

**Bolton Flat Green Bowling Club**

**Minutes of the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting**

**Held at the Clubhouse on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 12:00.**

**Present:** S Hemsley, J Hayes, C Walmsley, M Withington, C Withington, S Oliver, R Oliver, P Sharples, P Gillett, P Launden, D Crisp, C Travis, C Fletcher, A Davies, J Glass, J Cunliffe, C Swift, J King, V Slater, L Noon, K Hayes, C Saunders, J Muldoon, G Ellis, M Ellis, M, Parker, D Flint

**Apologies for Absence;** Apologies for absence were noted from:

P Thorpe, D Lockhart, E Franklin, C & G Partington, R & N Finnen, J, C, & L Yates, L Hemsley, E Benvie, J Ryder, H Braddock, C Leece, B Knowles, P Syddall.

**Opening of meeting and Welcome** – Address attached to these minutes.

M Parker

President M Parker, welcomed everyone to the meeting, commenting on the good turnout thanking those member in attendance for coming.

**Obituaries**

The Secretary advised that there were no Obituaries to record.

**Adoption of the Minutes of the 42<sup>nd</sup> AGM**

The Minutes of the 2023 Meeting were adopted, unanimously, as a correct record.

**Matters arising from the Minutes of the 42<sup>nd</sup> AGM**

There were no matters arising raised.

**Administration Report** Attached to these minutes.

S Hemsley

The Club Secretary's report was : - *Adopted unanimously.*

**Treasurer's Report & Adoption of Accounts to the 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2024** - Attached to these minutes.

J Muldoon

The Treasurer drew attention to his report and distributed a revised copy of the Accounts which, whilst substantially the same as the one previously circulated with the Agenda, had been amended to take on board recommendations from the Accounts Examiner. These included changes to where certain items of income or expenditure were allocated and making allowance for changes in the levels of Bar and Clothing Stocks.

## **Membership Subscription Rates**

The Management committee proposed that there be no change in the Subscription Rates for 2025.

Discussion followed about the recent expenditure of £6k on the green and the planned expenditure of £4k- £5k to deep clean the green, and the need to build reserves for future repairs to the Clubhouse and to replace the bowling green carpet:

M Ellis proposed and C Fletcher seconded and amendment: That Full Membership be increased by £20 TO enable reserves to be built up.

A vote was taken: 11 Votes in favour: 11 against.

J Benvie proposed a further Amendment suggesting that a smaller increase: £10 may get more support.

### **A vote was taken and carried by an overwhelming majority.**

It was further agreed that that the increase apply pro rata to all classes of Playing Membership with no increase for non-paying members.

### **The Management Committee proposed that there be no Membership Fee for <18's.**

It was explained that the reason for the proposal was to encourage younger people to take up our sport.

The Club policy is that any child 12 years old **must** be accompanied by a parent, guardian or adult carer whilst attending the Club and we have a opportunity to try and recruit this person as a member. The reason for the upper age limit on "under 18" is because this is the legal age at which they are children.

It was clarified that it was not necessary for Volunteers who did not play bowls but assisted with tasks at the Club to be a member.

It was further clarified that, both members and non-members undertaking Voluntary work at the Club were covered by the Employers Insurance cover held as part of the clubs Insurance with Sutton Winson.

Subs for non-playing members to remain unchanged.

### **The proposition was carried unanimously.**

#### **Subscription for 2025 will therefore be:**

Full Members: £130

First Year Membership for members new to Lawn green bowls: £85.00

Winter Members: £65:00

Junior Members Age 18 – 24: £27:50

Juniors < 18 No Charge

Social Membership: £25.00 (i.e. no pro rata increase)

**Secretary's Allowance** - Not claimed

#### **Account Examiner's Report.**

J Benvie advised that he had examined the accounts and noted that they were prepared on the basis of Accounts on Income and Expenditure.

J Benvie

He had made some recommendations to the Treasurer on some points relating to presentation which he was pleased to see had been reflected in the Report tabled at the meeting was happy to sign them.

**Building Report (incl. Health and Safety Report)** Attached to these minutes.

S Hemsley

Noted that there was nothing significant to report on Health and Safety matters.

**Green and Surrounds Report** - Attached to these minutes.

D Travis

In presenting his report David Travis made an impassioned plea for more members of the Club to join the small but happy band of volunteers who undertook maintenance work on the green and surrounds.

#### **Membership Development**

G Ellis

Covered by Captains Report

Membership Secretary's Report - Attached to these minutes.

J Hayes

Competitions Report - Attached to these minutes.

K Hayes

Social, Funding (incl. Catering) and Bar Report	J Muldoon
Included within Treasurers report.	
Club Captain's Report - Attached to these minutes.	G Ellis
Men's Captain - Attached to these minutes.	J Muldoon
Ladies Captain - Attached to these minutes.	B Knowles
Bowls Lancashire Delegates Report - Attached to these minutes.	L Noon
Website and Publicity - Attached to these minutes.	K Hayes
Safeguarding	G Ellis

Graham Ellis advised that:

- If anyone had any Safeguarding concerns that should speak with him as as Club Safeguarding Officer
- The Club followed the Bowls England / Bowls Development Alliance Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.
- There were no current Safeguarding issues at the Club.

Election of Officers for 2024/25

### Members of the Executive

Their being only one nomination for each position, the following were elected en-bloc.

<b>Office</b>	<b>Nominee</b>
Honorary President	
President	Mike Parker
Vice President	Barbara Knowles
Honorary Secretary	Stephen Hemsley
Honorary Treasurer	John Muldoon
Competitions Secretary	Ken Hayes
Club Captain	Graham Ellis
Membership Dev team leader	Graham Ellis
Membership Secretary	Jenny Hayes
Building Team Leader	Paul Willcocks
Green & Surrounds Team Leader	David Travis
Social & Funding Team Leader	John Muldoon

Other Posts

<b>Position</b>	<b>Reporting To</b>	<b>Nominee</b>
Bowls Lancashire Delegate (2)	Club Captain	Lyndon Noon
Graham Ellis		
Men's Captain	Club Captain	Lyndon Noon
Lady's Captain	Club Captain	Barbara Knowles
Publicity Officer	Social & Funding Team Leader	Ken Hayes
Catering Officer	Social & Funding Team Leader	Steve Morris
Health & Safety Officer	Buildings Team Leader	Paul Willcocks
Safeguarding Officer	Club Secretary	Graham Ellis
Accounts Examiner		John Benvie

**Propositions:** None

**Key dates** – *added after the meeting*

**Opening Day:** Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> April

**Club Finals 2025:** 20<sup>th</sup> / 21<sup>st</sup> September

**2025 AGM:** 12:00 Noon Saturday 15th November 2025

President M Parker thanked everyone for attending a very constructive meeting, and wished everyone a safe journey home.

## **2. Presidents welcome and opening remarks**

Thank you to you all for attending the AGM and showing your interest in the future of this club. I appeal to all our members to play an active role in this club. We rely on volunteers in every aspect from being a club officer to helping to set up the green for you to play your game.

First I'd like to thank all the clubs officers who have put in so many hours in fulfilling vital duties. Also I know many of you are here supporting the various jobs that need doing. Thank you for the various and many ways you do this.

We need more like you, and I appeal to every playing member to contribute a regular hour of their time particularly on a Friday morning when there is so much to do.

We are trying hard to cater for all age groups, and both working and retired people. I'm also proud that we now have several qualified coaches who can help not only new bowlers but those, like me, that have new challenges with the passing of years!

Graham has been very active in introducing bowls as a fun activity to schools in our area. We have had regular sessions with 2 primary schools, and have been asked by another to start soon. I'll leave him to explain our challenges in this sector later. We need to convert this interest into membership.

I was privileged to lead a group of 17 on a 4-day tour as guests of Renfrewshire Under 25's. This presented a unique test of bowling skills and stamina but was hugely enjoyable and hopefully created friendships in the 2 Cumbrian and 2 Scottish clubs who hosted us that will result in more clubs visiting us in the future.

Hosting visiting bowls teams is the way that we will underpin our finances, and maintain the club in a way that we all desire and attract others to join

Lastly our links with the County, holding a Bolton Open competition, games against other clubs in the county and local crown green clubs have been very successful and we should all support such events in the future.

Lastly thank you for your personal support and I look forward, subject to your vote, to continue to do this for another year, health permitting.

**Michael Parker, Club President**

## **6. Secretaries report.**

Having re-read my report from last year I find that it remains valid this year:

As always your Management committee has had a busy year:

We have met 10 times during the past year with the majority of meetings 'in person' and exceptionally via ZOOM.

However, it must be remembered that meetings are where things are planned, reviewed, and decisions made.

The amount of work undertaken between meetings to make things happen is far more time consuming than the time spent at meetings. I am certain that many members of your Management Committee spend as much time on 'running the Club' than they spend playing Bowls.

This needs to be recognised, but not taken for granted.

We also need to recognise those members, not on the Management Committee, who provide valuable assistance in the bar, the kitchen green and premises maintenance.

All of these people help to make our Club such a success.

If you are not amongst these people, please consider how you can contribute and spread the load.

**Stephen Hemsley**

## **7. Treasurers Report**

2024 turned out to be a break-even year for us no profit and very little loss, the exception being the green repairs which turned out at nearly £7k, which we took from savings account at Skipton.

Bar was down to £500 profit, a big reduction on 2023 but we didn't have any visiting parties to boost our bar profits.

Social nights were at minimum in '24 with only presentation/Christmas night being the only one.

Chris B tried a few other small events but didn't have much luck with only a handful of attendees.

2025 will need more visitors to keep our head above water.

**John Muldoon**

**A copy of these Accounts, signed by J Benvie, the Account Examiner, is held on file.**

## **8 Auditors Report**

To follow

## **9 Building Report**

We have to thank Chris Beard for his sterling efforts in the first half of the season when he dealt with a number of maintenance issues within the Club House including, but limited to:

- dealing with a number of plumbing issues,
- replaced sections of flooring which had suffered from water damage and had become unsafe.
- Replaced some of the fluorescent lighting with LED to reduce electricity costs
- Some remedial re-decoration.

Unfortunately, Chris was unable to continue and the work has fallen to members of the Management C'tee to fill the void, usually Ken Hayes.

This is a critical role in the preservation of our Clubhouse and the post needs to be filled.

**Stephen Hemsley**

## **10 Green & Surrounds**

Amongst the numerous jobs undertaken by the Green and Surrounds Maintenance team over the last 12 months were the following:

Regular sweeping and cleaning of the green and the ditches. A replacement brush, battery and filter have been purchased to improve the efficiency of the machines.

Jetwashing of the green, surrounds and paving. New machinery has been purchased to improve the efficiency of our efforts.

Jetwashing all of the rubber mats from the ditches.

Cutting back of the vegetation and trees on both sides of the fencing.

Weekly maintenance and improvement of the gardens, hedges and tubs/containers.

Painting and cleaning of all benches. Protective covers have been purchased for all rink end benches.

Maintenance of the Council car park including leaf collection, weed removal, tree pruning, and pothole filling.

At the end of March the club employed Dales Sports to completely overhaul all of the risen edges of the green including refurbishment of the steel edging and levelling of the green surface plus installation of new carpet grippers. The work took six days to complete throughout which I undertook additional daily works at the club.

For the last 3 years I have been banging my head against the brick wall that is Bolton Council to get remedial works undertaken on the Council car park at the club. As you will be aware the surface has deteriorated and there are sizeable potholes especially around the entrance barrier. Following several meetings with our local Councillors and badgering of the Council there is now a commitment that the contractor who is currently doing the Radcliffe Road resurfacing works will come and do certain (unspecified) work on the car park. Road chippings from the resurfacing work have previously been promised. No date has yet been set for commencement of any work but it will obviously require closure of the car park whilst it is completed.

The green and surrounds have been prepared by the team for Club, County, National and Bolton Open competitions throughout the year in all weather conditions.

All members who have volunteered on a Friday morning throughout the year are greatly appreciated by myself, with special mention due to Rod Finnen, Phil Thorpe and Geoff Saunders for their unstinting and selfless commitment.

The actual number of volunteers continues to be minimal, sporadic, and hugely disappointing bearing in mind the membership base available. If you don't already help out at the club, can you spare us some of your valuable time for the benefit of us all?

**David Travis**

## **11 Membership Development**

To Follow

**Graham Ellis**

## **12 Membership**

Membership fees from existing members were received during March and early April and applications from new members continued throughout the summer months, making a total of 13 new members this season, 4 of whom had previously been winter members 2023.

With the encouragement of fellow bowlers many of the new members enrolled in the club competitions and progressed to Finals day.

The current membership as at 30/9/24 is 84, made up as follows:

Full Members	66 (45 men & 21 Ladies).
Playing Life Members	2
Non Playing Life Members	4
Juniors (u18 )	2
Juniors (u25)	1
Social Members	9

Winter Membership as at 6/10/24 is 13.

This year, for various reasons 11 did not renew their membership .

May I take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped in various ways throughout the season.

**Jenny Hayes. Membership Secretary**

### **13 Competitions**

In comparison to 2023, the weather was kinder this year. The only Fixed Day competition postponement was the Mixed Triples, which I think was due to the Club's success in the Tony Alcock Trophy. The calendar later in the year was quite congested and a re-scheduled date was not possible. There were however only four entries.

There were two innovations this year: the Ladies' Singles Championship, (the Hunt Cup) was changed from a Fixed Day Competition to a Progressive Competition and the Early Bird Singles was also changed from a Four Bowl Singles to a Two Bowl Singles, a format that seemed popular.

Many thanks to everyone who entered all the competitions.

### **League Competitions.**

League competitions overall were well supported.

### **Pairs Leagues.**

There were fourteen entries in both the Early Season Pairs League and the Australian Pairs League, which enabled two divisions in each.

### **Singles League.**

There were nineteen entries in the Singles League, so Division One had ten players and Division Two had nine.

### **Winter Pairs League.**

The Winter Pairs League has fourteen teams entered and will commence on Wednesday 23 October 2024.

### **Fixed Day Competitions.**

There was a slight increase in Fixed Day competition entries, and it was encouraging to see some of our newer members taking part in some of the Balloted Competitions.

### **Progressive Competitions.**

There was a slight increase in entries in the Progressives. Last year's figures are in brackets.

McNair Handicap	20 (18)
LG Sets	20 (16)
Williamson Men's Singles	15 (12)
Challenge Pairs	8 (9)
Hunt Cup Ladies' Singles	8 (10)

As reported last year, perhaps the newer members are beginning to feel more at home in the Progressives.

**Ken Hayes**

### **14 Social & Funding**

Included within Treasurers Report

### **15 Club Captain**

This year has been a successful one for the club. The results may not have been what we wanted but the club and its members have progressed to the national final at Leamington in a number of events. Barbara our Ladies Captain qualified in so many

events she was practically a resident for the period of the championships.

Whilst not being successful in capturing a national title our club continues to punch above its weight which is something we should not lose sight of. Our opposition play regular matches against other clubs and have far more experience of differing greens, speeds and conditions. We must also remember that lots of our players are still developing. But a word of caution whilst playing with 4 bowls seems to be the preferred format for our players when playing at Bolton its not preparing them for inter club and county matches where you have only two. You have to adjust your pace and line quickly with only half the amount of bowls. Its also important to realise the importance of playing as a team with each member supporting the rest of the squad. With this in mind it was great to see that we celebrated as a team and supported our club and county colleagues in their own matches at the nationals.

One of the main roles of the club Captain is to organise tours and visiting teams. Mike Parker has done a great job with his Renfrewshire links in the past and he kindly agreed to organise our return visit in September. We played 4 matches in 4 days with a visit to Wigton on the way up and Carlisle on the way back. The two matches in Scotland were epic. The hospitality was out of this world and whilst I can't remember much after the second visit to the committee room, I have been told we were fed and watered at both clubs. They provided us with free food and entertainment making us feel welcomed and at home.

I am sure the timings of the visit to the committee room were orchestrated as our rink was winning prior to the visit but were hammered following the chat in the room. The golden amber stuff had nothing to do with that. It was the break in continuity "Honest". If you were not lucky enough to be part of the tour

you missed out on a fantastic 4 days, The hotel accom was great and was perfect for our needs. The local restaurants were plentiful, and we even managed a Costa, Weatherspoon's, Greggs and McDonalds to meet all preferences for breakfast if you did not fancy "the all you could eat" hotel buffet. A very big thank you to Mike, your hard work and efforts were fantastic and appreciated by all the tourists. I do hope we can repeat the tour as its gone down in the clubs history and will be fondly remembered by all who took part.

We made a number of friends across the country whilst playing in the Tony Alcock and I hope we can go and visit their clubs. Again, I would ask that players look at this as an opportunity to develop and improve skills whilst taking part in a competitive game. The experience you will gain is invaluable. Please support the team captains by making yourself available for these matches. You will have fun and gain valuable experience playing on a different surface.

We hosted the Harding trophy this year. I am sure Manchester sent a team to retain the trophy with a number of the senior county players turning out for them. I was incredibly proud of the response by Bolton. Whilst on paper Manchester was far stronger we managed to beat them convincingly to take the Trophy back off them.

I will conclude by thanking John and Barbara the men's and ladies' captains for the job they have done. Their reports will provide more details but their support and advice in selecting teams as been invaluable.

**Graham Ellis**

### **15.1 Men's Captains Report:**

Very poor and disappointing season this year for mens section

A loss to Heaton Hall B at Manchester in double fours

A loss to Heaton Hall A at Bolton in top club.

We sent a team to Wigton once again , and did not have a lot of success here either.

The what we call second tier players who got a chance to play in the inter club league did not fare particularly well with exception of David Travis who out performed most. The league was a good and steep learning curve for these players, and hopefully they now realise how difficult it is playing at higher level on a different surface and playing with only 2 bowls. Playing at Bolton with 4 bowls is completely different game altogether. More of this type of game will surely help these players to improve their overall game and be more "team Ready" next time.

My last report as mens captain , good luck to Lyndon next season

**John Muldoon**

### **15.2 Lady Captains Report**

Another good season for Bolton Ladies and my thanks to all those who contributed in the playing, training, travelling, and supporting each other in various events.

We had entries for all competition categories at County level and progressed to the National finals at Leamington in the singles, triples, and senior 4s. However, success at Leamington proved hard to come by. In addition I personally had a good run in the Bowls England senior singles and in the Champ of Champs competition. I managed to get to the last 16 stages in both but –as previously said – success at Leamington is hard to come by.

The Lancashire inter league was enjoyable and successful with no losses recorded on the ladies' rinks at Bolton, Heaton Hall or Southport. It was a good opportunity to improve our grass play. In the coming season we are aiming to provide more opportunities for playing at different venues.

I encourage all ladies at Bolton to consider how they can improve their own bowling skills and to enter/continue to enter competitions at club and county level as well as supporting the fun events of Lady Patrons, the Harding Trophy and the Ivy Martin

**Barbara Knowles**

### **15.3 Bowls Lancashire Delegates Report**

#### **AGM**

The Bowls Lancashire AGM was poorly attended once again this year. The same people who complain about the game were again

absent and the stalwarts who put their shoulders to the wheel and serve on committees year in year out were re-elected. Members would do well to realise that without their help and support for both club and county the future of the game we love hangs in the balance.

Ted Pentecost has stepped down as President and his replacement with immediate effect is Brian Toner. I'm sure Brian's enthusiasm will be of great benefit to the County and we wish him all the best in his tenure. Brian is particularly keen on youth development. He would like to see more competitive bowling for our juniors next season and will seek to organise a number of internal matches against some of our more experienced bowlers to make them more able to cope with pressure situations.

#### **WALKER CUP**

Last year in an attempt to involve others, two practice sessions, one at Heaton Hall and one at Southport were organised. Both were well attended, with a number of new ladies in attendance. The session at Heaton Hall run by Graham Ellis and the session at Southport run by Shayne Rimmer were particularly rewarding. Sad to say there were a number of very good younger ladies who didn't put their names forward – which is a real pity. I'm sure Helen would appreciate their help next season. We wish her all the best.

Our Lead Coach Graham Ellis is intending to run another Coaching session for the Ladies over the Winter to build team spirit.

#### **ALSOP TROPHY**

Brian Toner has taken on the Captaincy for this competition. Former Captain Graham Ellis has stepped down to concentrate on his coaching duties. It has been agreed that from next season Ladies are now eligible to play in this competition, so this will give them even more opportunities to play at a competitive level.

#### **COMMONWEALTH GAMES**

The 23rd edition of the Commonwealth Games will take place in Scotland from Thursday 23rd July - Sunday 2nd August 2026. It has been announced that Bowls has been included within the 10 sports that will feature at the Games, though it must be noted that disappointingly this will be played indoors not outdoors as has been the case in the past.

**Lyndon Noon**

#### **16 Website & Publicity**

For the first time in many years the annual cost of the website has increased from £158.40p to £230.40p. This still only equates to roughly two full playing members a year and represents good value because most new members find us by way of the website. Since 2015 when the hit counter reset itself, we have had a total of 87,037 visits, an average of almost 11,000 each Year.

It also continues to provide, a "Welcome to our Club", and remains a useful source of information about the activities at the Club, to both the World at large and our members.

For those new to the club, it also allows us to utilise online forms from Membership Applications to Competition Entries, plus other forms as and when required.

There is also a Member's Section, (which is password protected and therefore complies with GDPR), which allows member's contact details to be accessed together with the Club Calendar.

**Ken Hayes (Webmaster)**