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# THE B.B.C. NEWS

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## Hi Everyone

A few months ago, I told you that I would keep you up to date with developments at the Club. During the last year myself and your committee have been very busy working on club matters, even during the lockdown period.

In February 2020, we submitted an application for Brush to go on a development programme with the Bowls Development Alliance (BDA). The committee took this decision in response to falling membership numbers at our Club over the last couple of years. We, as a club, have been very proactive trying to get our membership numbers up during this period but sadly with very limited success. We are not on our own in this, as most bowls clubs, and most sports clubs in general, are all experiencing similar problems. The BDA have been running their development programme for several years and their record to-date, when it comes to recruitment and retention of members, has been very impressive.

Our application to the BDA was successful and we started their programme on July 1st. Following initial meetings, the first task was to come up with a Development Plan for the Club. By having a robust Development Plan, we were able to identify the things that were most important to the Club in the short, medium and long term and what actions would be required to achieve those things. Some of the first proposals to come out of those early discussions were as follows :-

Committee Structure – review and recommend changes/additions

Membership Questionnaire – get feedback on membership feelings about the club. Get better understanding of why membership recruitment and retention is low

Arrange meetings with our landlords (CBC) – to discuss aspects of our lease regarding any structural development plans and any opportunities for grant applications & sponsorship

Club Communications – review current methods and propose improvements

Club Website - review current website and propose improvements

Club Policy Documents – review and update all documents based on current guidelines and legislation. These include Data Protection (GDPR), Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Club Rules

I am pleased to report that all of the above have either been completed or have been started and will continue to be evolved over time.

As far as the committee structure is concerned, we have identified two new positions that will be put forward for ratification at the next AGM. These new positions are for a Development Manager and Sponsorship & Fundraising Officer and are very important additions to the current structure. The Development Manager role will include responsibilities for the Publicity Officer

which already exists. Both new roles, if accepted by the membership, will potentially help to put the Club into a much stronger position financially and will also be pivotal in driving future change within many aspects of the Club.

In addition to changes at committee level we will also be seeking to appoint members into five new Non-Committee roles. These roles will again need ratification at the next AGM. The positions, if accepted by the membership, will be Head Coach, Volunteer Coordinator, Membership Officer, Food Hygiene Officer and Welfare Officer. The Welfare Officer will assume responsibilities for Safeguarding and Health & Safety, which are currently dealt with by present members of the committee.

Job Outlines for all of these Committee (existing and new) and Non-Committee roles have been created so that responsibilities are very clearly identified. This will ensure that every elected member knows where they fit in within the Club and where they can influence how things are done.

As has always been the case, our Club is very reliant on the support and generosity of its members. Without volunteers, prepared to donate their valuable time and energy, we would not be able to continue. Hopefully, as time goes on, our membership numbers will increase and this inevitably will reduce the burden for everyone, but especially those who we always seem to call upon. The Club is very aware of the generosity from those individuals. Thank you.

The questionnaire that came out to everyone in August gave us some very useful feedback. It reinforced some of the concerns that we were already aware of but also gave some useful pointers on how some things could be improved and quickly. As a direct result of your comments we have totally updated the Club website, changed the format of the Club Newsletter (BBC News) and introduced the Brush Matters Magazine. Your feedback also led to the recent questionnaire relating to the relaxation of the dress code for Friday roll-ups, which has now been agreed.

Please take time to look at the Club Website. It is regularly being updated with everything that is going on within the Club and will be developed further next year. We are currently in the process of recruiting two University graduates, one of whom we hope, will be able to assist us with the more technical aspects of improving our website. The second graduate will be used to help us with our methods of recruitment and to widen our appeal to the local community via social media and advertising campaigns.

All of our Club Policy documents have recently been updated and copies of the current documents are available for everyone to view on the Club website.

You will be aware that we have previously had a set of Club Rules which have been the template for how the Club has been run in the past. In our recent attempts to get funding through grants, it has become evident that we need to have a proper Club Constitution in place as these are a requirement for most funding applications. As a result, a new Club Constitution has been compiled and will be submitted for ratification by members at the next AGM. This will supersede the current set of Club Rules, if accepted. A small list of Club Rules will still remain, but these will cover the more day-to-day rules for playing bowls.

Attempts to arrange a meeting with our landlords (CBC) have proved difficult during the Covid pandemic as most council workers are working from home. Our previous contact at the council has recently left, which hasn't helped us. However, I can confirm that there is a meeting now planned for December 8th. At that meeting we will take the opportunity to make the council fully aware of our future plans in the hope that they will be supportive. After all, they own the building that we lease and therefore stand to benefit from any improvements that we make. To keep our membership at sustainable levels we need to make our Club as attractive as possible and we need our landlord's support and consent to do this.

I hope, as promised, that I have given you some insight to what we have been doing. These are just the foundations, there are other parts of the Development Plan that will run well into next year. Most of what we have done already is working towards getting our membership moving in a positive direction. An Open Day, with the help and support of the BDA, will be arranged for early in the new season. This will be an essential part of our recruitment drive and it is vital that we all get behind it.

I will continue to update you with any further developments as and when they happen.

Kind Regards

Mick McAuliffe

President