

SWANTON MORLEY BOWLS CLUB

ABOUT US

Swanton Morley Bowls Club has been in existence since 1957. Situated by the side of the ancient All Saints Church the club has, over the years, been very successful in winning trophies and competitions. It has a rich heritage that the parents, grandparents and great grand parents of current residents will identify with.

The constitution of the club states that it is founded for : "The promotion of the game of Lawn Bowls within the community." And the current membership upholds that ambition.

The land the club occupies is owned by local land owner and farmer John Carrick; who is also the club president. Although there is no formal agreement or lease in place, the club does not pay a hire or rental fee for use of the land; for which we are exceptionally grateful.

The club is organised, funded and administered solely by the members. There are no paid or salaried positions in the club. All officers are totally voluntary and repairs and maintenance to grounds and green are carried out by club volunteers and paid for from club funds.

Administration of the club is by a committee made up of Chair Person, Secretary, Treasurer and the League Captains. (Currently 5)
These positions are open to all members and those willing to serve are voted into office annually at the AGM

At the Annual General Meeting, the members express their goals and priorities for the coming year. These are debated and voted upon. The Club Secretary records the meeting's minutes. It is the committee's task to ensure the elected motions are carried out.

TODAY'S CHALLENGES

1. To fund an increasingly costly amenity.
2. To promote the game of Lawn Bowls.

We share with every business, local authority and household in the country the challenge of meeting inflated costs.

It is increasingly difficult to control outgoings to manageable and sustainable levels.

OUTGOINGS

Whilst outgoings are maintained at the lowest possible level there are certain necessities without which we would not be able to operate as a bowling club. As already mentioned repairs and maintenance of the grounds and green are done mostly by unpaid volunteers who generously donate their time many hours a week.

However, the greatest expenditure is on maintaining the playing surface or 'Green.'

In recent years commodity prices, energy and utility prices and insurance costs have soared. The cost of seed, nutrients, control chemicals and soil has also risen sharply.

We use some specialized machinery which, if it can't be repaired by one of the members, has to be sent away and is exceptionally expensive.

INCOME

The club currently has about 20 members.

Each member pays £25 annual subscription and a match. fee.

The Membership fee is the same as last year but the match fee has risen this year from £2-50 to £3

The past year's accounts show an operational deficit of about. £400 which is not sustainable.

SUMMARY

We seek to attract more members to the club to promote the game and to assist in covering the costs.

We have a poster on the Village Hall notice board and have placed an advertisement in the Parish magazine. These have had no impact as yet.

It would be good policy to reach out to other groups within the community to inform them of the benefits, both physical and mental health wise, of playing bowls.

To financially help recruitment of members, we have reduced our Annual Subscription to £10 to new members for the first year.

THE FUN OF BOWLS

In the past the game has had a somewhat unflattering image of a rather 'clicky', middle class game for 'starchy', old pensioners. And, in truth, this was a reputation not entirely undeserved.

The modern game is very different.

Teams wear their own, bright, colourful playing strips.

Bowls, or 'woods' as they are known, are manufactured in vibrant colours and varied designs instead of the age-old **black**.

The game has become much more sociable whilst maintaining a sharp, competitive edge.

Within a certain level of decorum, participants are actually allowed to have fun whilst playing the modern game.

There are many more evening and weekend matches that allow working people to participate.

And there are many more, younger people playing bowls these days. They are positively encouraged to do so by the County Leagues who run coaching and tuition for juniors. Our youngest member is just 18.

We play Lawn Bowls outdoors from May until the end of September. Games start about 7 o'clock and last about 2 hours; after which we enjoy a cup of tea or coffee with the opposition. And then a chance to chat.

Whilst playing bowls is not a 'high energy' exercise, it is consistent, gentle use of the physical body in bending, stretching, lifting and walking which helps players maintain strength and flexibility.

On a mental level the tactics of the game provide much to think about; it is often described as a game of three dimensional chess.

From a mental health point of view the game provides good social contact, companionship and purpose in being part of a team. All much needed amongst people of all ages in our fragmented society.

We believe our club also provides its members with a sense of belonging and pride.

GOING FORWARD

We are a very friendly club of very ordinary people who not only like playing bowls but enjoy being part of a sporting, yet sociable environment.

We are competitive but we are not elitist. We enjoy having fun and the company of like minded people.

We actively welcome all members of Swanton Morley Parish who would like to join us having fun on the bowling green during the summer months.

However, we do warn all newcomers to the sport that it can be somewhat addictive.

Apart from a pair of flat soled shoes, no equipment or special uniform is necessary.

We have plenty of bowls in the clubhouse for people to use and try before acquiring their own.

All the members are keen to help others get started and willingly give their time for coaching new comers and beginners.

We would like to reach out to all other groups and organisations in the parish and invite them to join with us in establishing a working relationship to benefit our mutual interests and establish a united, community spirit.

We would encourage everyone, young and old, to come along as spectators and watch a match then join us in the clubhouse afterwards for a cup of tea.

If the weather is kind, it's the most lovely, de-stressing, relaxing way to enjoy a summer's evening in the beautiful and timeless setting of our wonderful, rural parish.

If you have any further queries, need any more information or help with anything regarding Swanton Morley Bowls Club please contact me :

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