



WELLINGTON (SOM) BOWLING CLUB

REPORTS OF THE 2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY NOVEMBER 11th

There was a 1-minute silence as we remembered members who had died during the past 12 months.

1 The Chair for the evening Henry Richbell declared the meeting open 7.10pm.

2 Apologies for absence

Richard Whiting, Martin Speakman, Graham Brown and Paul Kelly.

3 Presidents address by Ann Cowling

The last two years have been quite an adventure and honour for me to represent Wellington Bowling Club. Having to make speeches is not an easy task especially when you have to address other Presidents of different clubs and counties – all most helpful and friendly.

Chosen Charities – Your full support and donations meant we raised nearly £2000.00 for Reminiscence Learning, Guide Dogs for the Blind and Steve's chosen charity Air Ambulance. All cheques displayed in the club house. I know I keep repeating it “Thank you all.”

Remembrance Sunday

As Roland Bath was not able to carry on the laying of the Wreath on behalf of the club for health reasons, I was asked to do this in 2023 and this year my final duty as President. There was no hesitation in being part of this Remembrance Service in Wellington Park.

I thank all those who run our club for us all to benefit from the facilities/entertainment made available to us. Without them we would not have a club.

Most of all enjoy your bowling!

Signing off

Ann Cowling

Retiring President.

4 The minutes of the 2023 AGM held on the 13th November were approved.

5 Matters arising from the previous minutes. Mike Connor asked about the honours boards. Henry responded by stating that they were ready for collection but due to Paul Kelly's operation this had not been possible. We will now arrange for them to be delivered.

6 Chairperson's Comments Paul Kelly

Congratulations to all Members you have made 2024 a very enjoyable bowling experience for our own club members and all those visitors to our club that have played bowls against us this season. Our visitors enjoy visiting Wellington I have had very positive feedback from conversations with visiting players, a visit to Wellington is one they put their names down to play, and is looked forward to. You the members have made Wellington a welcoming Club. We have a very good clubhouse building and facilities that are well maintained by our members, decoration of indoor and outdoor areas has been carried out by groups of volunteers during the year that keeps the Clubhouse looking spic and span. Thank you to all that have given their time.

Members will see from the Annual Accounts we have made a small loss this year which is due to heavier spending on Assets the more costly items being The New Verticutter £3,500, New Gas Boiler £2,000. And all cost of maintaining the club increasing. These bigger items can be viewed as one off spends that our reserves are in place for, and why we need to have a reserve.

The outdoor surrounds will incur further one-off expenditures in the next year, which has already started with the removal of the hedge along the North side which was completed in early October. The invoice paid after year end was £1400, having accepted the lowest quote. Replacement gate for green equipment access (wooden gate and post has rotted and beyond repair). Green edge wooden support surrounds to the ditches are failing and will need replacing. Rather than replacing the tanned timber like for like which fails at around 6 years due to water sitting in the drilled holes to accommodate the rink marking, the option of using recycled plastic planks is now available. This option with costings will be put to the members at the AGM.

The Exec is very aware that the cost of bowling should be kept as low as possible, we have that responsibility as we represent the members and work to produce a viable and pleasant facility. Using our cash reserves on the items discussed above is what they were built up for. The membership fees we will hope to not increase for the 2025 season.

The indoor rink has been a disaster since work was carried out to check the underlying surface was level.

I would just like to state the facts as many stories have circulated. The mat and underlay were lifted and rolled back so that the chipboard surface could be inspected. Additional fixings were added and the floor is level, on replacing the underlay and top mat, problems arose with the underlay buckling when the top mat had tension applied. The contractor suggested that the underlay a product installed 18 months ago was the cause and agreed to replace the underlay at their cost with another material. While the previous underlay was just abutted together this material can be heat joined to make one continuous length down

the green. It was anticipated that would solve our problems. While the surface was better the carpet joins still made bumping bowls when stretched. The contractor has been made fully aware that we do not have a satisfactory playing surface despite two further attempts at achieving it. Currently the contractor as I am writing this, is due back to achieve that smooth surface. We are using the premier indoor carpet specialist in the country. I can only apologise to our Indoor members this work was started back in early July no one could foresee that we would have had such problems. We have retained part payment as an incentive to the contractor to produce a playing surface that is acceptable.

As I am sure you are all aware the running of the club is spread over many individuals that all contribute time, skills and knowledge I would like to make a personal thank you to you all for your contribution during the last year. We do have post that have no nominations prior to this AGM, without you the members coming forward to fill these the organisation of the club is at risk. Please consider what you can offer, if you are not sure what is involved or if you believe the task to big then job sharing is an option.

Regards Paul

Henry advised the meeting that the carpet had been re-laid and members felt it as now better. Steve Lovell asked if we have a guarantee for the latest works and unfortunately the answer is no. In view of this Henry authorised Phil Ellis to pay the remaining balance of the invoice.

7. Executive Committee Members Reports

Admin Coordinator's Report- Jay Merrell

Henry has asked me to write this year's Admin Coordinator's report because I was doing the job until the August Executive Committee meeting. At this meeting it was agreed I would continue with the fixture secretary duties and takeover the Indoor Secretary role which became vacant following Janet Moore's resignation. I felt I was unable to combine these two key roles with the Admin Coordinator role, so Henry kindly agreed to reprise the role he held with distinction between the February 2020 EGM and August 2022.

I would like to thank the Admin subcommittee members without whose help I would not have been able to complete the job. These members were- Brian Wombwell who retired as Admin assistant during the summer. We are delighted that Ann Cowling has agreed to take on this roll post 2024 AGM. Lynda Manning is our membership secretary. Martin Speakman publicity officer- Martin is looking to reduce his work in this role, please speak to him if you might like to help. Steve Lovell is Welfare Officer, a job he conducts in tandem with the Functions Coordinator roll. Henry is retiring as club safeguarding officer with Tracey kindly agreeing to replace him. Tracey brings a wealth of experience to this role which becomes a legal requirement for each club to have from 2025. The other role within the Admin Coordinator's sector is the webmaster, which I carry-out myself. If anyone has an interest in this area, please let me know. Populating the website with content is a job that can easily be shared.

The reason I gave up my place on the Executive Committee was because I felt unable to combine my other club roles with this one. You will note from the paragraph above that several Executive Committee members and other club officers hold more than one roll. I am fairly sure I speak for all when I say that ideally no club officer should have more than one role or responsibility, not only is this hard work but also can create a conflict of interest. If you care about the future of our bowls club, please consider whether you are able to give up a small amount of time in order to take on one of the club volunteer roles.

A potential revenue stream that has remained relatively unexploited by the club over recent years is sponsorship. The Executive are now taking this more seriously and so far, we have secured over £1000 in sponsorship from four different sources- Omoda Jaecoo are our first Gold sponsor, our thanks to Alan May for securing this lead. Sheppy's Cider Farm were our first Bronze Sponsor, this deal was secured by Steve Lovell as he negotiated the supply of cider from them. The easy funding website was setup from a recommendation by Paul Kelsall, in essence when a member shops online a percentage of the shopping value transfers to the club. So far this has raised nearly £300, though it should be noted only 15 members have signed up to this, if more did, I am certain the sums raised would exceed all other sources of sponsorship income. Finally, you may have noticed the small adverts around the bar, these have been obtained through our collaboration with mbcg media. While income from these is relatively small, so far just over £120, the money comes in with extraordinarily little effort on our part.

In the pipeline is a leaflet designed to be given to local businesses and service providers to obtain more sponsorship. Very shortly we will be receiving these leaflets, and we encourage all members to give them to local traders whom they may be doing business with. Potential sponsors will receive a summary of the sponsorship packages we offer and the benefits to them by partnering with us. My thanks to Clive Manning and Paul Kelsall for helping to design this leaflet.

Jay Merrell

Admin Coordinator until August 9th, 2024

Lynda has confirmed as of 1st November 2024 we had 255 members made up as follows:

	Men	Ladies	Total
Full Members	69	35	104
Outside Members	17	5	22
Indoor Members	25	14	39
Hemyock & Uffculme	7	0	7
Junior	0	1	1
Life Members (Playing)	1	1	2
Life Members (Social)	3	0	3
Social (Club)	9	25	34
Social (Pétanque)	18	25	43

Historically the Membership numbers have been.

2014	70 men (inc 4 life members) 22 women= 92 outdoor members.
2015	84 men (inc 4 life members) 30 women= 114 outdoor members
2016	88 men (inc 4 life members) 31 women= 119 outdoor members.
2017	85 men (inc 4 life members) 41 women= 126 outdoor members

2018	90 men (4 life members) 45 ladies (1 life member)= 135 outdoor members
2019	94 men (4 life members) 52 ladies (1 life member)= 146 outdoor members
2020	Not available
2021	71 men (3 life members) 40 ladies (1 life member) = 111 outdoor members
2022	66 men (2 life members) 39 ladies (1 life member) = 105 outdoor members
2023	93 men (1 life member) 45 ladies (1 life member)= 138 outdoor members
2024	86 men (1 life member) 40 ladies (1 life member)= 126 outdoor members

Lynda

Membership Secretary

Bowls Co Ordinator. Graham Brown.

Summary

The 2024 season progressed smoothly with members supporting the club, resulting in relatively few instances where full league and friendly fixtures could not be fulfilled. We are thankfully in a healthy position regarding membership and are probably the envy of many other clubs who struggle with numbers. All members are thanked for their support.

The Big Bowls weekend was not as successful this year, needing to be rearranged from the original date due to the green disappearing underwater twice throughout the day.

Nevertheless, we have received a steady stream of new members throughout the season and our coaching team are again thanked for their support in providing the initial trial sessions.

Finals weekend and President's Day were again well supported, and it is pleasing to see some new names appearing on the Honour's Board this year,

Bowls Coordinator subcommittee activities

I would like to thank each of my subcommittee members for their support and contribution throughout 2024.

As mentioned above the coaching team have been active throughout the year, not only introducing potential new members but also supporting last year's new members to further the development of their game.

In addition, the internal matches that Ian kindly organized proved popular and will hopefully encourage more members to step up to the next level and make themselves available for league selection next season.

Regarding coaching, congratulations to Janet Moore and Angie Moore who both progressed to achieve their Level 2 coaching status, also thanks to Richard Whiting who continued his development sessions from which several members benefitted.

Thanks to Janet Moore who in her role as Outdoor Competitions Secretary ran a seamless competitions schedule. The use of the new competition module on Bowlr proved effective and will be repeated next season.

The August Bank Holiday mixed triples competition and President's Day were again well supported and as we move into the indoor season, I thank Jay Merrell for capably assuming the vacated role of Indoor Secretary.

Season resume

If not reported elsewhere these seasons “highlights” and “dipped lights” were as follows

Ladies Somerset League. Very credible performance in their second season, regularly winning rinks and starting to threaten a few upsets. Also, a great run in the Fear Plate until the “freak” meeting with Clevedon and their international players.

Somerset League. (Saturday men’s rinks). “A” team finished second in South West 1, failing to gain promotion back to Prem due to a disappointing last match against resultant promoted Bridgwater A. “B” team had a difficult season in South West 2 finishing next to bottom.

Exeter and District Over 60s. (Wednesday men’s triples). Lions promoted to Division 1 whilst Tigers narrowly missed promotion to Division 3 on literally the last bowl of the league season. Pumas finished mid table and remain in Division 7 but were well supported this year. Despite asking for potential interest, we currently do not have enough support to apply to reinstate Leopards, but this will be kept under review.

East of Exe. (Monday mixed rinks). For the second year again, narrowly missed promotion to Division 1, largely due to some unfortunate outcomes arising from “rearranged” rain affected matches. Next year!

West Somerset League. (Thursday open triples). “A” team (Division 1) finished mid table with some strong opponents’ teams now being fielded and heading the table. “B” had a challenging season in the same league finishing well down. After some good results in Division 2 “C” finished a credible mid table.

Objectives for 2025

1. Continue to integrate newer members and encourage their availability for league selection.
2. Seek to further increase membership to consolidate the strengths of the club, both competitively and financially.
3. After working alongside the selectors this year, (if accepted as 2025 Men’s Captain), propose to restructure the selection process by delegating responsibility to individual league team managers. The rationale is that currently selectors are unaware of individual performances across each league team. The aim is, through the respective managers, to react to an individual performance throughout the season with the aim of fielding competitive teams.
4. Extend the use of Bowlr by team managers to maintain the improved notification of selection achieved last season.

Graham Brown (Bowls Coordinator – October 2024)

Mike Groves advised that at the SBA AGM held on 9th November, the club was presented with a cheque for £100 prize money for being runners up in South West 1 Saturday League.

He also advised that the Fear Cup would remain in its current format, the proposal to reduce it to two rinks being defeated.

Assets Co Ordinator Report

The following works have been completed on the Clubhouse during the past year:

- Painting of the corridor and installation of new blinds in the corridor windows and moving archive photos to a better position in the corridor
- Painting of the outside walls of the Indoor Rink and clearing vegetation between the Indoor Rink and the Squash Club
- Annual Inspection of all Fire Extinguishers in the Club
- Annual Check of Boilers
- Annual check of the Security Alarm
- New rope on the Flag Pole
- Replacing window handles and locks in the Kitchen
- New Kitchen Door
- Relaying of indoor Carpet and boards screwed down

I would like to thank all those members who helped with work around the Club during the year.

Alan Moore
4th November 2024

Functions Report: Steve Lovell

Who would believe another year gone so much has happened this year we have raised a few pounds for different charities< Guide Dogs and Air Ambulance. Several hundred for the Air Ambulance, even more for the Presidents charity Guide Dogs for the Blind over £1300 the exact amounts on the cheques on the wall, so all those wrong Biases all went to a good cause.

We had quizzes and Ferret racing, Bingo, music quiz, general knowledge quiz.

I took around 30 members to Torquay to play outside at the end of the Summer which they all enjoyed. We will do it all again one day.

March saw us playing again at Torquay indoors this is a popular trip and we are all booked up for 2025.

So with the bingo and quizzes and other little raffles along the way plus the Tombola at the Park

Thanks to Angie, Marg, Janet, Pete Alan & Janet, Alan & Liz and the whole of the social team for helping with all the food that had to be bought and prepped and distributed.

The sum we made through out the year by the social team and events is just over £2700. So well done everybody, if there is anything you can think of for us to purchase for the club please let me know. Suggestions so far Cameras each end of indoor rink so can be seen on our TV , and a camera by the front door.

We have had a few shock deaths in the last couple of months you know who they are so not going to name them Prayers with their families.

As this is my last year running the Functions good luck to whoever takes the job on but health comes first.

Steve Lovell

Functions Co Ordinator

Welfare officer

Steve as part of his report encouraged members to purchase tickets for the Christmas Party on 7th December and reminded member s that it would be a 'bring your own food' event.

Kathy Alford asked that a vote of thanks be given to Steve and Janet Lovell for all the hard work they had put in. Unanimously agreed by the members and a loud round of applause followed.

8 Treasurers Report/Auditors Report

The Treasurer's report was presented by Phil Ellis and accepted and approved by the meeting. Phil thanked Derek for his help and guidance during the year. Phil commented that although we made a small loss for the year this could easily be accounted for by the purchasing of the verticutter, a new boiler and a new dishwasher. The change back to a rink fee for playing indoors had made a significant impact on revenues and would continue. Phil thanked Jay Merrell for looking at the gas and electricity costs to see if we could reduce them.

Mike Connor asked if we could have some new indoor jacks and this was agreed. Gill Groves asked where all this information was held and Jay Merrell stated that it was in the member area on the website.

Auditors Report - Copies of the Audited Annual Accounts as issued by Batchelor and Company were displayed on the TV screen. The Accounts were accepted unanimously.

9 Team Captains Reports

Ladies Captain Report Brenda Wilson

I would like to thank everyone who has played over the summer without you we could not have entered any competitions.

We played in the Southey Trophy on 16th June against Mark Moor and won that game – Wellington 69 Mark Moor 60.

We played in the Q final; we lost but everyone had a good game. Score Wellington 55 Bridgwater 67
Well done all.

We then played the Fear Cup/Plate on 19th July against Taunton Deane. We then played Clevedon on 4th August in the semifinal. We had a very challenging game but well-done ladies.

We all give Win our thanks for doing the teas for us all. I thank Gill and Angie for helping me to pick the teams. It is not an easy job but we did our best. It is nice to see new ladies on the green.

In the Saturday league we did very well coming 3rd, well done to all thanks to Ann and Lynda for picking the teams.

I wish you all a good winter bowling and look forward to next year.

Thank you all

Brenda Wilson
Ladies Captain

Men's Captain Report 2024 No report submitted

Mixed Friendly Captain's Report. Ian Hollingsworth

A verbal report was given at the meeting with the main points listed here.

We played about 50 mixed friendlies and around 70 people played at least one match and Ian was pleased to see some new bowlers taking part. Overall, we won as many as we lost and interestingly the number of rinks won was almost the same as the number we lost.

Ian thanked members for not changing the selected teams without advising him and also said he was not sure that the bowlR system would work for him but he would keep this under review. Availability forms and selection sheets would still be posted in the corridor as normal. Ian advised that it may seem that some people got more games but it was important that each rink had an experienced skip or number 2 if new skips were being tried out. It is important that new member made themselves available and asked the more experienced members to encourage this.

Ian advised that there would be about the same number of games in 2025.

Finally, he thanked everyone who had helped during the year.

10 Proposals.

The Executive Committee put forward to proposal for changes to the constitution.

Proposal 1

Currently only 'Full members' (Outdoor Members) are allowed to vote on matters concerning the club. This excludes indoor members voting on issues specifically relating to the indoor rink.

The executive is proposing that the constitution be amended so that indoor members have a vote on matters relating solely to the indoor rink. Full members would continue to have voting rights for all areas of the club.

Questions raised on proposal 1

Mike Connor felt it was a good idea and Mike Groves asked if members of other clubs would have a vote. The reply was that as they were indoor members of Wellington they would have the same rights as any other indoor member.

Proposal 2

Currently only 'Full members' (Outdoor Members) can stand for election to the Executive Committee.

The executive is proposing that the Constitution be amended so that indoor members, who have previously been full members, but for whatever reason now only play indoors be allowed to serve on the Executive Committee.

The primary reason for this is that it is becoming more and more difficult to get volunteers to serve on the Executive Committee and it does seem that if the club has expertise from within indoor members that we should be able to use that expertise.

Questions raised on proposal 2

Brian Wombwell asked if this mean that indoor members who had never been full members could go on the Executive Committee and the answer was no.

Both proposals were unanimously accepted by the members.

11 Officers to serve on the Executive Committee were approved en-block by the meeting:

President	Mike Groves
Chair	Paul Kelly
Admin Coordinator	Henry Richbell
Treasurer	Phil Ellis
Assistant Treasurer	Derrick Alford
Bowls Coordinator	Graham Brown
Assets Coordinator	Tony Wollard
Functions Coordinator	Vacant
Greenkeeper	Paul Kelly

The Club Captains were approved as follows:-

Men's Captain	Graham Brown
Ladies Captain	Brenda Wilson
Mixed Friendlies Captain.	Ian Hollingsworth

It was again requested that we needed a functions coordinator but this did not mean they had to do all the work. Angie Moore has agreed to be responsible for the bingo and Alana and Liz May have agreed to look after events. This leaves us in desperate need of someone to take on catering.

Tony Woollard agreed to be Assets Coordinator but cannot undertake all the tasks himself so would be looking for help where needed.

12 Membership Fees for 2025/6

It was agreed that the Membership Fees would remain the same

13. Election of Auditors

It was agreed that Batchelor and Company should be retained as our auditors for 2024/25

14 Sponsorship

Jay Merrell showed the members the sponsorship flyers and ask if they could take some and pass them to retailers when they purchased goods. The sign for our Gold Sponsor was displayed at the back of the room.

15 Items to be discussed at a later date

Ian Stewart asked if the rule on extension for matches could be reviewed and this was passed to Jay Merrell for a response.

Finally the presidential chain of office was passed from Ann Cowling to Mike Groves and Mike gave a short speech thanking Ann and hoping to follow in her footsteps and would let the members know what charities he would like the club to support.

The meeting was closed at 8.32pm