

# HERTFORDSHIRE BOWLS

The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Hertfordshire Bowls took place on Saturday 7 January 2023 at Hatfield Bowls Club at 10.30am. The meeting was attended by 80 Officers and Members representing 41 Clubs.

1. **Welcome, Apologies & Obituaries:**

Chairman, Allan Sayers took the chair and welcomed all to the meeting. Before apologies were received a period of silence was held in memory of past members. Health and Safety information was given by Marcia Dunstone. Apologies from 30 Members were received.

2.

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 3 April 2022:**

These having been previously circulated were adopted and signed. Proposed by G Searle (Met Bushey) and seconded by A Langley (Harperbury).

3. **Matters Arising:** No matters were raised.

4. **Hon. Executive Secretary Report:** (M Dunstone) Read and attached

5. **Hon. Ladies County Secretary's Report:** (N Chalcraft) Read and attached

6. **Hon. Men's County Secretary's Report:** (S Kilford) Read and attached

7. **Hon. Treasurer's Report:** (M Duke)

M Duke presented his financial report which had been previously circulated and is attached.

D Brown (Berkhamsted) proposed to approve the accounts seconded by T Phipps (Aston). Unanimously carried. Accounts signed by A Sayers and M Dunstone.

Accounts verifier of B Maule was again approved. Proposed by P Stamp (Met Bushey) and Seconded D Fox (Sawbridgeworth).

Mentioned if anybody wanted to join 300 Club to see him afterwards.

8. **Treasurers Report on Charity Accounts:** (M Duke)

M Duke presented his previously circulated reports on the funds' activity for the past year and their financial position. Attached.

Proposed by G Searle (Met Bushey) these fund accounts be accepted, seconded by P Havord (Hatfield) Unanimously carried.

9. **2023 Match & Competitions Programme:** (M Duke and A O'Hare)

M Duke read out his report which is attached.

A Sayers thanked M Duke and A O'Hare for taking this role on.

It is proposed to purchase hoodies for the County, these will be the same as acquired by Sawbridgeworth, but in Hertfordshire colours with the County name on the back, a sample of which was modelled by S Russell. These are not waterproof. They will be ordered and available before the season. The cost will be £40.

10. **County Development Officer's Report:** (G Marriner)

He spoke about his report previously circulated and attached. Thanks, given to Graham by A Sayers.

11. **Eastern Counties Bowling Association:** (S Kilford) Read and attached within Men's Secretary report.

12. **Council's Recommended the following changes to Affiliation & Competition Fees for 2023:**

- a). Affiliation Fees – No change. Remain at £5 Bowls England, £3.50 Hertfordshire Bowls
- b). Competition Fees – No Change. Remain at £3.50 per competitor.
- c). Club Competitions – No change to Men's Team Ten, Men's Club League and Men's Club Championship. All remain at £10 each. Women's League remains at £5/team

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d). Match Fees – Friendly & Presidents Match Fees £12

## 13. Rules & Constitution

### Executive Recommendations:

**Proposed amendments to HB Rules and Constitution agreed by the Executive Committee to be confirmed at AGM.**

#### **Rule 8**

##### **Executive Committee:**

Amend the first sentence in “A” to read:-

**The executive Committee shall consist of the Officers of the Association, the Immediate Past Presidents, and from each Division, the Men’s Division Secretary, and the Women’s Division Secretary.**

Proposed by Council and Seconded by A Langley (Harperbury) **Carried**

Reason:- as there are neither no longer Divisional Presidential Matches nor a Divisional League the representation from the Divisional Secretaries provides the necessary Divisional communication.

#### **Rule 9**

##### **Selection Subcommittees:**

Delete existing “A” and replace with:

**A The Executive Committee shall appoint each year a subcommittee for each gender consisting of the Honorary County Secretary, a maximum of three other Officers of the Association and a maximum of two members from each Division all of the relevant gender. The Executive Committee shall also appoint a Chairperson from the above-mentioned Officers of the Association.**

Proposed by Council and Seconded by A Langley (Harperbury) **Carried**

Reason: The current rule appoints a subcommittee consisting of Officers where the positions are now often not filled. The proposed changes would give the Executive greater flexibility to appoint a relevant subcommittee.

### **Amended points, Competitions and Inter-Club Competitions By Laws for 2023 sent separately.**

M Dunstone mentioned that there was a new version of World Bowls Rules under Crystal Mark 4. This can be downloaded from the World Bowls website.

## 14. Election of Officers for 2023 in accordance with Rule 6A.

<u>Office</u>	<u>Women’s Nomination</u>	<u>Men’s Nomination</u>
<b>President</b>	Mrs A Hudson (Hertford)	T Phipps (Aston)
<b>Senior Vice President</b>	no nomination	no nomination
<b>Junior Vice President</b>	no nomination	no nomination
<b>Honorary Gender Secretary</b>	Mrs N Chalcraft (Sawbridgeworth)	S Kilford (Royston)
<b>Honorary Executive Secretary &amp; Competition Secretary</b>	Mrs M Dunstone (Berkhamsted)	
<b>Honorary Treasurer</b>	M Duke (Batchwood Hall)	
<b>Honorary Match Secretary</b>	Mr M Duke (Batchwood Hall) & Mrs A O’Hare (Wel Gdn City)	

Proposed by J Loudon (Hatfield) and Seconded by A Langley (Harperbury)

## 15. Election of Honorary Life Member(s) in accordance with Rule 11:

2022 President, Rose Varney, was awarded Honorary Life membership for the work she has done over the year. Unfortunately, Rose was still unwell and so can’t be present.

Another person has also been awarded Life Membership, but can’t be present today. This will therefore be presented at the County Luncheon.

## 16. 2022 Samaritan Fund Veteran’s Events:

Thursday September 7: Sue Moodey Gala (Mixed) to be held at Stevenage Town BC

Saturday August 5: Gerald Scott Memorial Gala (Mixed) to be held at Welwyn & District BC

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Entry forms to follow in due course

17. **2022 Annual Prize Presentations:**

Sunday 5 March at Homestead Court Hotel, Welwyn.

18. **2023 Annual Tours**

Monday 19 to Friday 23 June Women President's Tour to Great Yarmouth staying at Gunton Hall.

Sunday 18 to Sunday 25 June Men President's Tour to Jersey. Final details to be circulated within the next 2 weeks.

19. **Any other relevant business:**

None received

20. **Chairman's Address**

AS thanked Hatfield for hosting the County and refreshments provided. Executive thanked Betty Stewart, Terry Barker, John Loudon and Phil Clewes-Garner for all the work and support they had given to the County over the years. Thanks to everyone for attending.

The meeting was closed at 11.30am.

**Open Forum**

AS said that two significant discussions had taken place at Executive meeting.

1. Just a few weeks ago at the Council meeting we went through a very similar agenda as today. The Exec feel that the Council is an extra layer of bureaucracy and that exactly the same results can be achieved at the AGM in full. If the Council were wound up there would be no loss of democracy as clubs would still be the main decision makers. Currently the Council meeting creates extra work without any apparent benefit and with the difficulty in obtaining nominations for positions this all seems unnecessary.
2. You are all aware of the difficulty in getting nominations for JVP, SVP and Presidents as we again saw earlier. Traditionally the route to Presidency has involved a 4 year commitment JVP, SVP, President and IPP. The Exec feel that with the changing times this length of commitment is one reason why candidates do not come forward. There is consideration of reducing this to a 2 year commitment by doing away with JVP and electing directly a Vice President year one and President year two and eliminating any formal requirements as IPP. As the world changes around us it is necessary to modernise bowls as well. Comments and views welcome. No comments were received but it is a matter to be given consideration.

Jon Hay (Life Member) asked for the outcome of the survey. This was outlined at the Council meeting and M Dunstone will ensure details of this was sent out to clubs.

Forum closed at 11.35am.

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Executive Secretary's report at AGM January 7 2023

## Bowls England.

Leamington Championships 2023 are Thursday 10th – Sunday 27th August.

Draws for the Inter-county competitions are on the BE website and it is a 2 year Round Robin - home and away.

Since our Council meeting I along with Allan Sayers attended the BE Council Meeting at the Double Tree Hilton in Coventry. The format was that the attendees are allocated to round tables with 1 or 2 BE personnel or Board member. Each Agenda item was presented to the floor by either the CEO Jon Cockroft, a member of the Board or the BE relevant staff. After each item there was a related discussion topic and each table had time to chat about the topic and produce ideas that were collated and then read out to others in the room. There were strong indications that BE have been listening to feedback and making a positive response. A prime example is that they have accepted that Regional Finals were not a success and will be abandoned for 2023 (Inter county competition Regional Finals remain). Competition qualifications should return pro rata to 1 or 2 players from each county in 2023, the same as Championship comps. Two similar proposals regarding format of the Championships in either 2023 or '24 from Dorset and Worcestershire are being put forward at the AGM in February. The proposal by Worcs was better documented before the meeting and had prompted the Board and BE to put changes in hand for the Championships in the summer. Dorset's proposal seemed to be similar but may not be actionable for this year. It needs more clarification for the delegates. Other discussions included an inevitable rise in Affiliation. BE capitation has been £5 since 2007. It has to go up but by how much gave rise to quite a lot of discussion. We came away thinking it would probably go up to £7.50 but whether that was immediately or over 2 years was not clear. Affiliation continues to be from 1st May.

Regarding marketing and publicity BE are keen to use the legacy of the CWG to expand on TV and media coverage. There was an excellent video called "Have We Got Bowls for You" from Kevin Clarke of Berkhamsted BC on the initiatives they have introduced to encourage Bowls and Membership. Many delegates were interested to borrow the video. BE plans to host a Big Bash taster session at Leicester IBC on the Friday before their AGM. Interest had to be registered before this AGM.

A shortage of Umpires was recognised and the current payment of £15 for attending a match was going to be followed up by BE bearing in mind the time and travel commitment involved when umpiring.

Although not formally announced during the Council or Dinner we understood that Sheila Storey of Northumberland had been voted in as Junior VP rather than Charlotte Emanuel of Surrey. This has subsequently been formally announced.

In the evening the re-introduced BE Champions Dinner took place. It was a delight to see our Champions, Rhianna Russell and Jerry Rumball receiving their Trophies and to see our Men's Manager, Roger Evans, going up to receive the Runners-up Trophy for the Middleton Cup. There was plenty of photo opportunity afterwards.

The BE AGM will be held at Goodwood BC on Saturday 26th February. This will be followed in the evening by the Awards Dinner at the Athena Conference centre. I attended last year and it was very professionally presented. A big negative is that the nearest hotels are about 5-10 minute walk away. The short list for the various categories has been announced and unfortunately no person or club from Hertfordshire is included. A link to the list was in a recent BE communication I shared with the clubs.

Other BE items reported at our Council:

Local Councils are getting back to looking at sports pitch requirements and BE would be grateful for any local input from us as to Council activity in this area.

Dennis/Sisis are keen to increase the number of Greens seminars in 2023. I'll be asking John Hay to liaise with BE regarding our county being included on the programme

There are currently 30 Bowls England Celebration matches confirmed for 2023. It seemed to have been very successful opening up the nominations to workers and officers from clubs instead of just the 10 men & 10 women per county previously invited. However as I write I am disappointed with the Hertfordshire response for 2023. There is still time if you are quick.

## County & Competitions

Thank you for the Competitions entries. Indications are that the entries are down. We are looking at updating our Competition system and will be having a zoom meeting and demo with the company who produce BowlsR. It is the system used by BE for their competitions and adapted for a number of counties and clubs. We will let you know our

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progress with this. Thank you to the Divisional Secretaries who take the competition results and organise Quarter finals and 2 Wood days etc on a rota.

Clubs have been sending me their Contact forms and any changes should, if not already done, be reflected on our website and the 2023 Club Directory, soon to be sent out to the secretaries. However you have to change your details on the BE website. I cannot do it for you. Every club apparently was issued with a user name and could make their own password to access and change their club details.

Many clubs are changing their club playing uniforms or strips. They have to be approved by the county using a form devised by BE however I have yet to disapprove any. Some run the new and old strips at the same time whilst the newer strip is introduced however when on the green everyone in the same team should be wearing the same including colours below the waist.

Affiliation as previously mentioned is as at 1st May so the form for that will be out in March

Following the resignation of Alan Spicer as Women's Team Manager as well as team selectors Jan Holland and Jan Sellek we have advertised these positions. Ann O'Hare has stepped forward and will be managing the team.

Congratulation to our other Team Managers; Roger Evans and Nick Muir for all the work they do with their respective teams. If you identify any promising players of any gender or age group please let us know.

We also need Vice Presidents for both genders. Anne and Tommy would like support this coming summer and we need the progression. The Exec will be looking at ways of reducing the commitment and increasing the assistance to make the roles open to all. It was a very sad loss to the county when Noel Roberts passed away early in 2022 and we thank very much the Past Presidents who assisted where possible. We have also missed very much our President, Rose Varney, following her shingles attack during the summer. The legacy of that painful illness is still with her. Thank you to all the Club Secretaries who forward to their members the information I send to them.

Thank you to Tony Redford for keeping our website up to date.

I'll finish by thanking our Chair Allan Sayers and the Exec for their support.

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## 2022 MEN'S SECRETARY REPORT

Well, 2022 was our first full season back without any restrictions since Covid 19 affected our sport. A late start, shorter season, potentially too many games, cancellation of fixtures or a reduction in numbers of players, limited catering etc etc. Yet despite all this our clubs and their members continued to play bowls. Congratulations to everyone for persisting in these difficult times.

### National Championships:

This year proved to be a successful year for Hertfordshire for which I would congratulate Jerry Rumball (Garston) for winning the National Senior Singles a tremendous achievement. Matt Coppen (Royston) for reaching the Semi Final of the Champion of Champions Singles, Paul Mackness, Brian Ralphs, Kevin Clarke and Chris Gray (Berkhamsted) for reaching the Semi Final of the Senior Fours and Jack Bunting (Hemel Hempstead) for reaching the Quarter Final of the Junior Singles. I must also congratulate our Middleton Cup Team who achieved their best ever result in over 40 years. In the first round we overcame Hunts by 10 shots at St Neots BC. We then had our local rivals Beds at Aylesbury BC who we stuffed out of sight. In the Quarter Final we drew Leicestershire at St Neots where at one point we were 10 shots up but then found ourselves 10 shots down with very few ends left. However, we picked up a six, five and seven to win by 2. Leamington was next where we had to play Gloucester in the Semi Final, where again we were losing by 25 at halfway but managed to turn this round to win by 12. So, onto the Final against Berkshire where we met a team on top form and one we were unable to contain unfortunately losing by 33 shots. However while credit goes to the players a lot of credit needs to be given to Roger Evans Team Manager for his commitment and time given in creating a great team spirit and belief within the team.

In the Balcomb we played Cambs at Newmarket where we had a comfortable win. This put us through to the Regional Area Finals at Wellingborough where unfortunately we lost to Norfolk.

As for the White Rose Nick Muir had a very young team as the likes of Tom Muir and Glenn Williams were now too old, Despite, there lack of experience they made the Area Regional Finals beating Northants by 10 shots on the way, where they then came across a very experienced team from Suffolk. However, they put up a very creditable performance and only lost by 8 shots which if for one lapse where they dropped 10 shots over one end, they could possibly have won. This bodes well for the future and my thanks goes to Nick as he has created a good team spirit amongst the lads.

### Gerald Scott Memorial Gala:

This annual event was postponed for 2022 again due to the lack of nominations. Consideration will need to be given to whether this continues. Do we need to push this back to later in the season or is it that the players do not want to play in this anymore?

### Club Team Events:

The Club League Champions are Garston Runners up Hoddesdon Rye Park. The Team Ten Champions were Royston Runners up Baldock and the Club Championship winners were Garston Runners up Welwyn Gdn City.

### Middleton Cup/Balcomb:

Draw for 2023 has now been received and we are in a group of 5 for the Middleton Cup with Beds, Cambs, Hunts, Northants. As for the Balcomb we have a bye and await the winner of Essex v Hunts away. In respect of the White Rose we are drawn away to Hunts.

### Competition Entries

Despite being able to get back to a state of normality during 2022, there again is a slight decrease in numbers entering competitions, with only the 2 Wood and 4 Wood Singles showing an increase.

Nation Champs	2022	2021	2019	2018	2017	County	2021	2019	2018	2017	2016
2 Wood Singles	88	87	101	103	92	Unbadged Singles	91	92	94	97	97
4 Wood Singles	146	143	178	163	151						
Pairs	144	154	204	158	157						
Triples	94	96	109	109	114						
Fours	60	63	68	69	69						
Senior Fours	50	50	42	32	29						
Junior Singles	6	6	15	14	13						
Total	588	599	717	648	625		91	92	94	97	97

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## County Finals

The semi-finals were held at Welwyn & District B.C. during July with the finals hosted by Bishops Stortford B.C. on Sunday 31 July when the players produced some tremendous bowling with the following results:

### **SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP** (*Owen Cup*)

Winner: G Williams (*Garston*)

Runner Up: S Brown (*Royston*)

### **TWO WOOD SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP** (*Poole Cup*)

Winner: N Muir (*Harpenden*)

Runner: G Williams (*Garston*)

### **PAIRS CHAMPIONSHIP** (*Haynes Cup*)

Winners: M Coppen & S Brown (*Royston*)

Runners Up: P Element & M Coles (*Mill End*)

### **TRIPLES CHAMPIONSHIP** (*McKelvie Cup*)

Winners: G Williams, S Lepley & J Rumball (*Garston*)  
(*Baldock*)

Runners Up: S Andrews, D Hickin & P Andrews

### **FOURS CHAMPIONSHIP** (*Paskell Cup*)

Winners: R Murphy, C Frostick, S Wake & M Plume (*Buntingford*)  
& J Rumball (*Garston*)

Runners Up: S Horwood, G Williams, S Lepley

### **SENIOR FOURS CHAMPIONSHIP** (*Sayers Salver*)

Winners: P Mackness, B Ralphs, K Clarke & C Gray (*Berkhamsted*)

& L Ramsay (*Royston*)

Runners Up: S Kilford, K Lamacraft, I Snowdon

### **JUNIOR SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP** (*Simmons Cup*)

Winner: J Bunting (*Hemel Hempstead*)

Runner Up: S Andrews (*Baldock*)

### **JUNIOR PAIRS CHAMPIONSHIP** (*Dunstone/Marriner Salver*)

Winners: M Murphy (*Buntingford*) & J Duke (*Batchwood*)  
(*Baldock*)

Runners Up: T Bunting (*Hemel Hempstead*) & S Andrews

### **UNBADGED SINGLES** (*Tingey Cup*)

Winner: R Chunn (*Herts*)

Runner Up: R Avery (*Welwyn Garden City*)

## **Friendly Match Programme:**

HB Men had 17 fixtures arranged, however only 13 inter-county games were played with 4 being cancelled at Norfolk, Oxfordshire, Warwickshire and London & Southern Counties (3 by Herts and 1 by London & Southern Counties). However, I would like to give thanks to all the Match Officers, for all the hard work they put into getting teams to play, due to the large number of withdrawals and lack of nominations. It was hoped that nominations would increase with the change to the points system, which did happen, but the fact that over 60 badged players who normally nominate didn't, caused tremendous problems again. Reasons behind these badged players not nominating is not known. Maybe the survey to be circulated to members might highlight this.

## **Presidents Matches:**

The Presidents played 20 matches this year.

## **Flashes:**

Next season we will be awarding 8 Middleton Cup Flashes to Sam Andrews (*Baldock*), Jack Bunting (*Hemel Hempstead*), Paddy Jones (*Wel & Dist*), Phil Russell (*Wel & Dist*), Dave Murphy (*Buntingford*), Stewart Parkhouse (*Wel Gdn City*), Martyn Ball (*B Stortford*) and Ross Murphy (*Buntingford*).

Also 7 Eastern Counties Flashes will be awarded to Matthew Murphy and Ross Murphy (*Buntingford*), Aaron Heath (*Baldock*), Rob Dempster (*Baldock*), Paddy Jones (*Wel & Dist*), Martyn Ball (*B Stortford*), Roger Evans (*Buntingford*)

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Points Another 14 players have achieved 10 points and will now qualify for their Colts Flash and can nominate for County Friendlies.

Congratulations to them all.

## Eastern Counties League

Again, another successful year. We managed to win 4 drew 1 and lost 1 finishing third on shot difference of plus 66, compared to Beds of plus 79, both being on 89 points. The winners were Essex on 92 points.

As for the Exec rink they managed to win 6 out of 6 winning the league on 12 points with a shot difference of plus 67.

In 2023 the league will be reduced to 6 Counties as Huntingdonshire have withdrawn.

## Eastern County Bowls Association Finals;

As a trial these are being played on 21 May 23 to try and get more of the County winners participating by giving them more time to play the prelims. Our representatives are;

2 Wood Singles Nick Muir (Harpenden)

4 Wood Singles Glenn Williams (Garston)

Pairs Matt Coppen & Stewart Brown (Royston)

Triples Glenn Williams, Scott Lepley and Jerry Rumball (Garston)

Fours Ross Murphy, Carl Frostick, Scott Wake and Mark Plume (Buntingford)

Junior Singles Jack Bunting (Hemel Hempstead)

Bedford Cup John Loudon (Hatfield) and Don Fox (Sawbridgeworth)

Good luck to them all.

## Thank You's:

Finally, I would just like to thank the Executive for all their support during the year.

Steve Kilford

Hon. Men's Secretary



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## Herts. Bowls Hon. Women's Secretary's Report AGM 2022

### County matches

Over recent years the number of nominations for inter county matches has been on the decline. It was hoped that in 2022 with the change of eligibility there would be an increase in nominations. This was not to be. Despite an extra 62 players obtaining 10 or more points matches were cancelled through lack of nominations, (although some fixtures had double the nominations required). The situation was not unique to Hertfordshire, other counties reported a similar situation. Reasons given were varied – some still had concerns about Covid, others life style had changed, cost of living increases and many others concerns. The 2023 programme has a reduced number of fixtures and tend to be with counties bordering Hertfordshire. Hopefully all the matches will be well supported.

I would like to thank the Match Officers for their hard work in making sure all went well. It is no easy task when there are last minute drop outs.

Many thanks also to Phil Clewes-Garner for the work he put in as fixture secretary and to Ann O'Hare and Martin Duke for the work they are doing for the 2023 season.

### County Points

Players with 10 or more points are now eligible to nominate for inter county friendly matches and will receive their colt's badge at their first game. They will receive their county player status after five games over a minimum of three years. There are 50 players eligible to nominate in 2023.

### National Championships

A great achievement for 16 year old Rhianna Russell in taking the title of National Champion in the two wood singles. Well done, Rhianna. Hertfordshire also did well in other rounds at Leamington. Quarter finals were reached by Devon Cooper and Rachel Tremlett in the junior pairs, Devon Cooper in the junior singles and Rhianna Russell, Val Challacombe and Sue Tye in the triples. Congratulations to all the competitors.

Many thanks to the clubs for hosting the quarter and semi-finals. A special thank you to Bishop's Stortford for hosting the Finals and to Marcia Dunstone for all the organisation – no easy task. A special thank you, also, to the divisional secretaries for collating all the results.

### National Competitions

Congratulations to Herts BC on reaching the last 16 in the Women's Top Club.

Congratulations to Alison Hall on reaching the last 16 of the Champion of Champions.

### Inter-County Competitions

The Amy Rose girls put up a good fight but sadly lost with the last bowl of the game. Thank you to Roger Evans for all his work and support with the Amy Rose and well done to all the girls.

The Johns Trophy was once again played on a knockout basis. Having won against Suffolk, Hertfordshire then were faced with a very strong team from Leicestershire and lost by 8 shots. 2023 season will be a return to the round robin.

Hertfordshire won the first round of the Walker Cup versus Bedfordshire and the second round against Cambridgeshire, but unfortunately lost in the regional final to Huntingdonshire by one shot after an extra end. Although disappointing it was an achievement to get to the regional finals. Congratulations to all the players. A very special thank you to Alan Spicer as manager and Janet Selleck and Jan Holland as selectors for all their time and efforts. Sadly, they are all standing down and are not available for the 2023 season.

### Inter-divisional Competitions

The women's county league final was played at Royston BC with Tring BC, Sawbridgeworth BC, Royston BC and Hatfield BC playing in the semi-finals and Hatfield were the ultimate winners. Many thanks to Royston for hosting the event.

### Finally

I would like to thank members of the executive committee for the time and effort they put into supporting the county and the clubs and players for all their support, without them we would not have the successes and fun enjoyed by so many. Please continue to support all the events organised in the county.

Natalie Chalcraft, Hon. Women's Secretary, January 2023

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## Male Match Officers Report to AGM 2022

Phil has left after many years of doing an excellent job and Ann & I have stepped up to try and fill his shoes. A number of colleagues have helped in producing the 2023 programme and I would like to thank them all for their help. The two differences from 2022 are the Fours & Triples, once again, starting earlier and the fixing of dates, as far as we can, with the Bowls England competitions. Bowls England has set up a working party to review competitions over the next few months, so we will see what transpires from that. I do not have the full details yet from Marcia but competition entries are about 5% down on last season. We would like to hear any views for 2024, as we are open to suggestions from individuals and clubs, although there are very few free dates. The programme is now on the website, you need to refresh if it is still showing as 2022. This is very full and it makes life difficult for others organising competitions within the County. I have tried to help where I can, but there have been some significant changes between the first and last draft, with the new boy trying to find his feet.

In 2022, apart from the two galas 11 of the 45 matches were cancelled. 2023 will see a reduction to 29 matches. There will be 10 men's matches, 11 women's matches, and 8 presidents matches, one of which is by invitation only. We have dropped the Counties that involve the longer distances with a view to eventually only playing the 5 surrounding counties twice a season. I would ask that you nominate when the forms arrive and would also remind you that match officers will also be needed.

The executive recognize that without the clubs, we cannot hold matches or competitions and I set out in my financial report the changes we are making to try and help clubs. This also ensures that the County is more aware of costs, although away matches are still outside our control. The Eastern Counties League set a maximum of £6.50 for their matches, which Hertfordshire feels is too low but it seems as though these matches may go the way of the Middleton, with no meals. Our clubs will receive a green fee regardless of meals being provided.

We have had various offers of greens for both competitions and matches, with a few more venues still required. Bishop's Stortford are happy to once again host the finals but we did not reach agreement with Welwyn & District and subsequently the semi-finals have moved to Shire Park and the men's competitive matches to Royston. Ann has arranged for the women to use Shire Park for the John's. There are only a handful of clubs, who we consider have the green and necessary facilities to host these top events. Please let us know if you think your club is missing out. Many events move round the County, by Division, but if we decide to move other events, the club will be given a reason and usually a year's notice. We owe a great deal to the clubs that provide their greens and this is the least we can do in return. Buckinghamshire have asked that our match is in Hertfordshire this season, so as of yesterday I am looking for a green for this match on Tuesday 1 August. Any takers please see me afterwards.

The draws in the Middleton and John's are for two years, with this seasons fixtures being reversed in 2024. The women have drawn Bedfordshire & Huntingdonshire at home and must travel to Norfolk & Leicestershire. Ann and Natalie are looking at coach travel for these ties. Meanwhile the men travel to Cambridgeshire & Huntingdonshire, whilst entertaining Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire. On the 10 June and the 8 July, only one of our teams is playing, so the whole County will be able to come and support the other gender. Your support can definitely make a difference.

Our men are away to the winners of Huntingdonshire or Essex in the Balcomb whilst in the Walker, our women must travel to Suffolk. Our Amy Rose girls have drawn Northants at home and the boys are at Huntingdonshire in the White Rose. The boys have been very poorly supported for at least the past two years and I would join Nick Muir in calling for a good crowd in 2023.

After that it's the Regional Finals and Leamington.

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## Hertfordshire Bowls Development Officer

7<sup>th</sup> January 2023

- Recovering from Covid:** Overall, the number of Affiliated bowlers in Hertfordshire is down on the pre-Covid levels. For the period 2019-22 all four Divisions [71 clubs] are showing a fall in their club membership figures: -  
South 127 [men], 68 [women]. North 49 [men], 36 [women]. East 82 [men], 63 [women]. West 65 [men], 55 [women].  
In summary, there were 323 [14%] fewer men and 222 [19%] fewer women playing bowls in 2022 season that is.  
The fall in bowler numbers may be a contributing factor to why clubs have been reporting difficulty in fulfilling their fixtures programme, due to members not being available for selection. The key 2023 challenge to clubs is to work on increasing ways of attracting new members and working hard to retain existing members. Watch [www.bowlsengland.com](http://www.bowlsengland.com) for news of their 2023 initiative that carries on from “All to Play” and the 2022 ‘Big Bash’, reflecting on the qualities of our game.
- Coaching:** At last year’s AGM I reported on the new way the Coach Bowls courses were offering based on Tutoring the Theory of coaching via Zoom followed by Practical session leading to the Assessment and hopefully the awarding of a qualification in Coaching at Level 1 or Level 2.  
During the year I have been working on a plan that will [a] offer a Level 1 course, with the two Practical Days at Harpenden IBC; [b] to recruit/‘train-up’ Tutor/s from within our County so that going forward we can offer more L1 & L2 coaching courses based in Hertfordshire.
- Very pleased to announce the Level 1 course is currently available and can be booked on-line at:- [www.coachbowls.org/courses/level-1-qualification-in-coaching-bowls](http://www.coachbowls.org/courses/level-1-qualification-in-coaching-bowls) ; the site shows only four places remaining. I will update the remaining availability at the AGM.
- We still need to establish a Hertfordshire ‘Centre of Excellence’ for delivering coaching courses ‘locally’ to prevent the need for those wishing to get their coaching qualification having to travel [Avon Valley IBC, Warwickshire](#); [Desborough BC, Berkshire](#); [Falcon BC, Essex](#); [Heaton Park, Manchester](#); [Ilminster BC, Somerset](#), [Preston BC, Sussex](#), [Royal Leamington Spa Bowling Club, Warwickshire](#) or [Selby BC, Yorkshire](#).
- Earlier, reference was made to growing and retaining Club membership. One sure way is to ensure that every one of our 71 clubs has a qualified coach, to both work on recruiting and retaining club bowlers. By the development of a bowler skills; a coach can help build greater fulfilment in the Sport
- Wishing you all good bowling in the forthcoming 2023 season*

# HERTFORDSHIRE BOWLS

## Honorary Treasurers Report to AGM 2022

Good morning all.

It is over 2 months since the accounts were circulated, shortly before the Council meeting. Since then they have been verified by Bob Maule and hopefully, have also been seen by club members.

In 2023 all clubs hosting matches will receive the same, a £2.50 green fee and £8 for a 2 course meal. So clubs will still receive money from the County in matches where there are no meals required. We will also be paying £50 to clubs who have offered their green for competition use, up to and including semi-finals and divisional finals. The Executive are aware of the financial strains being placed on clubs.

This is all part of the County working with the clubs and with the current timing of the divisional meetings, I would suggest that any thoughts about your expectations for 2024 should be conveyed immediately after your September meeting. So, 2023 will see the County again showing a deficit for the season, with these increased competition and match costs. I am also hoping to spend money with Hertfordshire again doing well in their team competitions. With healthy cash reserves this is not a problem but as an executive we will need to decide when fees need to be increased rather than reducing our reserves.

The 300 club effectively funds our youth arm. However, this fund is gradually reducing, and I would ask for your renewed support. Entries remain at £10 per number and by far the easiest way is to pay straight into the County Account (30-94-17 00151849). Mavis is continuing to run this, and I will let her know that you have paid. You can easily check on the website that your ticket(s) have been entered. I can give you all you need after the meeting.

Onto the Samaritan Fund, which is now one fund. We again cancelled both charity galas in 2022, through lack of support. In 2023 the Gerald Scott Gala has been moved to Saturday 5 August at Welwyn. The 7 September sees the Sue Moodey Gala, again held at Sue's old club, Stevenage Town, who always offer great hospitality. Both of these galas continue to be mixed and are in memory of two bowlers, who worked tirelessly for the County. Let's make sure that they are a success in 2023. I have some entry forms, or if you leave me your email, I will send you one.

Our main expenditure this year was for the trip to Leamington, which was reinstated this year as a mixed event. I am looking for a volunteer to help me with 2024 and would ask one of you to contact me.

Does anyone have any questions? Can we please adopt these accounts.

Martin Duke January 2023