time when we had a much higher population of working members and the evenings were fully booked with two sessions most evenings.

The decline over recent years is something we have to continue to address if we want the club to be here in the future. The recruitment efforts this year are to be commended.

All of these successful ventures would not have been made possible without a hidden group of volunteers who have kept the facilities of the club in good order. How many of us realise that the playing surface is vacuumed weekly and the alarms tested on a similar basis. These are just two of the regular unnoticed activities that are at the heart of our club.

All of these activities and many more are covered by the Facilities team headed by Ken Herbert and this team needs your support. I would ask all of you to think how you can give a little of your time by either offering to carry out minor repairs or offer technical advice for projects to improve the club.

The bar and kitchen are in a similar situation and we have Pauline, a new member, keeping the kitchen topped up with supplies.

For the bar I have just recruited a few people to work as a team to ensure that the stock in the fridge and bar is kept up to date by moving items from the store for the members to enjoy.

Members contribution in these and other fields keep our costs down therefore keep down the fees you pay.

Those of you who have been members for a few years will remember the agreement for the club to become a Limited Company which was agreed in principle two years ago. The reason for this was to reduce the individual members personal liability to £1 and give its officers more protection in carrying out their duties.

The need for this is brought into sharp relief by the need to sign the lease which is in the final stages of preparation. To this end, work is ongoing to prepare all the documentation necessary for the transition of the club to "*A Company limited by Guarantee*" which is fully compliant with UK Gov and CASC requirements.

The ratification of this decision will be brought to the AGM together with the plan for its implementation at the earliest possible time during next year.

Over recent years we have enjoyed a high level of stability in our Management team but the time has come when some members wish to step down and enjoy the benefits of the club for which they have worked so hard without their current responsibilities.

This includes Peter and Elizabeth who have worked tirelessly over many difficult years to get the club to where it is now. We owe them an enormous debt of gratitude for their services and steering us through difficult times.

Mike Arnold is also stepping down as Membership Secretary having served for several years in this role and kept us in line at council meetings and kept you supplied with working key fobs!!

Finally a big thank you to you all for the support you have given the club over the last year

John Favell