

HECKINGTON & DISTRICT BOWLS CLUB

Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2024

Meeting held Thursday 29th November 2024 at Bowls Clubhouse
16 members were present. The meeting started at 7.00pm

Apologies for Absence

Paul Rooke, Anne Clayton, John McDonnell, Wendy Repp, Sue Porter, Michael Smith, Malcolm & Nadine Foster, Joyce Miles, Maggie Davey & Ann Stevenson

Minutes of the 2023 AGM & Matters Arising

No matters were arising from the minutes and they were Proposed by Malcolm McIntyre and seconded by Alan Davey.

Election of Officers

The following committee members stood for re-election. Vice Chairperson: Linne Wollerton, Treasurer & Clubhouse manager: John Collard, Secretary: Michael Repp, Match Secretary: Paul Inchley & Green Manager: Paul Rooke. The meeting voted for their re-election. The Chairman, Paul Inchley, announced that he will not be standing for re-election. The committee thanked him for his time as Chairman and proposed Dean Casswell for election as the new Club Chairman. As no other member elected to stand, this was proposed by Andy Robinson & second by Irene Herod.

Chairman's report

Chairman stated the 2024 season had been a great success, both on and off the green.

He wanted to thank the committee for their support and all the volunteers who helped out with the various projects. Mention should also be given to the players for making the year enjoyable and supporters who came to watch the bowling.

The Mason Cup competitions were our flagship events once again, giving us an opportunity to showcase our club. A huge thanks must be given to our President, John Stevenson for organising & sponsoring the events. Thanks must also be given to the volunteers who provided catering raffle prizes & organisational help.

On the green it was extremely satisfying to see our members really enjoying their bowling. The performances have improved & members coming into league bowling have made adjustments quite easily through our internal bowling games.

He was pleased that the season closed on a strong footing with an active membership & healthy finances.

Secretaries report

The season closed with 40 active members & was well supported in the Club competitions & social events.

We started the season with our pre-season meeting to hear the plans for the year & an update on the Sleaford & Woodhall Spa leagues. This was followed by working parties, which were well attended, over the Easter weekend, to prepare the club for opening on 13th April.

To encourage new membership the club held a series of open days, and promoted the club on our website, on Facebook and in an article in the village Living magazine. I would like to thank Malcolm McIntyre for managing our Facebook presence. Thank you Malcolm.

As the accounts will show, our catering continues to be popular at our competitions & Saturday roll-ups. We are very grateful for all the hard work that the catering team does.

The planned new social Summer Quiz did not happen due to a very busy August competition diary. However an afternoon tea was introduced to follow the Pimz club competition & this was well received.

After tonight's meeting the Clubhouse will be shut down for the winter. There are 2 upcoming events. The popular Pie & chip quiz night is booked at the village hall on December 6th. Anyone who has yet to reserve their tickets can see me after this meeting or email by Monday evening. The raffle, held on the night, is a useful fundraiser and we would very much appreciate the donation of a prize.

The presentation evening was booked for 31st January at the Barge & Bottle, Sleaford. The pub always makes us very welcome and provides a good selection of meals at competitive prices. It is a social evening and you certainly don't have to be in line for a presentation to attend. Friends and family are all welcome & I will be emailing members with the details, and menu in the New Year.

And finally a volunteer contact list is kept. We will be asking any members who can spare a few hours during the season, to register their interest at the pre-season meeting next March.

Treasurer's report

The Club finances ended the year with a gain of £1,700 from 2023 (when there had been a loss of £1,000) with a closing balance of £13,902.

Once again this is due in large part to the generous donations given by some members, especially our President, and a donation of £600 from the Co-op Community Fund.

These donations and the associated Gift Aid claim formed the largest part of the Club's income at over £2000. Membership fees brought in £1665.

Competition and match fees increased to £750 (£635 last year), profit from food sales increased significantly once again to £658 (£585) thanks again to Wendy, Mezz and others, and raffles made £360 (£408). The two Masons Cup competitions remain profitable for the club, although only because the prize funds are donated by John Stevenson.

Income from the Easyfundraising scheme halved, so please continue to use this whenever you can when buying online.

Green, clubhouse and equipment costs have been lower this year at £2,526 (£4,500) and as usual this would have been far higher if not for the committed voluntary work of the green team.

The Club finances remain basically stable but this depends on members continuing to support the social events and other schemes that raise funds for us.

Balance at bank 30/09/2024 (01/10/2023)

Lloyds current a/c £ 2,070.26 (£ 2,074.60)

Lloyds savings a/c £ 1,787.69 (£ 46.07)

Term savings £ 10,027.51 (£ 10,000.00)

£ 13,885.46 (£ 12,120.67)

Petty cash held £ 16.65 (£ 83.20)

TOTAL FUNDS £ 13,902.11 (£ 12,203.87)

Net gain £ 1,698.24

Competitions Secretaries report

The play-by date, for each round of competitions, introduced for this season worked well. All matches were either played on time, or an extension agreed. This resulted in all the finals being played on or before the planned date. This arrangement will be repeated for the 2025 season.

Club competitions, previously held on either a Saturday or Monday, were all moved to Saturday for the season. This resulted in the 2 & 4 wood pairs, 3 wood triples, Australian pairs, 4-3-2-1 pairs, Dave Wollerton singles and the Ladies v Gents match all being played, with the help of a bacon bap, on Saturday mornings.

We turned out with full teams in all but one league match, and although the weather resulted in several postponed games all the fixtures were rescheduled. The club finished mid-table in both the Sleaford & Woodhall Spa league. Matches were close & we worried most of the top teams, always giving them a good game.

The season finished with the Ladies v Gents Challenge, which was very competitive, closely resulting in a 1 point win to the Ladies.

Our plans to run a second team in the leagues will again be postponed as, due to player relocation & ill health, we are not sure we can consistently commit to supply 18 members for every match.

The pre-season meeting will be announced and held, after the 2025 fixture list for the Sleaford League and Woodhall Spa league has been agreed. This is usually in Mid-March & members will be notified of the details when available.

It was certainly very nice to see all the members enjoying themselves at the matches during the season and next season is already looking good.

Green Report

Firstly, apologies for not being able to attend the AGM in person.

To start the report, thanks are due again to Stewart, Steve and Rodger for their assistance this year. As with 12 months ago their work has principally been seen through the in-season grass cutting but there has been so much more work taking place behind the scenes, not least this year in terms of the work undertaken on the green since the end of the season and more recently starting to work on the surrounds. A number of people both in and out of the club have commented on the quality of the green this year and whilst it has been a team effort, specific thanks go to Stewart who has taken on the lion's share of this work.

I talked last year about the impact the weather has on our green and how that is exacerbated by factors outside of our control – trees. That has been equally true this year although we have not seen quite the period of drought this year that we did last year and that has made irrigation slightly easier.

Also last year I mentioned the work that is going to be needed on the clubhouse. We will soon be at the point where, hopefully, we have more clarity on a future lease term and this will allow us to look more closely at what is required.

I am conscious that because we play pretty much always in the same direction we are starting to see more and more straight runs on many of the rinks. To look at addressing this we are intending, for 2025, to introduce 3 different positions for the 5 rink set up which can easily be moved and will hopefully introduce a bit more variation. The aim is to run at 5 rinks through the season other than the open competitions such as the Masons, where we need the extra rink.

As most of you will know we have lost Steve from our team following his move away from Heckington. As such it would be great to see one or two more people who have the time to support us in green management and maintenance throughout the year. Please contact myself, Stewart or Mike (as Secretary) if you are able to commit some time.

Finally, on a similar theme, we once again had a good turnout at the pre-season preparation day earlier in the year and it would be great to see as many people back again before the start of the 2024 season – the date will be confirmed at the pre-season meeting in the spring.

Many thanks

Paul R

Membership fees

The Committee had voted to keep all membership fees unchanged for the 2025 season. The Treasurer emphasised that fees have remained unchanged for five years and represent incredibly good value for money. In addition to the membership fees it relies on members supporting the competitions and catering to generate the cash needed to cover the Club expenses.

A vote was passed to leave all fees unchanged for the 2025 season.

Club Whatsapp Group

The Secretary said that there had been some discussion on communication between members to arrange games and receive information on upcoming matches etc.

Malcolm McIntyre had suggested forming a Club Whatsapp group. He explained the principles at the meeting and offered to set up and maintain the site. It was agreed to introduce the system at the 2025 pre-season meeting, where members would be invited to join.

Any other business

A member asked why the AGM was held in November, when it could be at any time of the year, out of the Bowling Season and when the weather was warmer and nights lighter. The Secretary explained that the Club Constitution required the AGM to be held at the end of the season. He accepted the meeting could be held earlier and in a more convivial environment. It was agreed that the Committee would investigate other options before planning the next AGM.

A member raised the question of the Club lease renewal. He had previously expressed concerns about delaying negotiations to renew the lease, due in September 2025. The Treasurer confirmed the Committee had noted his concerns and agreed to start the negotiations, with the Landlord, in the New Year.

The meeting closed at 7.49pm