



Established 1934

Prospectus for the Development of Charlbury Bowls Club

A not-for-profit Community Amateur Sports Club



Our main purpose is to provide facilities for and promote sport within the communities of the Charlbury area. We also share our facilities with local groups and societies to enhance our community links in a sustainable way.

Charlbury Bowls Club (CBC)

play **Flat Green Bowls** outdoors between April and September. The governing bodies are Bowls England (BE) and Oxfordshire Bowling Association (OBA)

play **Short-Mat bowls** indoors between September and April. The governing bodies are English Short Mat Bowling Association (ESMBA) and Oxfordshire Short Mat Bowling Association (OSMBA)

Email enquiries@charlburybowls.co.uk Website www.charlburybowls.co.uk

Prospectus for the Development of Charlbury Bowls Club

Charlbury Bowls Club is a thriving and dynamic community amateur sports club. Established in 1934 at the cricket ground in Dyers Hill as a two-rink green, it moved to the old tennis courts at Dyers Hill House in the mid-1940s before a four-rink green was constructed behind the (now closed) White Hart pub. The lease there expired in 1994 and was not renewed when the site was redeveloped. A 99-year lease was agreed on one acre (0.4 hectares) of land with Charlbury Town Council and Oxfordshire County Council at the current site in Ticknell Piece Road. The current building and six-rink green were developed by the club with the building containing a bespoke two-rink short-mat (indoor) facility in the main hall. It was opened in 1996 by local celebrity Freddie Jones, and remains today largely as it was built.

Period of Expansion

The period between 2016 and 2020 was one of growth and success for CBC.

- ⇒ membership of the club increased by over 40% and active participation by the same amount
- ⇒ revenues increased by 39%
- ⇒ secured eight sponsors whose support for the club has enabled some modernisation. In addition, we have developed strong relationships with some sponsors – for example, Hydac (a multi-national hydraulics company and the largest employer in Charlbury) hold an annual charity fundraising day at the club, supported by bowls club members
- ⇒ green maintenance was outsourced to Bicester Turf Care and the green has developed into an excellent playing surface
- ⇒ notable playing successes in 2019, winning the West Oxon League
- ⇒ winter short-mat league teams increased from two to five
- ⇒ Oxfordshire fours short-mat champions in 2019, qualified for the national finals of the mixed fours in 2020, and three players represented the Oxfordshire Premier team in the County Championships the same year opened our club facilities to community groups for non-bowling activities
- ⇒ updated many of our internal and external fixtures and fittings to be energy efficient
- ⇒ Selected as a prospective pre-games training camp for national teams in the **Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022**

However, as a club we realise we can do much more. A vibrant and active committee, supported by the members, is determined to improve our facilities, expand our sport further in the area, reach out to groups who may find a place to bowl with their peer groups difficult, and to further enhance our links with the community. The promotion of bowls as one way of achieving improved health and wellbeing is at the heart of our efforts. The Covid-19 lockdown of 2020 enforced the understanding bowls plays in providing social contact and emotional wellbeing with many members being isolated and significantly missing the regular, friendly contact.

Our Objectives

This capital expenditure will enable Charlbury Bowls Club to achieve so much more than we do now. Our ambitious plans encompass a range of sporting, community, and social activities which we will implement by September 2024, and need some additional revenue which we are confident will be met by existing funds, new members and grants.

Sporting

We aim to expand our **Flat Green Bowls** activities

- increase our playing members registered with Bowls Oxfordshire by 30%
- achieve at least two fully accredited coaches and one accredited umpire
- introduce a Ladies League team in the West Oxfordshire Ladies League
- introduce a youth section with at least eight bowlers aged under 18 years
- increase our participation in Bowls Oxfordshire county competitions by 25%
- equip our club for disabled bowling and introduce free sessions in consultation with Disability Bowls England
- seek to host Bowls Oxfordshire run county competition finals and county matches
- organise and run an afternoon triples league for west and north Oxon
- host an open fours tournament
- host a ladies triples tournament
- we seek to introduce an initiative entitled *Bowling with Dementia* for those with the condition and their carers (see www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/daily-living/exercise/early-middle-dementia)

We aim to become a Centre of Excellence for **Short-Mat Bowls** in West Oxfordshire.

- increase our playing members registered with OSMBA by 30%
- increase our playing teams from five to six within the OSMBA structure
- achieve at least two fully accredited coaches and one accredited umpire
- introduce two coached skills sessions each week open to members of any bowls club in West Oxfordshire
- increase our participation in OSMBA county competitions by 25%
- host an annual team competition
- introduce disabled short-mat bowls and *Bowling with Dementia*



Community

We aim to increase our links into the **Community** of Charlbury and its hinterland. Our premises licence with West Oxfordshire District Council is a members' club licence so we can only hold 15 licenced events with public access per year. Hence, our efforts will be predominantly to work with community groups rather than party hires.

- work with Sustainable Charlbury to identify ways to reduce our carbon footprint
- increase the number of community hires of our premises by 50%
- increase our popular Charlbury Bingo to five times a year
- hold a charity gala pro-am day with our sponsors and others
- maintain and expand our links to community/charitable organisations through our President's Day, Hydac charity day, and links with Special Effect charity

Current use and the Community View

As a sport, Bowls has the ninth highest participation level of over 18s of any sport in England – more participants than cricket, rugby union, hockey, netball, squash, table tennis, rowing, sailing, archery and many more sports – and is holding up its participant level well when others are declining. (Source: Sport England Active People survey, September 2016). The nature of the sport is that it lends itself to those retired who can participate during daytime or evening. The demography of players is toward the retirement end, and the ESMBA estimate 80% of participants in that indoor form of the sport are over 65 years of age. The demographic trends for Charlbury and surrounding villages indicated in the 2011 census returns (and that will continue as a trend in 2021 census) suggest that in future the area should anticipate and plan for a growing number of elderly and retired. The health and wellbeing of this age group can be well supported by an active bowls club.

However, bowls is not a sport for just the elderly – in 2018 Charlbury fielded a friendly team that contained a 92-year old playing alongside an eleven year old member! Many of those that reach higher levels of competition for county and nation are at the younger end of the age spectrum.

As well as a bowls club, we are a community facility, open to hire by community groups, private events, and charitable activities. St Mary's Church, Charlbury, hold a weekly Stay and Play drop-in for parents and pre-school children, and a monthly group for people with dementia and their carers. Charlbury Women's Institute use the facility for craft activities. And others such as Charlbury Probus club for social and other activities. The multi-national company Hydac, Charlbury's largest employer, hold their annual charity day at the club while a local group fundraising for an annual computer gaming event that raises thousands of pounds for Cornbury-based charity, Special Effect, is moving their event to Charlbury Bowls club in spring 2022.

To achieve our objectives we will seek to expand our building footprint to meet the current and future demands of bowling and community activity within the Charlbury area by providing an upgraded, sustainable building suitable for our needs. But an expanded building is not enough. We have an adventurous plan to increase our sporting and community activities which are set out in this prospectus. The capital spend on building is intended to be a catalyst for enhanced sports participation, increased community use, and increase revenue expenditure on activities. Our current building is recognised as one of the most attractive in the County and beyond, and the new extensions are an unobtrusive expansion in that they are flat-roof and single story. We are proposing:

- ◆ Two extensions either side of the existing signature entrance area

One of these will provide a multi-purpose meeting/committee room, administration room, viewing room onto the green for summer activities with floor to ceiling glass, and other general purposes. At present, it is difficult to watch outdoor games from inside in inclement weather, and impossible for anyone in a wheelchair or who needs to sit down. In addition, during the six months of the short-mat bowls season, bowling currently stops to permit committee and other meetings. The second front extension is of similar outward design and is intended to provide excellent viewing for spectators out to the green in summer (again with floor to ceiling glass), viewing area for spectators in winter into the club house with the removal of a significant part of the wall, and as a social area for members, visitors and community groups

- ◆ An extension to the end of the building

The clubhouse was built in 1994 with a bespoke short-mat bowls area supporting two mats in the main hall area. However, this was in the early days of the sport and it has grown tremendously since then. One end of the mats is adjacent to the end wall of the clubhouse, and to improve the playing area by enabling bowlers to stand behind the fenders of the mat a small extension is proposed. It also makes disabled bowling from this end extremely difficult, if not impossible. The extension would also provide some much-needed storage space for chairs, tables, bowls equipment, and community groups' equipment, much of which has currently to be stored in the ladies changing room. With expanded participation that has become unsustainable.

◆ A new storage area

This extension encloses a small, unattractive area that already has three sides to provide additional storage space. This is needed to store existing and new equipment to meet our stated objectives detailed below, including the storage of two disabled bowling wheelchairs, freeing up much needed room in the ladies changing room.

A small extension to the gents' toilet

This will provide a gent's cubicle. Currently, the disable toilet serves as multi-purpose use and with our plans for expanding disabled bowls more toilet space is necessary.

Conclusion

It is recognised that the building of an extension is just a catalyst to achieve much more. The old and the young are being engaged in new activities to strengthen mind and body. The health and well-being of the whole community is lifted by the potential for the facility and its associated activities. We expect to see even greater community involvement, and exciting new opportunities to support those more vulnerable within the community, especially through age or disability. The benefit will be social inclusion and whole-town integration through sport and social activities. It will place Charlbury Bowls Club alongside other local amenities to ensure that the town has diverse and complementary activities for people of all ages and abilities.

Proposed Milestones

October 2020	Planning permission applied for
January 2021	Planning permission decision expected
April 2021	West Oxfordshire District Council Community Grant application
June to December 2021	Additional grant applications submitted
April 2022	Building work commences
December 2022	Building work completed
January 2021 until 2024	Completion of the sporting and community objectives

Officers and Contact Details

David Cooper (President)
Ron Smith (Secretary)
Shaun Morley (Treasurer)
(the above three office holders are also Trustees)
Nine other committee members

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Our Sponsors

