

## **Beckingham Bowls Club 2021**

### **April**

After very little competitive bowls in 2020, Beckingham's bowlers are looking forward to the start of the season. The Club's green opened on 30 April for socially distanced play with league matches scheduled to start week commencing 17 May when up to 30 people can gather outdoors, and the weekly Thursday Club Nights start on 20 May and continue until late September. Beckingham have entered a team in each of the Gainsborough Bowls and Isle of Axholme Evening Leagues, and 2 teams in the Isle of Axholme Seniors' League. Three members are unable to play this year due to illness and we sadly lost another playing member who passed away, but we are pleased to welcome 4 new members, all from Beckingham village.

We have been delayed in cutting the grass on the green to the optimum height for playing. Fertiliser spread weeks ago had not completely been absorbed into the soil due to the lack of rain, and a low - cut setting would lift the remaining fertiliser. There's nothing like a Bank Holiday to trigger rain and with two due in May, we expected there to be sufficient rain to satisfy our needs!! In last month's Newsletter, we incorrectly stated that the old tea room which we demolished was acquired from Rampton Hospital, whereas it actually came from Cottam Power Station. Our existing pavilion came from Rampton. With no dedicated tea room yet, we will have to be innovative to provide refreshments for our visitors, and for the month of May and well into June, Covid regulations will not allow us to use the pavilion, but we have plenty of well - spaced benches and a useful open shelter.

Anybody interested in receiving details of our fixtures and activities should please contact Roger on 01427 848628.

### **March**

All 3 leagues in which we play have indicated that we can expect to start league matches with effect from w/c 17 May when up to 30 people can meet outdoors, subject to no deterioration in the Covid situation. We plan to open the green for social distanced play during the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> week in April but have not yet fixed an exact date. Members will be advised of the opening date, and this date will be included in the "Diary" on the Village Website, or phone Roger on 01427 848628 for details.

We have completed the demolition and removal of our Tea Room which was a health hazard and unfit for purpose. Contractors quoted approaching £2000 for this work which Club members have done for the cost of a skip and a small fee to isolate the electricity and link it back to the pavilion so we had power for our tools. The structure demolished was acquired second hand from Rampton Hospital circa 1980. This has been a tremendous team effort and we have plans for a suitable replacement and are working with the Village Hall relative to sourcing funding. The photographs accompanying this report show the old Tea Room complete with the inner fittings piled up, members working on removing the metal framework and the structure completely removed, leaving some tidying up to be completed.

From 1 May, Beckingham Bowls Club will be affiliated to Bowls England and linked to Bowls Nottinghamshire. The benefits of this affiliation make the small annual fee based on the number of playing members well worth it.

We intend to hold our postponed AGM as soon as indoor restrictions are lifted and it is safe to meet indoors. If these restrictions continue for some time, we will consider holding the AGM outside during the day.

Roger Platts

5 April 2021



## **February**

We are working with Beckingham Village Hall by applying for grants to replace our unfit for purpose tea room as well as equipment for the Village Hall play park and multi - use games area. As yet, we do not know if our application has been acceptable, but we do have options planned for the eventual replacement building. We have been included in the Co-op Local Community Fund since October 2020 whereby Co-op members can elect to support us until October 2021, whereby we receive the same dividend as the member when they purchase own brand products in any UK store, or use their financial, insurance or funeral services. Although this will not be sufficient to completely fund a new building, it will nevertheless help greatly with our green maintenance costs.

We are awaiting news from the 3 leagues in which we compete once a Road Map is issued, and we are currently planning our teams and activities on the assumption that bowling will be able to commence in May, so we are ready to go.

Our green is looking in excellent condition and benefitted greatly from the extensive maintenance work carried out last July to October. Regular cuts at the optimum height for winter have been made, and the moss which appeared has been successfully treated.

## **January**

We are pleased to have reached a mutually worthwhile documented and signed Agreement with Beckingham cum Saundby Village Hall & Playing Field for the Use of Trust Premises for exclusive access to the bowling green and facilities and free use of the car park, subject to the green still being part of the Beckingham & Saundby Village Hall & Playing Field Trustees Trust Deed dated 25 May 1948 and Beckingham Bowls Club giving access to all of Beckingham (and Saundby) residents, under BBC controlled supervision. The rolling Agreement, which commenced on 1 January 2021, fully respects both the original Trust Deed and the Club's Rules and clearly defines which party is responsible for the various aspects involved in running, funding and maintaining the green, site, equipment and buildings. This is an important moment for our Club's future, and such joint co-operation will not only benefit both parties, but more importantly, benefit the villages of Beckingham and Saundby and surrounding community.

Our AGM scheduled for 29 January was postponed to a later date due to Covid restrictions. We intend to hold this as soon as it is safe so to do, and our aim is to offer some form of social bowling by the beginning of June, as we were able to do in 2020. Whether or not we will be able to do this and eventually play league/competitive games depends upon developments. In the absence of our AGM, all members were provided with a year end report for 2020 which showed the Club would emerge from the Covid epidemic in a strong position with funding obtained from a Sport England Covid related grant, generous donations and annual subscriptions. This helped to partly compensate for the loss of funding we raise in a "normal" season and ensured that we were able to provide top class maintenance and upkeep to the green. Our mower was recently collected for a full service, and the person collecting it commented that he had collected 30 mowers for servicing over the last few months, and our green was by far the best he had seen.

Although our membership numbers are currently relatively healthy, our main concern for the future is the lack of new members, especially of less more mature age. Anybody interested in joining the village's only remaining outdoor sports club for our 73<sup>rd</sup> year since being formed, should please contact Roger on 01427 848628. Bowls is not just a sport for people of a more mature age, and also provides social advantages which will be particularly beneficial when we emerge from Covid.