



Yorkshire Bowling Association

Minutes of the 15th Annual General Meeting of Yorkshire Bowling Association held at York Railway B&SC - Sunday 10th November 2024

Officers in attendance:

Lesley Dearlove (LD)	County Administrator and Acting Chair
Gayle Hartley (GH)	County Treasurer
Vivien Wilton-Middlemass (V W-M)	Ladies' Secretary
Andy Humphreys (AH)	Men's Secretary
Stewart Clark (SC)	Patrons' Secretary
Pauline Beecroft (PB)	Ladies' President

- Welcome and Opening Comments** – LD opened the meeting by welcoming the attendees. She explained that our YBA Chair (Stuart Forrest) had stood down from his role due to personal circumstances. For this reason, LD chaired the meeting. Our Ladies' Finance Officer (Angela Hollingworth) had also stepped down from her role. LD read an email from Angela to the attendees. LD thanked both Stuart and Angela, on behalf of both officers and members, for their work and dedication over many years.

2. Registration of clubs

Name	Club	Name	Club
Pauline Beecroft	Bishop Monkton	Robert Maxwell	Nafferton
Mervyn Beecroft	Bishop Monkton	Jill Hall	North Duffield
David Thackwray	Bishopthorpe BC	Mel Wilkes	Northallerton
Di Massingham	Boroughbridge	Brian Wilkes	Northallerton
Derek Massingham	Boroughbridge	Jane Simpson	Selby
Pat O'Shea	Brotton	Trevor Downey	Sessay
Tina Robinson	Copmanthorpe BC	Dave Whittle	South Cave BC
John Watson	Copmanthorpe BC	Marie Whittle	South Cave BC
Stewart Clark	Driffield Rec	Margaret Watson	Swinton BC
David Dearlove	Dunnington BC	Chris Atkinson	Swinton BC
David Badby	Dunnington BC	Lesley Dearlove	Thirsk Athletic BC
Alan Cole	Dunnington BC	Malcolm Hartley	Thirsk Athletic BC
Lee Coutts	Harrogate BC	Gayle Hartley	Thirsk Athletic BC
Margaret Redhead	Helmsley	Helen Walker	Thirsk Athletic BC
Ann Russell	Helmsley	Alan Smith	Thirsk Athletic BC
Chris Laker	Helmsley	Judith Smith	Thirsk Athletic BC
Vivien Wilton-Middlemass	Helmsley	June Ogden	York Railway B&SC

Barry Wilton-Middlemass	Helmsley	Lynda Parker	York Railway B&SC
Chris Redhead	Helmsley	Mick O'Donnell	York Railway B&SC
Bill Pierson	Middlesbrough	Andy Humphreys	York Railway B&SC
		Mike Bruce	York Railway B&SC

3. Apologies

Name	Club	Name	Club
Emma Oates	Bishop Monkton	Maggie Saunders	Richmond
Janet Farnsworth	Driffield Rec	Pat Bee	Sessay
Alwyn Baron	Driffield Rec	Bernie Hill	South Cave
Steve Wilson	Dunnington	Maxine Groce	South Cave
Steve Atkinson	Dunnington	Eva Dayes	South Cave
Angela Hollingworth	Harrogate	Jo Williamson	Thirsk Athletic
Stuart Forrest	Middlesbrough	Kate Williamson	Thirsk Athletic York Railway B&SC
John Coleman	Northallerton	Mal Britton	York Railway B&SC
Cressida Fordy	Northallerton	Lyn Britton	York Railway B&SC
Colin Robinson	Poppleton		

4. Obituaries - Vivien Wilton-Middlemass

As it was Remembrance Sunday, a two-minutes silence was held to pay our respects and reflect on the service and sacrifices the Armed Forces make on our behalf. Also to remember our members and friends who have died during the year.

Name	Club	Name	Club
Charli Parvin	Borough Park	Peter Gordon	Harrogate
Brian Pears	Borough Park	Brian Garbutt	Helmsley
Stan Williams	Borough Park	Alan Russell	Helmsley
Julie Donnelly	Borough Park	Jean Bush	Northallerton
Edwin Taylor	Borough Park	Alec Wrightson	Patrons
Kevin Curtis	Borough Park	Pauline Fryer	Riccall & Selby
Heather Martin	Borough Park	Tony Longfield	Selby
Lily Curtis	Borough Park	Ken Previll	Skelton
Ronald Conway	Borough Park	Richard Howson	Stillington
Margaret Lambert	Boroughbridge	Doreen Walker	Veteran Yorkshire bowler
Maureen Stakes	Copmanthorpe/Selby	Brian Hutchinson	York Corinthians
Ken Carter	Dunnington	Tony Thornton	York Corinthians
Trevor Pearson	Dunnington		

5. Minutes of the 2023 YBA - AGM

The minutes, having already been circulated to the clubs, were accepted as accurate following Alan Smith's proposal and David Dearlove's seconding.

6. YBA Annual Reports 2024

- a. **Finance** - GH explained the accounts and the deficit that we currently have. Melanie Wilkes has agreed to be our Accounts Verifier and was appointed unopposed by the attendees (**attached**)
 - i. Executive Recommendations (**attached**) - were agreed unopposed by the attendees
 - ii. Benevolent Fund Changes, Benevolent Fund (Charity Number 508297) - V W-M (**attached**) were agreed unopposed by the attendees
- b. **Administrator** - LD read her report, mainly focusing on all the achievements from Team Yorkshire during the year and looking towards the reform required (**attached**)
- c. **Ladies' Sub-Committee** - V W-M reported on the successes and achievements of the ladies' section (**attached**)
- d. **Men's Sub-Committee** - AH reported on the achievements of the men's section. AH thanked Phil Parsons for his many years as Youth Development Manager (men's section) Phil is now stepping down. AH thanked Graham Stephenson who is stepping down from his Alsop team managers role and Steve Wilson, stepping down as Men's Competition Secretary. (**attached**) AH took a question from Bill Pierson re: ladies playing in Alsop team - AH explained that, whilst this is a Northern Counties decision - Yorkshire weren't opposed to it in principle providing the correct parameters were in place.
- e. **Youth Development** - read by LD (**attached**)
- f. **Patrons' Secretary** - SC explained it had been a difficult year for the Patrons (**attached**)
- g. **Safeguarding** - Mick O'Donnell read a statement from Bowls England and explained that more information would be available very soon. (**attached**)
- h. **Coaching** - Lee Coutts explained this new and exciting role is a work in progress (**attached**)

7. YBA Constitution, alterations and plans for the future - Vivien Wilton Middlemass

- a. Proposed amendments to YBA Constitution 2023 (**attached**) were agreed unopposed by the attendees
- b. Fundamental review of the YBA Constitution (**attached**) was agreed unopposed by the attendees

8. Election of Officers (2024/25) - Nominations have been received as follows: Please note that positions marked with * are to be ratified at this meeting.

- a. *Chair Mal Britton (York Railway B&SC) - appointed unopposed
- b. Ladies' President Helen Walker (Thirsk Athletic)
- c. Men's President Vacant
- d. Ladies' Vice President Wendy Pickard (Guisborough KGV)
- e. Men's Vice President Vacant
- f. County Administrator Lesley Dearlove (Thirsk Athletic)
- g. County Treasurer Gayle Hartley
- h. Ladies' Secretary Vivien Wilton-Middlemass (Helmsley)
- i. Men's Secretary Andy Humphreys (York Railway B&SC)
- j. Patrons' Secretary Stewart Clark (Driffield Rec)
- k. Ladies' Competition Secretary Helen Walker (Thirsk Athletic)
- l. Men's Competition Secretary Mike Bruce (York Railway B&SC)

m. Ladies' Team Manager	Jane Simpson	(Selby)
n. Men's Team Manager	Sam Winter	(West Park YPI)
o. Youth Development (men)	Vacant	
p. Youth Development (ladies')	Cressida Fordy	(Northallerton)
q. Accounts Verifier	Melanie Wilkes	(Northallerton)
r. County Development Officer	Vacant	
s. County Safeguarding Officer	Mick O'Donnell	

Approved - AGM 021125

- t. County Disciplinary Officers:
 - i. Lesley Dearlove
 - ii. Vivien Wilton-Middlemass
 - iii. Mal Britton
- u. County Coach Lee Coutts
- v. County Verifying Officer County Administrator
- w. Executive Committee under review but will include
 - i. Chair
 - ii. Administrator
 - iii. Treasurer
 - iv. Ladies' Secretary
 - v. Men's Secretary
- x. Bowls England Council Members
 - i. Vivien Wilton-Middlemass (Helmsley) - appointed unopposed
 - ii. Lesley Dearlove (Thirsk Athletic) - appointed unopposed

9. **Presidential Handover** - V W-M oversaw the induction of the Ladies' President 2025, Helen Walker.

- i. Women's President 2024/2025
 - i. Outgoing - Pauline Beecroft
 - ii. Incoming - Helen Walker

Unfortunately, the incoming Ladies' Vice President 2025, Wendy Pickard, was unable to attend.

10. AOB

LD thanked York Railway B&SC for allowing us to have the meeting at their club. A special thank you to June Ogden and Lynda Parker for opening the club and sorting out teas and coffees for us all.

Next year's AGM will be on **Sunday 2nd November @ 10:30** – venue to be confirmed. This is to avoid a clash with Remembrance Sunday.

LD closed the meeting by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Meeting closed 12:15

These minutes are a draft version and whilst they have been agreed by the Executive Committee, they are due to be ratified by the members at the AGM in November 2025.

Yorkshire Bowling Association -Treasurer's Report 2023/2024

Introduction

Gayle and Malcolm Hartley - Thirsk Athletic Bowls Club. We were asked, at last year's AGM and the passing of David Hall, to keep the accounts for YBA. We are working together but as only one name can be put against the role of Treasurer I drew the short straw.

Malcolm's first task was to work through David's paperwork and produce the accounts for 2023.

Thanks

We would like to thank Melanie Wilkes for verifying the accounts for 2023 and 2024. Mel your expertise and advice is greatly appreciated.

Our thanks also go to all those who have helped us through this first year: all those on the Executive Committee for sharing their knowledge and experience, all club secretaries and treasurers for their part in returning information and organising finance for their clubs, also thanks go to Angela Hollingworth and Steve Wilson for collating the competition entries and fees.

Accounts

You will have noted from the account's information circulated with the AGM agenda that the financial position at the year-end was a deficit of £6432.

The vast majority of the deficit was due to the subsidy that the YBA contributed to clubs to offset the increase in the Bowls England affiliation for 2024. The BE affiliation increased from £5 to £7 per member and the YBA subsidy was for £2 per member. The total subsidy was £4564.

Success comes at a cost, and we are pleased to have supported the Ladies' Walker Cup team who successfully won through to the semi-finals at Leamington - YBA support less BE contribution to travel £698.

Bowls England again funded travel for competitors to Leamington but only at half the rate they funded in 2023, a cost to YBA of £561.

There is a significant increase in travel expenses, part of this cost is due to travel to support clubs wanting advice on affiliation and green-keeping and supporting the newly appointed county coach to travel to courses.

Interest rates worked in YBA's favour this year with an increase in Skipton Building Society account interest of £412 this year.

Many thanks go to the Patrons for contributing £1270 to the YBA fund, most particularly to Stewart for his tireless work in arranging and organising the matches.

Gayle Hartley

17.10.24

Executive Recommendations

Whilst the Executive Committee have discussed and agreed these recommendations, there will be a full financial review during the coming months.

Affiliation Fees	<p>2025 The CPI figure for September 2024 was announced on Wednesday 16th October 2024 and stands at 1.7%.</p> <p>BE £7.10p - £1.00 (YBA contribution) = £6.10p + YBA affiliation of £3.00P £9.10p</p>																												
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Patrons' Sec	£150	*****	*****																										
Travel Allowance	<p>Recommend Increase Currently 25p per mile Recommend 30p per mile</p>																												
Patrons' Subscription	<p>Recommend no change: Life Membership for a one-off payment of £25</p>																												
Match Fees	<p>Recommend no change for 2025 but under review</p>																												
Umpires Fees	<p>Recommend Increase Currently £15 per ½ day Recommend £20 per ½ day</p>																												
Leamington Payment	<p>Recommend no change for 2025 but under review Currently £75</p>																												

YBA Benevolent Fund

Benevolent Fund (Charity Number 508297)

The YBA Benevolent Fund was set up in 1956 to **“assist Yorkshire Bowlers and/or their dependents who from age, illness, infirmity or any other causes are in financial need”**

The fund was set up to provide a grant to those bowlers and their families or dependents who were eligible and met the above-mentioned criteria.

Three Trustees were appointed by the executive committee of the Yorkshire Bowling Association to administer the fund along with the YBA treasurer and another member of the committee to provide a quorum.

Over the years the number of those seeking help has dwindled and in recent years there have been no new eligible candidates fitting the criteria.

The Trustees, after much discussion, decided to seek permission from the Charities Commission to broaden the scope of the criteria.

This has now been agreed after various to-ing and fro-ing and we have been advised that we can proceed with the following wording:

“To assist Yorkshire Bowlers of affiliated clubs and/or their dependents who are in financial need. These may be elderly/old, may be bowlers with disabilities, or bowlers of any age who require financial assistance in the development of the sport”

We would like your agreement at this AGM to agree this wording and proposal so that we can use the funds when appropriate.

County Administrator's Report 2024

Well, that's been some year!! You will recall that this time last year there was a question of whether we needed a County Administrator. A vote was taken and the membership decided that this role should stay. The membership was asked if anyone would be prepared to take on the role and not one person put their hand up - so I did!! After all, we are a **members'** association, and we should comply with membership decisions when voting.

So...anyone who thought this role was 'merely an admin role' was very misguided. Admin is just a small part of the role. A role that is extremely diverse, challenging and time-hungry but also very satisfying.

I'd like to thank my fellow officers, including Steve Atkinson, and all the club members for their support in this year of a big learning curve. I would also like to thank Vivien, as a Northern Representative for BE she has made herself available to make visits and hold meetings with me for a variety of reasons. Her support has been invaluable.

UNIFICATION - as it seemed to be a bit of a bone of contention, this was my very first task. It appears that unification means different things to different people. One of the first things I did was to clarify with BE what the term UNIFICATION means to them.

BE take on it is "Unification is an administrative benefit for the County. Single financial and secretarial point of contact. **There is nothing in unification** that affects the playing side, i.e. men's and ladies' activity can continue: similarly mixed and/or open events may grow as they are proving to be more popular."

So, the upshot is that we **are** a unified County. However, it is felt that more COMPROMISE is required to make us truly TEAM YORKSHIRE.

MEETINGS

Several ZOOM meetings, various updates and the giving and receiving of some feedback to and from Jon Cockcroft and the BE staff, has built a strong working relationship which I hope will continue.

NEWSLETTERS

Continued from Andy with the newsletters - feedback was that this was useful, is it still useful? Something you would like to continue with. Members agreed that they would still like the monthly newsletters.

JOB ROLES

Job role descriptions were lacking. We ask people to nominate for posts, but we didn't have written job roles with specific accountabilities, responsibilities or limitations. These are now in place at Executive level and hopefully, by this time next year the two gender sections will have something in place also.

MATCHES

I have enjoyed attending both men's and ladies matches and attended the ladies' finals day. I couldn't attend the men's as it was on the same day - that could be rectified, more on that later. I

also attended Leamington for 6 days - some of this was in my role as Marker/Umpire but the majority was on YBA business - networking with other counties, attending seminars and meetings with Jon Cockcroft - with Vikki (Head of Business Operations) and Juliette (Governance and Compliance). Of course, this also included watching some 'top banana' bowling.

EXPENSES POLICY

At my request, our Treasurer has in place for the coming year, an Expenses Policy. This will enable us to see the true cost of running the Association and enable us to better plan our finances for the coming years.

ROADSHOW

By building a great working relationship with David Bolt from the Bowls Development Alliance, Vivien and I managed to secure our own Yorkshire Roadshow - very successful and attended by 55 delegates.

Following the roadshow, we have also built a working relationship with Laura Harris, Welfare Manager for North Yorkshire Sport. This has been a worthwhile exercise and Laura has supported us in some of the challenges we have faced this year with Safeguarding and Disciplinary issues. The relationship we now have with BDA means that David will be concentrating on working with and supporting North Yorkshire for 6 months of next year.

BOWLS BIG WEEKEND

Visited 3 clubs over the Bowls Big Weekend in 2024. **Next year Friday 23rd - Monday 26th May.** It's a super weekend where, with the right marketing, we can attract new members. All I ask is that if you do register, please ensure that your club is open and manned for the registered day/time. One of our clubs registered and it was advertised on the BE website only to find that the club was closed at the specified time. No one really expects your club to be open the whole weekend - join together to maximise the benefits.

NEW AFFILIATIONS

I have been to a few clubs with Vivien to secure new affiliations for this year. We have 3 new affiliations this year - Thornaby Village, Wetherby and Stillington. Already we have Wigginton for next year. There is a brand-new club at Yarm, which is quite an exciting prospect - an all-weather artificial surface that we would welcome with open arms should they decide affiliation is for them. Sadly, **IF** they affiliate, they may well affiliate to Durham as clubs in the local area don't want to accept them into their leagues because of the playing surface. That would be a great loss to Yorkshire.

Our challenge during the off season, is to visit clubs to see if we can recruit at least 4 more. On our monthly BE Zoom call (Oct. 30th) it was announced that Yorkshire was the top county for improving our affiliation numbers. In the last 10 months we have had a 14.2% increase in affiliated members.

PLAYING PITCH STRATEGIES

Working with East Riding, North Yorkshire County Council and York City Council. This led to us looking at developing some support for our clubs and led to the birth of our Greens Advisory Team. The purpose of the team is to offer advice and support to clubs with the aim of improving their playing surfaces. A Playing Surface Policy will be available soon.

Approved - AGM 021125

NEW ROLES WITHIN THE COUNTY

- **County Coach** - Lee is developing an outline as to what we can achieve within the County, I'll leave it to him to explain in more detail.
- **Disciplinary Officer** - BE have asked all counties to have one. We already have Vivien, Stuart and me as Disciplinary Panel. Mal Britton will take over Stuart's role on the panel.
- **Development Officer** - This position is a big role and although currently vacant, it is one we are considering seriously. It will focus on increasing participation, supporting club growth, and ensuring the sustainability of the sport at a grassroots level. The Development Officer will work collaboratively with clubs, community groups, the County Coach and the website team to drive initiatives that make bowls accessible to a wider audience. Also responsible for securing sponsorship for Yorkshire.

CLUB CONSTITUTIONS

Email sent to all clubs on 15th October. Constitutions to be reviewed and/or amended and sent to County Admin. This was a directive from BE back in 2017 and I have found a reference to it in the minutes of the AGM November 2021. Because of the change of officers at club and county level, this exercise has lapsed but it IS a requirement and hence the request for you to return an up-to-date Constitution to me, via email by January 31st, 2025. Thank you.

Bowls England: As the National Governing Body, it is their duty to ensure that all affiliated clubs operate within a framework that promotes good governance, safety, inclusivity, and compliance with current legislation and regulations. They work under the current Code of Governance of Sport England.

In your Constitutions, specifically look at:

- Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding
- Disciplinary procedures - BE Reg 9
 - I find Reg 9 to be a robust procedure that enables uniformity in any disciplinary matters in any club or county. This document has been scrutinised by the legal team and deemed to be a very valuable and necessary procedure. I know there is some work going on to ensure that the information within Reg 9 is a little more user friendly, but the content will remain the same.

Lots of BE directives are a requirement of Sport England - who work under the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. A Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB is a public sector organisation that plays a role in the UK's national government but is not part of a government department).

FINANCES

So, how your money will be spent in 2025:

We need GOALS (short and medium term) - a specific Business Plan that is properly costed and financed for us to be more progressive. There is a need for reform if we are to be a progressive County.

Working Groups to be set up:

1. Constitution - in hand with Mal, Vivien and Steve Atkinson (more on this later)
2. Business Plan and Finance (goals to be decided and costed)

3. Competitions Review - led by Helen and Mike
4. Greens Advisory Team – we need to have a YBA Policy - Graham and Wayne will be working on this with me
5. Coaching - Lee Coutts will lead the way on this new and challenging role, I will leave him to explain what that may look like. Non gender specific and Lee will report directly to the Executive Committee
6. Safeguarding and Disciplinary Team - already in place. Vivien, Mal and Lesley. Working closely with Mick/BE and Helen Price at the BDA

To achieve all the above, we need more finance than the affiliation fees bring in so the need for reform also requires investment. Therefore, we will also set up a

7. Sponsorship and Marketing team that will actively be looking for sponsorship to support us, and market Bowls Yorkshire in the best possible way. This could possibly be led by the Development Officer.

It is probably relevant to say here that what could be a 'stand out' proposition for any sponsor is a **joint finals weekend**. That is something where we could really showcase our sport. There is work going on now to see how we can make this a reality. By using the word **COMPROMISE**, I'm sure this will happen - watch this space.

The other things we require to achieve what we would like to achieve, is PEOPLE. If any of you are interested in being a part of any of these working groups, please drop me an email. Your County needs you!

Once we have these groups in place, they will work under the Executive Committee BUT it's important that we give them the autonomy to get on with it. Seeking advice and approval when necessary but not needing to be micro-managed.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

David Bolt called me on Friday to tell me that he has organised another Roadshow for us. This will be (now confirmed) on Tuesday 11th March at New Earswick. 10:30-4. This will follow the same sort of format as last time:

1. Benefits of affiliation
2. Safeguarding (may include the new Reg 9 format)
3. BBW and Bowls Bash

But will also give people an opportunity to try Bowls Bash for themselves. There will be a Bowls Bash for the last hour of the session, so you can try it out yourselves.

Doesn't have to be a committee member that comes along - all welcome.

COMMUNICATON

Please ensure that I have the contact details of your club's secretaries - usually some changes following AGMs.

Surveys - please ensure that you fill in and return any surveys - you may not think they are relevant to you, but they are.

Approved - AGM 2021/22

YBA Ladies Section Report to AGM NOV 2024

Overall, our YBA Ladies' Section has had a very good season in 2024.

The season began with our Ladies' Spring meeting on April 8th which was attended by lady representatives from 26 affiliated Yorkshire clubs.

This was followed by our first match of the season, a Ladies' Friendly against Lancashire, which was held at York Railway B&SC and which the Yorkshire ladies won. We have a return match at Bolton in the New Year. We offered a place in this match particularly to several of the new faces who had nominated this season to allow our selectors to watch how they played and as a result we were able to recruit some new players to our NC teams.

Our Ladies' County Teams had their Get -Together on 3rd May also at York Railway B&SC. This is the first opportunity for the newly selected Northern Trophy and Stella teams for the season to play together. This was followed by the May Bowl on 22nd May held at Copmanthorpe BC. The May Bowl is open to the ladies of all affiliated clubs and was very well attended. A raffle produced some significant funds, and the day finished with tea and jam and cream scones. Again, this is another opportunity for our selectors to meet new players from a wide range of clubs across the County. A Ladies' County Day was also held at Shipton BC.

The Northern Counties matches began for the Northern Trophy team on May 10th and Stella team on May 17th. Following all 6 games, the Yorkshire Stella team won the trophy again this year against Cumbria, Durham and Northumbria and the Northern Trophy Team came a close second losing overall to Durham by just 2 points. So well done to both teams!

We also had good results in other national competitions. In the Champion of Champions Sue Allen (Swinton) won through 4 tough rounds to earn herself a place in the final against Steff Branfield (Somerset) Sue lost 21-16 in the final playing 26 ends.

In the Ladies' Pairs, Alison Paxton and Janet Farnsworth (Driffield Rec) came close to reach the semi-final stage losing out to Katherine Howes-Watts and Lorraine Kuhler (Oxfordshire) who went onto win the Pairs Championship. And in the Ladies' Senior Pairs Di Kirby, Alison Paxton, Liz Pollard and Janet Farnsworth (Driffield Rec) had a good run in this competition managing to reach the quarter-final stage.

President Pauline's 5-day tour to Northumberland was a great success and was well attended with 29 ladies taking part. The weather was mixed but we had a great time culminating in a wonderful evening sail out to the Farne Islands. Particular thanks go to Janet Farnsworth who arranged the tour and makes it so enjoyable.

For her President's Day, President Pauline held a match at her club Bishop Monkton followed by a delicious meal in the evening.

We held our Ladies Autumn meeting at the beginning of October at York & District Indoor Bowling Club with around 20 clubs in attendance.

The Ladies' annual luncheon and trophy awards afternoon held at the York Pavilion Hotel on 17th October was also a success with 76 lady bowlers from our county attending.

Finally, we would all like to thank Pauline for a wonderful year as our President and hope that she too has found the experience enjoyable.

YBA Men's Secretary Report 2024

Inter County

This year's 2024 Men's Inter County season saw the new Team Manager, Sam Winter, launch an intent to develop the Alsop and Middleton Squads into national winning units. This goal was always going to take time but the first season saw the Alsop squad just pipped at the post for a trophy that Yorkshire hasn't held for many years. The Middleton squad had one of those 'nearly years' with matches just getting away from them when they were in winning positions. One thing both squads won this year was the 'teaminess' award presented by our YBA Administrator (It's a word only Lesley uses!!). The spirit in the Alsop and Middleton squads was second to none throughout the 2024 campaign and this lays a great foundation for success, as we move forward to the 2025 season.

Crucially the goal to become winning squads saw an evolving commitment to a player development programme. Focussed development sessions were held and will continue into 2025. A 'Trial Day' based upon the approach used for our National teams took place. This event provided important player data which could be used by the individuals for their own development and with the County Coach in developing further programmes for the County Squads. If this all sounds a little bit professional for bowls, then that's the point. The Team Manager and his team of 'helpers' are seeking to raise the bar on the Yorkshire Men's bowling standard and just as with all other sport that means using performance data, alongside player and squad development, to achieve match success. True bowls is a game played socially by many, and that aspect of the sport remains vital to the game but at the County level it's winning that counts.

Some changes to the 'back office'

Going forward, there are some changes to those who take on roles crucial to the success of the YBA Men's Section. No one can actually remember just how long Phil Parsons has been the County's Youth Team Manager; it is certainly many years. Understandably, after such a long shift he has decided to step aside. On behalf of all those Phil has brought through the youth system (many of whom are now well into their adult life!) I thank him for such a crucial contribution to Yorkshire bowls. Anyone greenside at a Youth Team game will know that Phil throws his heart and soul into each, and every match and I know his pride in his young players will remain long after he leaves the post.

Graham Stephenson has also decided to step aside from his role with the Alsop Squad. Graham took this role on when I was the County Administrator at a time when we needed help to organise and run the Alsop team; something he did quietly and efficiently. I appreciate everything you have done for the YBA both behind the scenes and on match days for the YBA, Graham. Thank you.

Steve Wilson has created a step change to the organisation of our annual competitions, and he has handed this baton over to Mike Bruce for the 2025 season. Again, my grateful thanks to Steve. We needed change in this area, and he went a long way towards delivering it, often stepping in, unprompted, to get things done.

If anyone is interested in being considered for the role of YBA Youth Team Manager, then please drop me an email. The management of the Alsop is being considered by the Team Manager and any vacancy associated with that role will be circulated for people to consider in due course.

Competitions

Mention has already been made of the contribution to centralising and modernising our competitions arrangements already. Mike will be continuing this work as the last Men's Zone (Zone 1) joins the centralised arrangements for the 2025 season.

There have been some changes to the competitions that Bowls England oversee. All of this can be found on the BE website but Mike Bruce will keep you straight through the competition entry process.

We had an excellent day at the Men's County Finals Day, admirably hosted by Walkington BC. Thanks to all who arranged the sunshine, refreshments and the bowling surface; it was much appreciated. Next year we are off to a venue in Zone 3. I do keep trying to persuade the Ladies to link up so we can have a joint YBA Finals Weekend, but they keep turning me down!!

Thanks again to the individuals who run specific competitions and to the clubs who host our finals. I am very grateful for all the work you undertake on behalf of the YBA.

The number of qualifiers we have at Leamington is still directly linked to the number of BE competition entries we put in, so if you want to see both finalists go to Leamington make sure you enter again and encourage others to 'give it a go'. Those competing at the National Finals for the first time will attest to what an amazing experience it is to pit yourself against the best in our sport and who knows, next year it might be you.

Players of the Year

Ethan Fordy from Borough Park BC was awarded the YBA Men's Young Player of the Year, following some tremendous individual and team performances.

The YBA Men's Senior Player of the Year has not been awarded this season and the Team Manager and the Men's Section are reviewing the purpose of this award.

Going Forward

The new YBA Men's Sub-Committee was in operation during this last season. The clarity of roles and streamlined membership ensured an effective year, although the group remain conscious of the lack of Zone representation, something we would like to rectify. The current post holders are:

Men's Secretary – Andy Humphreys
Men's Assistant Secretary/County Coach – Lee Coutts
Men's Safeguarding Officer – Mick O'Donnell
Men's Competition Secretary – Mike Bruce
Team Manager – Sam Winter
Assistant Team Manager – Vacant
Youth Development Officer – Vacant
Patrons Secretary – Stewart Clarke

The YBA Executive are looking to launch some workstreams to take us forward as a viable and effective bowling county. Amongst these workstreams, which have yet to be officially launched, are:

- Competitions – there is a need to look at the cost of competitions to the County and make some changes that ensure we can continue to support these events.
- Marketing & Sponsorship – the only income the County gets is from affiliation contributions. As we look to support all our members through improving the playing surfaces at club level, developing players through the YBA Coaching Plan, having the best inter county standard teams as possible and helping those who are just having a tough time at the moment, we need to find ways of generating more income. If you have any skills or an eagerness to help in this area, drop me an email.

Let's keep in touch. Remember to sign up to Bowls Yorkshire (Facebook) and the YBA website.

Regards

Andy Humphreys

YBA Men's Secretary - andy.yba@outlook.com

Youth Development Report - AGM 2024

Great start to the season with our Development Day at York RB&SC. We started off with some fun activities and a then team game at the end of the session. Great to meet up with all our youngsters nice to see some new juniors attending this event.

Amica Fordy trialled for U25 England National squad was not successful this season but bring on 2025

Marcus Moseley attended Junior Performance Day

Our junior men were in action at Newark against Nottingham, put up a good fight ended up losing by 9 shots. Great experience & opportunity from some of our new junior bowlers

Great to see some of our junior players were involved in the Alsop Cup this season

Under 18 singles competition took place at York RB&SC. Great bowling took place on the day. Harvey Instone & Rafferty Patrick progressed to final at Walkington - winner Harvey Instone

Under 25 took place at Thornaby 4 of our youngsters in action Marcus Mosley & Harvey Instone progressed to final at Walkington - winner was Marcus Mosley

Under 25 pairs final took place at Walkington

Matty Mosley & Marcus Mosley vs Daniel Agar & Ethan Fordy

Winners: Daniel Agar & Ethan Fordy

Junior player of the season - Ethan Fordy

Leamington

Ladies Junior singles - Amica Fordy & Libby Hancock

Ladies Junior pairs - Amica Fordy & Libby Hancock

Men's Junior singles - Marcus Mosley

Men's Junior Pairs - Daniel Agar & Ethan Fordy

Men's Fours - Marcus Mosley & Matty Mosley played in team event at Leamington

No Amy Rose team was entered for 2024 as due to not having enough junior ladies to field a team but looking forward to 2025 with some positive news that counties are now able to collaborate with other counties. So, this will mean some of our junior ladies will be able to play in this event with other juniors from Northumberland & Cumbria.

PATRONS, REPORT 2024

It has been a difficult year for the Patrons. We regretfully lost two or three of our regularly reliable players, and they are much missed. I have had to put out many requests for players who hadn't nominated to help fulfil fixtures and, in most cases, we have managed to do so. The opposition teams have also had the same problems and quite a few of the matches have been played without full teams on either side. This is due, I'm sure, to the number of other matches and competitions that players are so heavily involved with.

However, as far as the year has been, we started our indoor fixtures on 26th Nov at New Earswick and out of the 8 original fixtures that were arranged we unfortunately, only won 1 match lost 6 and had to cancel one match at Hornsea because we just couldn't manage to raise a full team for that game, but Hornsea were also struggling to raise a team, so we agreed to cancel the game. Indoor matches are always very difficult to win considering the opposition always know their indoor greens much better than how outdoor greens play.

Moving on to the Outdoor season, we had much better results with those - out of 12 scheduled matches, we had to cancel one against Scarborough.

But out of the remaining 11 we won 6, drew 2, and only lost 3, the game against Richmond by only 2 shots.

We have already started the Indoor season with the match against Borough Park being played on the 3rd November with another 6 matches arranged for the Indoor season. My thanks to all patrons who turn out to play these games, we have had another 5 players join us this year so hope they will continue to support us in the coming years. But we are always welcome to anyone who would like to join in these friendly afternoons on the bowling greens of Yorkshire County.

Please continue with your support.

Stewart Clark (Patrons Secretary)

Safeguarding Report - AGM 2024

Bowls England published their updated safeguarding policy late on 8th November.

Their safeguarding pages will be updated shortly but the current Safeguarding Officer page of their website gives a steer as to what to expect -

- e.g. not essential for a club safeguarding officer to be a member or even a bowler
- Clubs will be able to share a safeguarding officer with another club
- DBS certificate required
- Completion of Coach Bowls "Safeguarding Officer Training" module recommended

There is also a "report a concern" button that anyone can use.

Affiliated clubs will have to have safeguarding cover by May 2025. The sanction against clubs is not spelt out but the inference in the updated policy is quite clear, if you don't have a safeguarding officer or a nominated person to go to with safeguarding concerns you cannot be affiliated.

The current situation as far as I'm aware is that 22 affiliated clubs don't have a Safeguarding Officer (about a third).

I will work with our Executive to agree a way forward so that

- a) clubs have appropriate cover and
- b) the number of affiliated clubs doesn't go down.

Regarding my workload, I have had dealings with 3 cases, all of which are still to be finalised.

I would like to thank the executive for their support during the last year, and I have worked closely with Lesley where appropriate to ensure relevant issues are being properly dealt with.

County Coach role to the AGM

The role is not predominantly a physical coaching position although he will lead on several County initiatives in support of the role. The main function of the role is one of co-ordination and motivation of the counties coaches and coaching across our expansive region.

The challenges

- It is a huge role across large region, assistance and support is essential to further success.
- Yorkshire lacks experienced level 2 coaches currently
- There is a great deal of under qualified coaching currently taking place as well as those presenting as coaches with no training at all.
- Many coaches have expired liability insurance or insurance potentially invalidated by coaching above ability/qualification
- Coaches are not widely sought out to remedy bowling related issues
- Coaches lack credibility amongst more capable bowlers.
- Changing the culture of bowls in Yorkshire to recognise and promote coaching across our region
- Information on currently active coaching is out of date and does not reflect coaches active on the ground

Positives

- Coaching does take place around the county
- There are many examples of good practice taking place
- Whilst coach bowls accreditation is the standard to which Bowls England align as a County EBCCS qualified coaches will continue to be recognised in Yorkshire and included in future developments and Coaching CPD sessions where possible.
- CoachBowls are keen to support the county with hands development sessions in our region

Opportunities

- We have a unique opportunity to restructure our coaching framework from the ground up.

Entry	Social	Club Comp	YBA Comp	Nationa l Comp	Inter County	Nationa l	Internationa l
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- To demonstrate a bowler's journey as a visual representation at each of our affiliated clubs. Access to information, contact details, maintained at each venue updated and maintained by club head coach (this can also be a coach from a neighbouring venue).
- To create support networks and communication channels for coaches. Coaches at times are solitary in their clubs or there is likely to be one dominant coach fighting the good fight with little or no support as well as much needed development and sharing of resources to encourage creativity.
- To work closely with County Managers in the development of current and future rising stars of the county both for inter county fixtures as well as national championships
- To recruit and train high performing bowlers as Level 2 coaches in each of our 4 zones/areas to facilitate progression and oversee area coaching.
- To develop specialist coaches within the county to advise and develop sessions for the ageing/injured bowler
Assistance to alter stance due to injury or reducing flexibility or to introduce bowling apparatus to allow bowlers to remain competitive to limit the effect of early or late release of bowls.

The planning phase of implementation will take some time to frame, and a working group will be formed to ensure an all-inclusive plan is established. This is a fantastic opportunity for Yorkshire, and I feel certain that

in due course bowlers will reap the rewards in our achievements and increased enjoyment of our fantastic sport.

Approved - AGM 021125

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO YBA CONSTITUTION VERSION 2023

YBA REGULATION 1 CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Removal of limit of 16 members so that it reads:-

- 1.1. Membership shall be open to all clubs in the county of Yorkshire which are unified with regard to gender, if appropriate, playing the game on private, leased or public greens which comply with the regulations of Bowls England.

Remove regulation 15.3

15.3 The YBA Treasurer will submit the name of the county singles winner (both genders) to Bowls England and pay the subsequent entry fee for the Champion of Champions, subject to that person wishing to take part.

To be added to Regulation 18.4

18.4 ----“Any club wishing to enter more than one team in the Janet Harrow or Ann Wilkinson competitions may do so provided a list of players for each squad is received by the Competition Secretary prior to the draw being made “

To be added to Regulation 18.6

18.6 ----” Any affiliated club with 7 or less ladies registered may join with another affiliated club in the same position to enter a team in the Janet Harrow and/or Ann Wilkinson competitions. The green for playing home games must be nominated upon entry.”

YBA REGULATION 19 ADDITIONAL RULES FOR MEN’S COMPETITIONS

Removal of mention of Men’s 2 wood singles entry fee to go to Benevolent Fund

19.9 “The men’s two wood entry fee is no longer to go to the YBA Benevolent Fund”

Why does the YBA constitution need regular “fundamental” review?

- The YBA Constitution has been changed at least twice in as many years, but it has not had a fundamental review for some time.
- Ad hoc changes have led to a situation where the Constitution has become bitty, inconsistent and frustrating to navigate.
- It is considered good practice to undertake a more fundamental review once every five years or so. And this is what has started with the approval of the Executive.
- We see this as more than simply a “tidying up”. We want to ensure that the constitution continues to be fit for purpose; and fits with the way the Association see its objectives going forward, i.e. its strategy for the next few years to secure and bring about a successful future for outdoor bowls in Yorkshire; and how it will manage itself in an efficient way and be accountable to its members.
- The review process and outcome must be one that has wide ownership and buy in by the Executive and members as far as possible, with collective responsibility and ownership in the face of individual differences of opinion.

We want to see a constitution drafted in a way that covers the following key aspects (and would only need to be changed as and when there is an overriding need to do so, or after a 5-year Review):

- sets out clearly the Associations objectives
- sets out the Association’s powers – i.e. what it can and can’t do,
- the application of any income and other assets
- the procedure for acceptance and termination of members of the Association
- contains a general power for the Executive to delegate some of its powers to one or more subcommittees
- contains a general power for the Executive to make rules as they deem necessary for the proper conduct and management of the Association
- sets out how general meetings of members, and of the Executive will be managed
- sets out how the functions and duties of key officers and how they are appointed and for what term
- how disciplinary action, including suspension, will be dealt with in line with regulatory body requirements.

The above enables the current suite of Regulations to be refocussed into 2 main separate working documents as follows, within the framework of the revised Constitution:

- **Association Management** – setting out how the Executive will delegate its powers or functions to committees or sub-committees, including the terms and conditions on which the delegation is made.
- **Association Rules** – setting out the detailed rules for the proper conduct and management of the Association and its objectives.

It is envisaged that these two documents are likely to change much more frequently than the Constitution as committees evolve; new members with new ideas volunteer; and the nature of competitions and Bowls England rules and policies change.

Way Forward

- Vivien and Mal are working on producing the suite of documents as outlined above. The revamped Constitution is well advanced.
- The Executive and members will be asked to provide input to certain aspects e.g. what should be the high-level objectives of the Association, fit for the 21st Century; and goals/targets to be set. A strategy for the future is key.
- Members of the existing Committees will be asked for their views on how the management structure below the Executive can be improved/streamlined to support those objectives/goals/targets.
- We plan to hold an EGM in Spring 2025 to present the new suite of documents for the Association for approval by members.

Resolutions to AGM

That the AGM agree with this direction of travel for the Constitution, Rules and Management

Members of the Association agree to provide input, as required, for the preparation of the documents. Welcome offers of help from members.

Approved - AGM 2021/25