

Chairman's End of Year Message

I suppose that every club and society's '2020 end of year' messages will begin with some reference to the circumstances of the epidemic and then proceed with a downbeat appraisal of how matters have impacted their activities. I try not to fly in face of public expectations in most things (as you all know) and so I feel bound to frame my message around COVID and our response to it, but I have a more buoyant view to put to you. Firstly, I am bound to say that Titchfield Bowling Club members are resilient and hardy; in fact you are 'thundering good eggs' – the lot of you, every single one. Despite the alterations to the season and the boundaries that have been imposed upon us the club has had a very decent year of bowling! We have, in short, made the best of a very trying situation. Virtually every club member has either played or has spectated and we even managed to run a competition. The maintenance crew and other volunteers have worked hard and flexibly to adapt the green as necessary and to keep the site in good order – so very well done to them all. Many messages of tributes, encouragement and general support have been received from members to the committee and as the chairman I thank you for that. Thankfully we have not had any COVID casualties amongst our members and I am greatly relieved by that fact.

The committee have not been able to meet with the frequency that would be usual although we did manage a socially distanced open air meeting and some 'Zoom' sessions. The work of the committee has been sustained though; the site maintenance I have already referred to above, but thanks again to Dave. The accounts have been kept immaculately; we still incurred pretty much typical running costs despite the changes in activity, so thanks Iain for your fine efforts. We have really needed the website this year and Mike has responded admirably to the requirements; very much appreciated Mike. Dennis has kept his grip on the reins of all of the administrative needs of the club with his usual tenacity combined with his typically affable manner - a big thank you to him. Whilst others on the committee have had their briefs curtailed by the circumstances; such as competitions and social, nevertheless Jim and Vanessa have been assiduous in supporting the running of the club, so a big thank you to them and also to Carol Johnson for her steadfastness despite the difficulties forced by having to keep isolated. There have been two departures from the committee; Colin and Sue have both stepped down and I want to thank them very much for their service. The committee were glad to have Chris Blackburn volunteer for the committee towards the end of the summer and we were pleased to put him into harness immediately! Thanks Chris. A final set of thanks to members such as, Jill Kelley, Peter Nash, Helen Chubb, Norma and Dave Cumming, Peter Taylor, Tony Crisp and indeed all of the people who have generously given time and work in support of the club.

In looking forward we all hope for a more normal season in 2021 when we can have a social programme and competitions. Some of the innovations that we introduced as we adapted to conform with the restrictions, such as the revised club opening times, proved to be unexpectedly popular with members and it may be that we can integrate some suggested changes in certain areas next season. Even further ahead is Titchfield Bowling Club's centenary year in 2023 and next year I will be asking the committee to plan suitable festivities to celebrate the occasion.

I wish you all a healthy Christmas and I leave you with high hopes for a 'back to normal' 2021 season.

David