

Club Secretary

Sadly, due to poor health Sue Thrush could not attend so her report was narrated by Julia Lambert.

Good evening everyone and thank you for attending our AGM. My apologies for not being present in person. I wanted to be at the meeting to close out the season and complete my tenure but my health does not permit that.

We have tried to keep you up to date with club activities during the season, so many members will be familiar with our current position.

We have welcomed quite a few new members this season, thanks to the publicity and coaching programmes run by Trevor Brown and Andy Winter. Our numbers haven't quite reached our pre pandemic total of nearly 200 but are a lot higher than initial indications. Currently standing at 160, with ratio of roughly 2:1 men to ladies.

The committee do try to be proactive and have been working through existing processes with the aim of eliminating problems we experienced this season regarding registration for membership, setting up the club fixtures and league teams and ensuring that new members have all the information they need. We have been a small group of committee members for several years now and were very fortunate that Julia, Richard and Margaret came to our rescue at the last-minute last year. Committee members hold office for one year at a time and so need to be freshly elected.

There is no formal requirement to serve several years before stepping down.

For those of us who come to club committee without any previous experience of running a bowls club it does take some time to learn how things work, what the traditions are and how the fixtures are organised, as well as the financial arrangements.

As ours is only a short season and not a full 12 months, there are periods of intense activity and then quieter times. So, serving for one year only is not common but on the other hand it is difficult to recruit new officers.

So, I am encouraged to see more nominations this year. Particularly as we are acutely aware that we do need to recruit regularly to the committee so that the administration aspects, customs, ethos and practices can be passed on. We have had no Chairman for the last two seasons but Gerald has stepped up when needed.

As secretary, my role required me to be the first point of contact, both for club members and for external agencies such as the English Indoor Bowls Association, as well as Woodgreen, Legacy and the local council. I have held regular meetings to update Legacy staff and try to build up the rapport with reception staff, particularly because many of their staff move on and new ones need to know how the bowls club runs and what their arrangements with us are for our various activities.

Our club noticeboards are used to alert members to activities and there are notices around the hall about use of the wheelchair, emptying lockers etc.

It is quite important that all our members do read and respond to the notices and don't assume everything is the same as it always has been: since the pandemic some of the old ways have gone.

My thanks goes to each person on the committee and others who have taken responsibility for running teams in the leagues, signing up and turning up for club matches,

offering transport for away matches, helping to set up and then clearing up after home matches, running one off events, giving time to coaching and open day sessions. For personal reasons including increasing demands on my time in my private life, I have made the difficult decision to step down. Difficult because I did want to continue. Picking up the baton from Carole 5 years ago I knew that I could never fill her shoes but I have done my best to serve so that the club can continue to thrive. So, it's with gratitude to all who have helped and guided me that I will pass on the baton. I do truly hope that the club will continue to offer a good bowling experience for all who join and I look forward to getting back to playing more often myself next season.