



SCWBA - SECRETARY'S REPORT

President Penny and fellow bowlers

Last year I gave you the history of the membership of Surrey County Women's Bowling Association membership for the previous five years. For the 2019 season 2,394 members affiliated from 124 clubs. SCWBA lost 136 members or 5.37%.

The fall in membership continues and, if our sport is to continue through the generations, it is clear that we need to reverse this decline. A Caterham BC member has set an example to us all in what can be done to recruit new members. His dedication to recruitment and his successes are remarkable. If any club would like help I am sure he would be happy to give guidance on how he has managed to find a large number of new recruits. He may even offer to help if he does not live too far away. Jean Hewett can tell you all about him. His work for Caterham and Bletchingley particularly and Warlingham Park and Chipstead has been very successful.

As you know, Bowls Surrey became fully operational following our AGM last year. Perhaps not unexpectedly, our road in the first year has been very bumpy. Unfortunately, the SCBA Secretary (who was also a member of the BS Board), and the SCBA Assistant Secretary felt the need to resign from their posts. The BS Chairperson also resigned shortly afterwards. Sometime later, the BS Administrator also felt that he should resign. As I said in my report last year, SCBA or SCWBA are not recognised as separate County Associations by Bowls England. BE will only deal with Bowls Surrey. They and Sport England require that we have a unified structure. In addition to these demands, we also have to comply with the law, not least equality legislation.

The differences between the administration of the two associations are not many but are important to both genders. For example, the men's areas and the women's zones are different. Both Associations differ in the award of honours. We differ in the payment of expenses; SCWBA has fewer members than the men and therefore less income. All these issues are unlikely to be resolved in a short space of time. On a positive note, as of today, clubs will be able to complete their affiliation and competition forms on-line. Secretaries or the designated person need only log in to their club's area on the affiliation system. They will not be able to access any information provided by other clubs. They will need to ensure that the address is correct and details of the club website are correct. The names of existing members will already be listed; so only details of any changes and corrections will need to be inputted. However, in future, we will require first and surnames, affiliated members' contact details, for example, email addresses and telephone numbers. The date of birth will also be required for all those entering competitions. An explanatory letter will be sent to all clubs with a full explanation and instructions.

Charlotte Emanuel is the Bowls Surrey Communications Officer. Her Bowls Surrey Facebook page has been a great success and has attracted a very wide following. She has kept everyone up to date with things that are going on in the County for men and women, in particular the scores at Leamington. In August she received over 30,000 hits. A hit is only recorded where someone has opened a page and commented. She has no idea how many people just look at the page without comment; (people like me I am afraid)!

We have been looking at a Bowls Surrey website and as you know we have the Bowls Surrey name already. We have little progress so far but hope to make more progress in the foreseeable future and the Board have just agreed the colours should be blue and yellow.

Website design has changed over the years and in order to achieve what we need, it is essential that it is researched properly. Both webmasters have been looking into this. One of the first things Bowls Surrey worked on was what should be moved to the Bowls Surrey website so that everything that is common to both Associations can be put in one place, therefore halving the work.

COMPETITIONS

Ann Rapley and Jean Hewett (our Competition Secretaries) reported that our entries for the National Championships and other Surrey competitions all ran smoothly.

Once again, many thanks to Jean and Ann for all their hard work to make sure everything ran well.

Thank you to all the clubs who have allowed us the use of their greens, to the club members who made everyone so welcome and provided excellent refreshments during the final rounds, to the green keepers who had the unusually difficult task of keeping the greens in a good playing condition in very difficult circumstances. Last year we had drought, this year we had wind and rain ad nauseum.

I would particularly like to thank: Mitcham, Croydon, Sutton and Burpham for hosting the early rounds of the two wood singles and Bletchingley, Epsom and Byfleet for hosting the zone rounds and West Byfleet for hosting the Quarter Finals, Semi-Finals and Final of the Benevolent Triples. These bookings are particularly difficult as we appear to get more and more people just dropping out at the last minute. We book the greens on the basis that we need them; it is somewhat disconcerting when so many people pull out and our bookings prevent clubs' own members from using their own green.

Thirteen members qualified for their County Badge:

Sandra Harris (Bourne BC), Jan Ward (Heathfields BC); Joanne Newman (Ewhurst BC); Christine Chambers (Sutton BC); Liz Avis (Milford BC); Shirley Tilley, (Bourne BC), Linda Aburn (Sutton), Sylvia Jones (Ember), Gill Rice (Camberley), Linda Gallagher (Purley Ladies), Linda Ball (Purley Ladies), Kara Lyford (Purley Ladies) and Kat Hornbrook (Milford),

Our congratulations to them all.

Other County competitions:

Shân Maylin ran the Champion of Champions and the Officers' Cup and all went smoothly I believe. Shân has agreed to continue running these two competitions for 2020. Thank you.

Our umpires and markers have again been busy and once again we thank them for helping us run our championships and competitions.

INTERNATIONALS

The British Isles Championships and the International Series was held in Jersey this year and a crowd of us went to support the Surrey triple of Sharmishta Patel, Maureen Vandrau and Margaret Smith in the British Isles Championships. Sadly, they lost 21-22 in the prelim to Ireland. They were very unlucky. Both Debbie Seward and Margaret Smith played for England in all the games in the International Series with Debbie moving up to play 3 to Lorraine Kuhler. England won the series and received the Eve Trophy. Congratulations!

I can confirm that both Debbie Seward and Margaret Smith have been selected for the international series for 2020.

Congratulation also to Yasmina Hasan and Rebecca Fey who have been selected for the Bowls England Youth Academy.

ROYAL LEAMINGTON SPA

The 2019 Season! Once again what an extraordinary season it has been! There were highs and lows! Surrey won the Johns Trophy (for the second year running and for the fourth time in six years) and the Sutton trio of Margaret Smith, Maureen Vandrau and Sharmishta Patel were runners up in the National Triples Championship. Incredibly, it was the third time that they had reached the final in the last four years. We are extremely proud of all three. Camberley won the Tony Allcock Trophy. Debbie Souter reached the quarter finals of the National Singles Championships which is no mean feat. Our juniors played very well in the Amy Rose losing to a very strong Devon team by just two shots. Well done to them all.

JOHNS TROPHY AND WALKER CUP

Once again we used observers to assist the selectors. Jan Pedersen sadly was unable to assist this year and did not act as a selector although she was at the other end of a telephone to give any guidance when the selectors felt it necessary. President Penny, Jean Hewett (Zone 2), Caroline Duarte (Zone 1), Ann Rapley (Zone 4) and myself were the selectors.

Selection is always a problem and leaves some people disappointed. This is extremely hard when they are friends and colleagues but at the end of the day selectors have to decide what is best for the team. They have to make some tough decisions and I would like to thank them all.

In the Johns Trophy we won all three of our qualifying games against Middlesex, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. We then played Hampshire in the regional final. It was lovely to meet up with our old adversaries and the game was played in excellent spirit with Surrey winning by 134 - 87 to qualify for Leamington.

I would like to thank Charlotte for arranging a coach to come and support the Johns team at Leamington. The enthusiastic support you gave us helped and encouraged the team enormously. I believe a very good time was had by all.

Our first game against Lincolnshire was no easy win. Although we won by 15 shots in the end we only managed to win on two rinks and halve one other. But a good all-round team performance saw us through. The win in the final against Wiltshire was a little more comfortable than we expected. Wiltshire kept it tight at the beginning but eventually Surrey pulled away and we won on all six rinks and by 142 shots to 91. Very well done to all.

This brings me to the Walker Cup. It is clear that Surrey has great strength in depth and are able to put out six strong rinks but we do not seem to be able to get it quite right for the Walker Cup. I do believe the selectors made the right choices for the Walker Cup this year and having spoken to the players I further believe there were extenuating circumstances for the defeat Surrey suffered against Oxfordshire in the first round.

Having played a Johns Trophy game on the Saturday and then travelling to Banbury Chestnuts to play the Walker took its toll. All players had a heavy bowling week beforehand and the trip to Banbury was a very long journey for some of them. Hindsight is a wonderful thing but I promised that I would leave the Friday and Monday free from competition either side of any Johns/Walker Cup double. In 2020 we

have a similar scenario in that we have a Walker Cup/Johns weekend prior to the Walker Cup/Johns Regional Final weekends. I have kept the Friday and Monday clear.

AMY ROSE

The team ably managed by Debbie Souter with assistance from Pam Garden and Liz Anderson did extremely well only losing by two shots to a Devon team led by Natalie Chestney and Sophie Tolchard. I must thank Pam for her work in coaching members of the Amy Rose team at Egham on a number of evenings to give them some practice at playing together.

THE WOMEN'S NATIONAL TOP CLUB

This year's draw in the Top Club was more equitable in that Sussex was put in Area 6 with Kent and Surrey remained in Area 7 with Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The numbers in each area were much more even. Area 7 was won by Sutton who went on to the National Finals at Leamington.

I travelled to Leamington on the Saturday to watch Sutton in the quarter finals. The draw was made that morning and unfortunately Sutton drew last year's winners Kings BC of Devon again with Sophie Tolchard and Natalie Chestney.

It was a really hard-fought game and the bowling was excellent. Sadly, Sutton lost by 2 shots. I am never too sure whether it is good to be beaten by a raft of shots or whether just one or two! I must commend the whole team on an excellent and very exciting performance.

BENEVOLENT TRIPLES

The Surrey winners of the Benevolent Triples were Jenny Baird, Lorna Kilpatrick and Linda Pillman. I am afraid this was another competition where a number of teams pulled out at the last minute. As I have said before when this happens this leaves other teams hanging about when their time could probably be better served elsewhere. Not only that but it causes problems when trying to book clubs as venues. It is very difficult to expect a club to give up their green to find that it is hardly used and they have had to turn away their own members!

At the time of writing this report I have not heard who the National winners are.

COUNTY, EXECUTIVE AND INTER-ZONE MATCHES.

Once again, twelve friendly matches against other Counties were arranged. We won 9 matches, lost two and the match against Middlesex at Windlesham was abandoned due to heavy rain. However, those ladies who were good enough to remain enjoyed a very lively and fun quiz.

Everyone wonders why Britain's first topic of conversation is the weather! Our climate is extremely variable. Two years ago we had games that were rained off, last year they were cut short due to the extreme, hot weather and this year we had one match cut short due to heat and one match abandoned due to rain. I wonder what our wonderful weather will hold in store for us next year.

Once again, I must emphasise that when the match choice papers come out please choose more than one game. It is very difficult trying to fit everyone in when only one game is chosen. This will hopefully avoid disappointment. I will try to get another County fixture but so far it has been to no avail. The Midland counties all play in a particular league and I am not sure that we would want to go down that road although it is something that could be investigated further. I am not sure how this would work out with the timetable but I am always willing to speak to my colleagues to see if we could arrange something.

Five Executive games were arranged this year. The first one was played against SCBA which we won 137 to 108. We played then played Wimbledon Park, Malden Manor and the Civil Service. I am pleased to say we won all three. The match against the Banks Association was cancelled.

INTERZONE GAMES (PHYL HILL TROPHY)

The Inter-Zone matches again proved very competitive and the winners were Zone 3.

Zone	POINTS 10th August	POINTS 17th August	POINTS 24th August	TOTAL POINTS
1	0	0	4	4
2	11	5	2	18
3	9	6	7	22
4	2	11	9	22

Once again, a big thank you to all those members who played and supported the Zone Secretaries in these games. Thanks also go to Sutton BC for allowing us to use their greens.

The Executive have discussed the Zone games at length. We feel that the purpose of the games has been lost and have been giving some thought to the way forward. These games are supposed to have a competitive edge to them and give Selectors and their “spies” an opportunity to look at players with a view to trials for the Johns.

Clearly Zone 1 has a problem in getting players, particularly in view of its small membership and occasionally Zone 4 has also had a problem as some women do not like travelling continually out of their own zone and going to one venue.

After much consideration we have decided that we will reduce the size to three rinks per zone and they will be played at different venues towards the centre of the County but just off the A3. For example clubs that have adequate parking for 48 women and have the facilities and are prepared to provide tea and biscuits. We will be playing 21 ends.

It was quite clear to me that most of the women enjoyed the games and everyone seemed to be having fun which is something I would hate to see the games lose. To find the right balance is extremely difficult.

COUNTY TOUR.

This is a subject which I think is best described by President Penny. I will simply say that I believe it was a great success.

LOYAL SERVICE AWARD

This year we made four awards. Firstly to Janet Hutchison from Sutton BC, then Janet Exall from Old Coulsdon BC. Members of the Executive then went to Cheam Fields to see Jean Taylor and finally they travelled to Croydon BC for Marion Branch. It is wonderful to see the pleasure and surprise on the recipients’ faces and I would urge all clubs to think whether they have a member in their own club who is deserving of such recognition.

SURREY BOWLS GROUP

Sponsorship:

“Co-operative Funeralcare” contract has now expired and we will no longer be sponsored by them

“Leightons Opticians” have agreed a five year contract at £2000 per year between the four Associations. This started last year.

“St James’ Place” we have recently heard that St James’s Place have suggested that we might pull out of the contract. They have had difficulties with 6 other counties and feel they would be better served going to the clubs direct. The final decision will be made by all four associations. However, your Executive recommend that we pull out of the contract. We feel that the disadvantages, not least the inconvenience and cost to our members in complying with their wishes for shirt advertising and the costs involved in all the events they want to promote their services, outweigh the benefit of the sponsorship (£1,000 pa) we would receive.

YEAR BOOK and WEBSITE

Marianne Ward has continued doing a wonderful job with both the website and Year Books and I would like to express my personal thanks to her for all her support and hard work over the years. Marianne advised me in May that she no longer wanted to continue with the Year Book but was happy to continue with the website until such time as the website became unified and I know that you will all be delighted to hear this.

In view of this news and with the difficulty in getting volunteers to fulfil the roles, I sent out a brief survey regarding Yearbooks. This proved very interesting and I received replies from 64 clubs, just over 50%. With the exception of two clubs, all confirmed they were happy for the history, advertisements, photographs, notifications from Coach Bowls, Umpires and/or anything else relating to general items be put on the website.

This will leave the Club information, County draws, Executive information, calendar, competitors’ contact numbers and the competition rules to be put into an Information Booklet half the size. This booklet would have a plain white cover with the County badge on the front. The paper would be non-glossy making it easier for re-cycling. This will also halve the cost to £2.

As far as the website is concerned, there have been no changes so far. I will refer to the Bowls Surrey website shortly.

BOWLS SURREY

Bowl Surrey has hit a few snags in its first year. As you now know, the new joint Constitution was adopted at both SCBA’s and SCWBA’s Annual General Meetings in November 2017 and the first Bowls Surrey AGM was held at Reigate Manor in November 2018.

At that meeting we saw the inauguration of Peter and Penny as our respective Presidents. Robin Fudge (Administrator) and Roger Lanham (Chairperson) were elected to the BS Board for three years. David Lokkerbol and I were appointed as Secretaries of the two Associations. It has become clear to us that some people had not understood that there was a joint constitution and what its effect was.

In June there were some issues within SCBA culminating in the resignation of David Lokkerbol as SCBA Secretary and thus from the BS Board. Roger Lanham felt that he had to resign as Bowls Surrey

Chairperson.

Robin Fudge, the Administrator, soldiered on for some time but sadly felt that he could no longer continue. His departure was a great loss.

Following these resignations I went through the Constitution in great depth and it was quite clear there were some holes in it. The Board was unable to appoint anyone to take the place of either Administrator or Chairperson. County Secretaries were members of the Board but only after they had been appointed by their respective Councils. This, therefore, proved there were huge holes in the Constitution with no provisions for the replacement of officers through death, illness, resignation etc. Attached to the papers for this meeting is a copy of the Constitution together with a list of the proposed changes and the reasons for such changes. All these changes will be voted on at the AGM in November.

So, at the end of the day what has Bowls Surrey actually achieved?

- We are still looking for a Development Officer which is absolutely crucial to our organisation. It doesn't matter what gender but we need someone who is keen and dynamic to take this huge task on.
- We have a Bowls Surrey website and we have identified what items should be on that website and what should remain on the SCBA and SCWBA websites. We have been investigating the cost of running three websites which is prohibitive. Equally there is also the problem that to build a website now there are all sorts of different parameters. It is important that we get this right.
- We have worked on a joint affiliation online system which will become operational this year. We have been testing this and we are currently working on a guide for clubs so they know what to do. There will be three or four people who will be able to assist clubs on how to do things.
- Those clubs that do not have access to a computer can still fill their forms in and either Howard Quinnell, (the SCBA and Bowls Surrey Treasurer) or I will complete the information for them.
- This online system will automatically work out precisely how much money a club needs to send to Bowls Surrey for affiliation, the cost of the information booklets, competition fees and any other ancillary matters.

I would just like to thank the whole of the Executive for their support and help this year, and to congratulate Penny on a successful Presidency and a job well done. We all wish Charlotte a very happy and successful 2020 season.

As you know I did say this would be my last year as County Secretary but due to the circumstances we find ourselves in with integration, I feel this is not the right time for me to leave. This does not mean I am happy to continue indefinitely and I desperately do need some help even if it is a minute-taker for all meetings.

Date of next Council meeting will be Tuesday 7 April 2020.

Sheron Mitchell
County Secretary

1 October 2019