



PONTELAND BOWLING CLUB

January Newsletter 2023



Happy New Year to everyone

We hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year and are looking forward to our Centenary year. Much of the information in this newsletter is to bring you up to date with our continued efforts to modernise how the club looks, feels and functions to ensure it is fit for purpose and operationally sustainable for the foreseeable future. The phrase Bowls England uses is **Fit for the Future**.

It is sometimes difficult to take on board the need for modernisation, particularly at our age. We do not willingly open our arms and embrace new ways of doing things. We tend to remember the good days we had many years ago but not if we took all our pills at breakfast time. It is, however, a journey the club must continue if we are to address the issues bowling and bowling clubs face.

We are reminded yet again of these problems locally/nationally by the reduction in the number of divisions, next season, that the Knight League operates, from 4 to 3, and the reduction of one rink from the lower divisions of the Parliamentary League due to difficulties some clubs are facing with falling memberships and getting teams out. However, one possible benefit of the Parliamentary League changes is that we have the possibility of entering a second team. Whether this is another men's team or mixed team will be open for discussion within the membership through the section meetings.

Clubhouse

The clubhouse is usable again even though we have a few more tasks to complete. The bulk of the work and disruption is now behind us. The electrics now comply with current regulations and energy efficient lights have been fitted. It has been painted inside and outside and has been cleaned inside. The office area has been modified to make storage more efficient (we can now get a couple of stacks of chairs in it which unclutters the main room a little) though there are a few tweaks we can make. New modern looking notice boards have been put up in the main room and a new bookcase has purchased. We have also used this opportunity to sort and clear out old files and documents. With the regulations on protecting members personal data the Club must **destroy** (not just throw out) lists and documents when individuals leave the club. I found lists of names, addresses and telephone numbers in files that were 50yrs old. Thanks to everyone that has helped with this work, it has taken a lot of time and effort but was necessary.

Honours Boards

Our Honours are coming to the end of their life. There are only a few spaces left for additional names and due to the changes in competitions, the repurposing of some trophies over time, they don't quite make sense. There are a couple of occasions where the winner of the club championship also won the runner up trophy - did he play himself? (I have tried digitising one of the Honours Boards so they could potentially be made available via the website - this is how I found the anomalies) Different lettering on different metal strips also makes them look a little tatty.

We are proposing to display a new Honours Board in the main room that represents the whole club together. Peter and Alison have been looking into this and will soon propose what headings will go on it. The existing Men's and Ladies Boards will go up in the changing rooms and the County and National Honours boards will be put up in the main room. If anyone has any strong views on these proposals, please get in touch with Alison or Peter. They will assume you are happy with these proposals if they don't hear from anyone.

Competitions and Trophies

These issues are related to the updating of the notice boards. Again, from looking at the Honours Boards you can see where some competitions have not been run in some years, where new ones have started and where trophies have been repurposed. Moving forward we need to clarify what competitions we are running and what trophies should be presented. The GPC have asked each section to look at the competitions they are running and liaise about running mixed competitions such as a mixed pairs or rinks comp where the finals could be played on finals weekend, enhancing the finals weekend.

Each section is also going to look at the trophies that are presented as a lot of them are now well past their sell by date. They look tatty, I can see why members have chosen to leave trophies they have won in the club rather than take them home. Whilst trophy winners are proud of their achievements, not many people would want to display the trophy they have won in their living room. This rather defeats the reason for presenting a trophy.

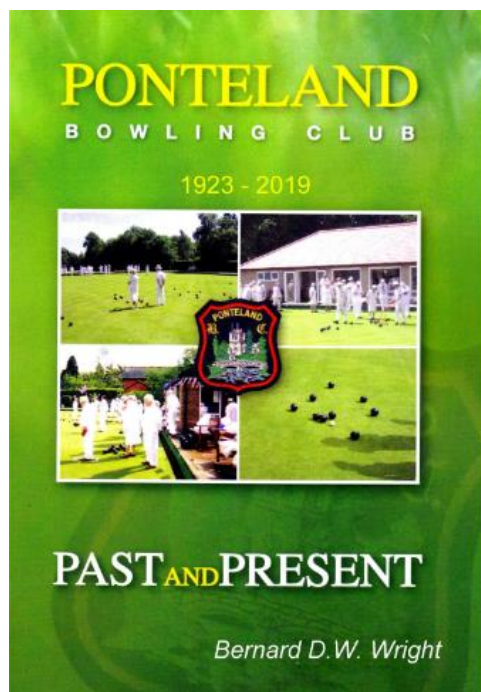
Each section is going to produce a list of trophies they want for each competition they are going to run and identify any new trophies they need, any trophies that could be renovated or any trophies that need to be renewed. This list will allow the GPC to plan a strategy to ensure all trophies for all club competitions are of a quality that winners and runners up would be proud to display in their home.

You will appreciate that there is a significant cost here and it may take a few years to realise our plans. To help with the costs we are proposing that next season, entry into any club competition will be £1 but you only pay once. So, for the Percy and Lorna Telfer Trophy which is played over several weeks, or the Straughan Salver or Nan McLeod, you will only pay £1 once. If you enter the Club Championship, two wood, three wood etc, there will be an entry fee of £1 for each of these competitions.

In addition, we also take this opportunity to invite all members to consider perhaps sponsoring a competition by purchasing a trophy which would bear their name. In the past some members have also left provision in their will to purchase a trophy in their memory. A

new trophy or shield engraved with your name would cost somewhere between £60 and £150 depending on style/size etc. Not a massive outlay to have your name remembered for many years to come. If you would be interested in purchasing a trophy, please let me know.

Club History



We have a past member of the club Bernard Wright who has put together a history of Ponteland Bowling Club from its opening in 1924 to the present day. Some members will know him as he was a member for many years and served as a Key Officer in the club for many years. His history has been compiled into a book, the club and some members have a copy of his book. Bernard updates the history every year by adding information on post holders, competition winners, members list etc. However, with legislation now requiring us to protect everyone's personal data, I am unable to pass on names without first getting everyone's consent. It would be a very onerous task to do this on an annual basis so we have agreed that Bernard will conclude his work this year. It would also be a shame not to pass on the final couple of years of data to Bernard so he can complete

100 years of club history and sign off on a fabulous achievement. I am therefore asking everyone if they would be happy for me to pass on their names if they are a member, have held a club position or won a competition etc. This is a **special circumstance and a one-off request**. If anyone has an issue with this please get in touch, otherwise I will assume you are all ok with this. Bernard had made a digital copy of his work available so we can put it on the website at some point. Thanks to Bernard for his extensive work and the gift of it to the Club.

Centenary Year

We would like to set up a small team who will take charge of anything to do with our centenary celebrations. Ideally the team would be made up of a mixture of new and older members and ladies and men. Could I suggest a team of 6 - 3 men and 3 ladies. Issues to look at would be things like: -

- ❖ Celebratory games against other clubs. Perhaps the other private clubs?
- ❖ How we engage with our local community (I have already written to the Town Council explaining/promoting what we are hoping to do and asking for their support, I have offered (and volunteered David) to go along to speak to the council at a time of their choosing)
- ❖ Working with the Social Committee and helping plan and organise the Celebrity game against a Bowls England Side - bunting, balloons, display aspect of the history of the club - perhaps

- ❖ Coordinating with members to get some troughs/pots of flowers around the clubhouse to add some colour and interest.

Working Smarter - Saving and passing on digital documents

I have stated several times that bowls has two key problems we must address, one is recruitment, which we have made great strides on, the other is having members who will volunteer to take on key positions, otherwise you cannot run the Club. Making time available to volunteer when we all have busy lives is challenging for everyone and if we want individuals to do key jobs in the future the Club needs to be organised much more effectively in the use of digital technology to reduce the workload required in some tasks/positions. Jobs and tasks need to be made as easy as we can make them and the technology to do this has now been around for over 30yrs.

We need a system where any documents, policies, adverts, posters, guidance etc, that are produced by anyone in a key position, are saved and passed on to the next person who takes on that position. It would be desirable if we could save this documentation centrally in a such a way that all key position holders can access it when required. Unfortunately, I lack the knowledge and understanding of setting up a network and what difficulties we could encounter - **is there anyone in the Club with knowledge or experience, that can advise/help on this issue, given our situation? Please let me know.**

I will illustrate why we need to do this. Last year I had to produce posters and forms for BH special games from scratch (yet they have been running for years), these are now saved digitally. Whoever does these tasks this year can have access to them, and it takes minutes to change a date on the posters etc and print them out, also the format of which team plays who and where can be saved in the same folder - this makes the job much easier and saves a lot of time over the season. This year I have had to write two policies from scratch as there was no digital master passed on. One of these the Safeguarding policy has contact details for the Social Services Safeguarding Officer, BE Safeguarding officer et al, which needs checking and updating annually to ensure these emergency contacts are accurate (They are currently several years out of date). To call up and edit an electronic copy takes minutes. To re write a policy takes days.

I hope you can see that the way we manage documents and data currently **is not a very efficient or effective way of working.**

Can I make the following request of all the key post holders this year, please bear the need to make what we do easier for each other and save digital copies of everything you do, so it can be passed to the next incumbent. For some tasks it would also be very useful to have a list of what to do, who to speak to, in what order etc., for specific tasks such - as running a Bank Holiday special competition or the BBQ for example. This prevents us all from having to reinvent the wheel whenever we undertake a task, and it will reduce the work and stress involved in serving in any key position within the Club.

Promoting the Club -in the next few weeks we start our campaign to promote the Club and

recruit new members. We will need some members to help with these activities. If you are willing to help, please pass your name to David. We have produced an editorial for Pont News that will go in the February issue, and an advert to go in it in March & April. We also have updated our A4 posters for the Council's Notice Boards and shop windows etc. All of these have our centenary year logo on them. We need help with the distribution of them. We are intending to run our recruitment campaign as we did last

Free taster sessions in April & May

PONTELAND
BOWLING CLUB

Ever fancied playing bowls but didn't know where to start?

Why not come along to one of our free taster sessions?

Wednesday 26th April at 10.30pm
Saturday 29th April at 2.00pm
Wednesday 3rd May at 10.30pm
Sunday 14th May at 2.30pm
Friday 19th May at 6.00pm
Saturday 27th May at 2.30pm

To book please
call us: - (07940) 923286
Email: - pontelandbowls@gmail.com
or just turn up on the day
Darras Road, Ponteland, NE20 9NX
www.pontelandbowls.com

Get fit
Get together
Play bowls

year. Taster sessions followed by an induction programme and perhaps games and competitions for any new members. Everyone involved last year appeared to enjoy what we did.

New Members and Club Competitions

We have many new members who joined the Club last year. I have watched you all play and develop, and I have played alongside all of you at some point. I can honestly say that most of you would have no issues playing in league games and Club Knockout competitions this season. For those of you who are still developing your game we will have friendly games that I would urge you to get involved in but also sign up for the Club Knockout comps. The best way to develop your skills, techniques and strategy is by bowling competitively. I personally would not have any issues playing in the same team as any of you, so please sign up and get involved this year. Information about getting involved in teams and competitions next season will go out to everyone, sometime in March with the membership renewal forms. There will also be Spring Section meetings in March where the new season will be discussed and information will be shared.

Social Events



had a lovely evening. Very close between all the teams that participated with two teams

Christmas Quiz - held Friday 13th January in the clubhouse. Great turn out and everyone



finishing joint first - sharing the loot. Thanks to the Social Committee and a big thanks to Dave Smith our quiz master on the evening for all his hard work, it was very much appreciated by everyone. The Music quiz made me feel quite young.

Future Events - dates for your diary

Coffee Morning - Friday 27th January from 10.30am (*Tickets for afternoon tea on sale*)

Quiz night - Friday 10th February, 7.00 in the clubhouse - bring drinks and nibbles

Afternoon Tea - Thurs 16th 2.30 - tickets £5. **Limited to 36.** First come first served.
(*Tickets will be on sale at the coffee morning on January 27th*)

regards

Don

regards

GPC