

# **CHELTENHAM WHADDON BOWLING CLUB**

## **MINUTES OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE CLUBHOUSE ON FRIDAY 07 JUNE 2024 AT 2.00PM**

Present: Dave Hooper, Dave Simmons, Andy Todd, Ray Hawkins, David Hearle, Gail Gilbert, Debby Hooper, Julie Beaven, Jools Gray, Mike Newman, Ken Campbell

### APOLOGIES

Don Bailey, Jill Whistler, Peter McGiffie

### MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The Secretary had circulated the minutes of the previous meeting on 02 May 2024. There were no corrections or comments, so the Chair signed the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

### MATTERS ARISING

2. We reviewed open actions from previous meetings:

- Actions 2401/06 (Constitution review), 2403/01 (Access to CCTV system), 2403/07(H & S Inspection), 2405/01 (Process for events) and 2405/02 (Grants for solar panels) remain in progress.
- Actions 2403/01 (side gate key), 2403/05 (Review of keyholders & keys) and 2405/03 (Connection of additional CCTV cameras) were now considered completed.

### REPORT FROM IGLU

3. The Iglu Bars representative was unable to attend, however David Hearle reported that they had been happy with the arrangement to use our car park for CTFC home matches and would like to continue next season, despite the relegation to League 2.

### RETENTION OF NEW MEMBERS

4. Andy Todd had provided statistics from the membership database (see Attachment A), which showed that almost a third of members registered with the club since 2021 (57 of 182) had left the club, and over half of these had left within 2 years of joining. His conclusion was that, while we had been reasonably successful in recruit new members, for example at Open Days, we needed to put more effort into retaining and integrating them into the club.

5. Though we do now routinely ask those leaving us to tell us why, unfortunately, there is a significant number (26) who gave no reason for leaving or at least that reason was not recorded on the database at the time. Of the others most had either moved away or had to give up bowling for health reasons, but it is somewhat worrying that 3 mentioned dissatisfaction with the club or dispute as a reason for leaving.

6. We noted that this year, having recruited 20+ new members, we had managed to arrange several sessions lead by experienced members and our coach. About half of the new players attended regularly but final session would take place on 11 June. Julie Beaven undertook to promote the event to existing members,

so that they could get to know the new people. There were encouraging signs of commitment from some of the new people who had bought their own bowls and club shirts. We should now encourage them to overcome any reluctance to sign up for friendly games to help integrate them into the club. **Action 2406/01**

7. We agreed that the cost for buying a set of bowls from the club should be set at £40. At least one set had been donated on the understanding that they should not be sold on: Andy would identify any sets that we should not sell. **Action 2406/02**

### SHORT MAT ON FRIDAY EVENINGS

8. Following a proposal at the previous meeting Andy had canvassed members to see if they would like to trial playing Short Mat on Friday nights, The intention of this proposal was to enhance the club night experience beyond the Waghorne's Trophy matches. It would potentially give new members a chance to integrate more fully into club life (having missed the chance to take part in the Waghorne's) and prepare for the winter competitions. Only a small number (5-6) had expressed interest, though we assumed that if the mats were laid out, more would probably join in. Several Committee members expressed objections to the proposal:

- Social members already had a concession to play Short Mat in the winter and it would be unfair to full members, who paid a much higher subscription, to allow them further playing opportunities
- It would be impossible to prevent full members from taking part anyway – they were entitled to participate in any activity put on at the club
- Laying down and picking up the mats could be a problem, if there were events requiring the use of the skittle alley

9. A wider discussion on how we might engage more productively with social members and with others who, for health or physical reason no longer wanted or were unable to play outdoors ensued. A suggestion that individual social members still wanting access to the green might be prepared to pay green fees or a supplementary subscription was turned down, since the club had voted at the 2022 AGM to simplify the membership structure. However, there was some feeling that this issue needed to be seriously reviewed by the committee.

10. In conclusion the President called for a vote on the original proposal to set out the short mats: the Committee rejected this by 6 votes to 4.

### AOB

11. A few new members had taken up the offer to **add their names to club competitions** and Andy had inserted their names into the relevant draws.

12. Committee members had been asked at the previous meeting to submit ideas on how we should use the **donation received from his family in memory of Don Hughes**. One suggestion was for a memorial bench but we agreed that the best proposal was to purchase a new clock and memorial plaque: the existing clock had stopped working. Dave Simmons would look for a suitable clock and obtain quotations. **Action 2406/03**

13. Gail Gilbert suggested that the **contribution of £5 offered to members who prepared sandwiches and cakes** was set too low, especially if the fillings were meat. However, after some debate, the Committee resolved not to change the amount. We were happy with the decision to now offer hospitality to visiting

clubs but considered what we should do if other clubs did not offer this in return. We concluded that the principle should be that we would reciprocate the same level of hospitality as offered to us.

14. We had received an enquiry from Whaddon Utd football club about allowing visiting teams to use our car park on Saturdays in the football season. We agreed that this would not be possible in view of our existing arrangement with Iglu: the Secretary would reply to this effect. **Action 2406/04**

15. Dave Simmons reported that the monthly electricity bill was now running at £594 and asked if Committee members had any ideas on how we might reduce this. We noted that on rare occasions lights were left on though this was unlikely to have a great effect. The chillers in the bar were a major consumer but turning them off, even for short periods, was not an option. No other ideas were forthcoming.

16. Peter Weir had organised a short trial of the **Bowls Bash format**, to see whether it would engage the interest of club members and whether it would therefore be worthwhile for the club to use it more regularly. It is a less formal type of game, which had been developed primarily for new bowlers by Bowls England. He would provide a report on the success or otherwise of the experiment.

17. On **club safety** Gail Gilbert would like to call for volunteers to act as fire wardens; she believed 4 (2 men, 2 women) would be sufficient to cover events and matches. They would ensure that in the event of a fire, they would ensure that the club was evacuated quickly and completely. She also reported that all electrical appliances would have to be PAT tested in the near future. Finally, she advised that the garage was rather disorganised and asked if the maintenance crew could do this fairly soon. It was used for storage of petrol and other chemicals and needed a tidy up.

18. Debbie Hooper had received a suggestion for a **fund raiser to replace the 50 Club**, but we felt it was rather complicated and, in any case, would still need a volunteer to run it. We thought it might be better to find someone to restart the 50 Club.

19. Julie Beaven asked that rinks should be oriented to avoid looking into the sun for Ladies League matches, as they were for NGL games, which was agreed.

20. Mike Newman noted that CTFC intended to use their car park as a fan zone for supporters to watch Euro 2024 games and was concerned that we might find drivers using our car park. He wondered whether we should try to put up some sort of temporary gate to keep it clear for members.

#### DATE OF NEXT MEETING

21. We agreed to meet next on Thursday 11 July at 2.00pm.

Andy Todd  
Secretary

Signed as a true  
record:

D. Hooper (President)



## Leaving Cheltenham Whaddon BC

We have discussed how many members we lose and the possible reasons why they don't stay at the club at the recent Management Committee meetings. The majority clearly did not believe we had a problem, but while updating the membership database to remove details of those who had left, it struck me that we indeed have a significant turnover of members. So, I took a more detailed look and was a little surprised at the result, as given in the table below.

These figures were extracted from the Bowlr membership database, which started in 2021: before then we have no accurate records of when members joined or left, or why they left.

Total Number enrolled	182	Reason for Leaving	
Left after 1 year or less	25	Cost	2
Left between 1 -2 years	11	Health	10
Left after 2 - 5 years	10	Relocated	10
Left with over 5 years membership	11	Moved club	5
		Dissatisfaction	2
Total Number left	57	Dispute	1
		Transport	1
		Unknown	26

So, what do the figures tell us? Nearly a third of our total membership over the last 4 years has left the club. Over a half of those recruited since 2021 left within 2 years of joining and most of those after only 1 year or less.

My take is that while we have been successful at recruiting new members from Open Days etc, we are not so good at retaining them at the club. This year the Open Day was particularly successful but as in previous years we had no plan in place to integrate them into the club and had to cobble together something at short notice. One significant problem is that we only have one qualified coach at the club and he clearly cannot take on 20+ new bowlers at once! Without a coherent plan or structure, I fear we may again lose a lot of the new members at the end of the year.

Looking at the reasons for leaving, the most significant figure is the 'Unknown' – my guess is that they just didn't integrate into the club and didn't want to spend £145 for a club they did not make much use of. Nothing else in the reasons stands out particularly as an issue that we can address. Most of them (20) have left for health reasons or because they moved away.

Andy Todd  
Secretary