

The Warwick Boat Club Limited

Annual Report & Accounts – 2021-2022

Captain's Report

As a new Captain I firstly want to thank all my new General Committee team and every Committee for all their help and support through this year. With the volunteers and staff our Club continues to be a great place to play our chosen sport and spend time with friends socialising.

It has been quite a challenge adopting this role and of course being your first female Captain made it more so. We all have our own style when we take on any role and I try to be inclusive, transparent, approachable and always willing to listen. I hope you have found this.

Over the year I think everyone has benefitted from our grounds and club house. This of course brings me immediately onto the subject we all want to know about.

The Development! Or Club Improvements as I prefer to now call it. What is happening? I have to be honest and say I am disappointed we haven't managed to move more quickly to get things rolling. But as a team our emphasis has been on consolidating the finances so we can offer you all a plan that is affordable. This I believe is almost there. I am very optimistic that in the New Year we will be proposing plans that will be acceptable to everyone. One that can realistically be achieved, is practical and gives us all we need. So I ask you for your patience a little longer....we will get there!

Membership numbers are healthy. We are almost at our maximum for tennis. The Club is busy. Not just in the evening but at all times.

Since Covid, and people adopting a different way of working, we have seen an increase in numbers using the Club at times not seen before. Our new Cafe, Dough and Brew, is at the Club every day serving delicious hot drinks and food. John Martin and his team are an enormous asset. They have provided catering for wakes, christenings, private parties, private dinner parties, fashion shows, Club events and more. You have all warmly welcomed them and I am hoping for a long relationship!

Many members supported and raised money to finance an Ambulance that has been sent to Ukraine. Over £14,000 was raised which has paid for the ambulance and medical supplies. It was quite an organisation at the time and many thanks should go to all who got involved.

The Club has applied for Community Amateur Club Status (CASC). Club President Ray McGuire, Vice President James Alty and General Committee member Jon Martin spent several hours adapting our Articles and Memorandum of Association to comply with all the requests made by HMRC. As you will see from the AGM agenda, there is a special resolution to adopt the changes.

Our subscriptions will rise this year. I'm sure that's no surprise to any of you. Unfortunately, we have bills to pay. I appreciate this is unwelcome news but we have to be realistic in the present climate. The car park fee is also to rise. Not to £100, which was debated, but by 10% plus vat. We are still exploring the possibility of several car registrations to a membership but this is work in progress.

While the cost of living goes up we can't remain in a bubble thinking it won't affect Warwick Boat Club! It affects all of us, staff and members. We are doing our best to keep bills as low as possible. LED lights in the clubhouse, sensors in cupboards and cloakrooms, fixed energy prices. Your committee is working hard for all of you but we all have to take some responsibility.

I'm sorry to be so realistic but we need some reserves to provide a great Club. A place we have become accustomed to enjoying with great facilities. The changing rooms are next on my agenda!

I look forward to seeing some of you at the AGM. Please remember to vote even if you can't be there. Your voice matters to those of us on the General Committee so we can make the right decisions for you all.

Thank you for your time reading this and I hope to continue as your Captain for another year. Please always feel free to approach me with your questions and ideas.

Libby Newman

Club Captain

Treasurer's Report to AGM 2022 and Accounts

I am happy to present the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Financial results

I can report that there is a small overall surplus for the year of £4,068 but, this is after substantial further exceptional costs of £37,571 relating to the driveway right of way and £9,600 spent on the Gifted Philanthropy report into possible funding for development. Adjusting for the surplus on normal activity is shown below:

			£
Surplus for the year			4,068
Add	Exceptional items		37,571
	Gifted Philanthropy report		9,600
Surplus on normal activity			<u>51,239</u>

Due in part to a membership campaign last year the subscriptions in the year to 31 March 2022 increased to £297,522 (2020 £253,774) and bar income exceeded the VAT threshold meaning we are now VAT registered from 1 April 2022. Bar income has increased since the year-end, and we are confident of still making a profit from the bar going forward.

The figures also show that each sporting section either showed a small profit or has reduced costs against last year.

Depreciation has reduced from £47,351 last year to £30,302 this year as the expenditure of the club house of £220K in 2011 was fully written off last year (this had been £22k per year for the last 10 years).

Administration costs are high compared to last year which included the gifted philanthropy fee of £9,600 plus a necessary increase in administration wages of £18,000. More analysis of cost will be available ahead of the AGM.

Cash-flow

Though there is a small surplus for the year cash balances have reduced from £259,152 to £202,633 and the reason shown below:

			£	£
Cash balances at 31 March 2021				259,152
Add	Surplus for the year		4,068	
	Non cash expenses - Depreciation		30,302	
	Reduction in prepayments		<u>1,139</u>	
				35,509
Less	Capital expenditure		72,183	
	Stock increase		581	
	Reduction in creditors mainly credits			
	given against subs last year		<u>19,264</u>	
				- 92,028
Cash balances at 31 March 2022				<u>202,633</u>

Main capital expenditure was:

	£
Tennis Court fencing/surrounds	26,700
New Boats	5,914
Boat House refurb and new doors	9,951
New paving in front and club house and driveway	15,750
Outdoor furniture	4,418
Carpets	2,545
Kitchen items (new dishwasher etc..)	3,510
Sundry items (driveway bollard, outdoor lights Strimmer, mower etc..)	3,395
	<u>72,183</u>

Currently the cash balances remain at a little over £200K and should be sufficient to ensure continued replacement of sporting equipment, maintenance of club house and grounds and possible future improvements.

Half year figures to September 2022 indicate a surplus of £20,000 for the period, which is close to budget though, as we all know, costs are increasing generally. I remain confident that the club can go forward maintaining a healthy financial position.

I would also like to report the following ...

Application to become a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC)

The General Management Committee (GM) recently took a unanimous decision to apply to become as CASC. This has been raised by various parties over the years and the GMC believe the benefits exceed any issues with conditions for membership.

The main benefits are:

- Gift Aid on qualifying donations from individuals and companies as well as Gift Aid Small donations payments on small cash donations from individuals. This is on “pure gifts” only and not subscriptions.
- 80% mandatory rates relief

In addition, there are also some corporation tax reliefs on property income interest received and any chargeable gains.

To register as a CASC your club must meet the following qualifying conditions and meet them on an ongoing basis otherwise the club may lose its CASC status and be subject to a de-registration charge:

1. Be open to the whole community
2. Be organised on an amateur basis
3. Have its main purpose the provision of facilities for, and the promotion of participation in, one or more eligible sports.
4. Not exceed the income limit (£100,000 from non-member trading and property - not an issue).
5. Meet the management condition (i.e., committee members cannot be paid to play for the club).

6. Meet the location condition (UK qualifies)

Only very minor amendments to our Memorandum and Articles have been required by HMRC and we are in the process of concluding matters with them.

Jeremy Chapman

Treasurer

Warwick Boat Club Estate 2022

Grounds

Paul Hinton and Chris Reader, assisted by a number of volunteers, have done an excellent job in maintaining the grounds during the last year. The team try to adopt sustainable practices and materials throughout. The Club provides rich wildlife habitats which the team recognise and protect, and there is an emphasis on reclaim & re-use where it is possible. We are continually reviewing the grounds maintenance equipment to ensure that we have effective modern reliable tools which allow the team to make efficient use of their available hours.

During the past year, the surface of the main path in from the Banbury Road has been resurfaced to resolve ongoing issues with the previous large gravel surface. As time passes this has bedded in well and has proved effective.

The structure of the path leading to the old Banbury Road pedestrian gate has been restored, allowing it to be brought back into service as and when the budget allows for completion of the gate, handrails and lighting.

The small sum invested in paving the area to the front of the Clubhouse has radically improved the general appearance and maintenance of that area – previously laid with grass which was continually worn out by foot traffic. The extra space created for outdoor seating has been well received.

The project to improve the planting along the Banbury Road was completed, thanks to David Howells. Visually, the area is much improved and the new planting is rapidly starting to mature. All but two of the new specimens survived the recent drought conditions.

A number of issues have arisen with trees around the site during the year. The site is within the Warwick Conservation Area and many of the trees have protected status, so any work carried out on them is highly regulated. We are working to establish sustainable maintenance plans with our tree surgeons, to keep the trees in good condition and safe.

Prior to the bowls season starting, we undertook to relocate the Bowlers' shed to the area beside the green. This has been a considerable improvement for the players.

The project to re-clad the boat shed was completed. Members have noticed that the area has been much improved visually and the shed is at least water-proof and secure. This work is effectively cosmetic and we still expect to have to replace the boat sheds over the coming years.

We have asked our Electrical Contractor to review the outdoor lighting provision in all areas of the site, with a view to improving members' safety and the general appearance. As part of this we expect to be able to introduce the energy efficient controls required to help reduce our energy costs.

Club House

General ongoing maintenance has continued throughout the year in the Clubhouse, however we have shied away from any large expenditure while the discussions around development / improvement progress to a conclusion.

There have been two major items requiring attentions. Firstly, the direct gas-fired hot water heater cylinder failed and had to be replaced. We took the decision to replace it with an indirect system which would a) provide similar capacity and allow easy integration of renewable heat sources in future, b) be more flexible for re-use during expected future development / improvement works.

Secondly, an issue arose with the main drain causing debris to back up into the drains beneath the changing rooms. A local company was able to deliver a portaloo solution within hours, which enabled facilities to remain usable while contractors cleared the drains.

As part of the review of the external lighting, we have also asked our Electrical Contractors to review the lighting within the buildings. The intention is to replace as much of our lighting load with LED as soon as possible. We expect this to make a significant reduction to the electricity costs for the building.

Car Park

Following the finalisation of the agreement with our driveway neighbours, we undertook to improve the control and monitoring of the drive. A number plate reading system has been installed which allows cross-referencing of members using the facility with their vehicle details. Members using cars for which they do not have permits are being contacted by the office staff on a regular basis. Further improvements to signage and systems are planned.

Energy & Utilities

The increase in energy costs is a serious concern.

We were able to negotiate a three-year fixed contract for the Club's electricity supply earlier in the year. This is at an increase of approximately 300% and was agreed before rates increased further. In spite of this being a fixed contract, the Club will still benefit from any government support available which brings unit rates below that agreed. Approximately 1/3 of the Club's bill arises from floodlighting, thus the change from conventional to LED lighting is a significant mitigating factor. The Tennis Committee & Nick Peall should be congratulated for their foresight!

We are in a fixed contract for gas supply until the end of 2024, thus have been largely insulated from the increases in gas prices. However, we must improve the energy efficiency of the buildings, which essentially means not leaving /tying / propping the Clubhouse doors open at any time.

We experienced a major water leak during the dry weather, where the old steel incoming water main - running from the Severn Trent supply on the Banbury Road onto the Club's premises – partially failed. It took several weeks to cajole Severn Trent and contractors into collaborating effectively to effect a repair. Unfortunately, use of tennis court 10 was compromised during the period and a significant amount of fresh water was lost.

We continue to monitor the general condition of the services.

Jon Martin

Estate Portfolio

Tennis Report

The objectives of the Tennis section are to provide high quality facilities to our members, to run excellent supervised Mix-Ins, to provide a wide range of coaching opportunities for groups and individuals, competitive tennis to those who wish to participate while leaving court availability to those who wish to play social tennis.

This year we have replaced the court fencing for courts 6 and 7 and have installed new LED lights on courts 6 , 7 and 8. The next phase starts on November 7th when the lights on courts 9 /10/5 will be upgraded to LED and on November 14th work starts to replace the fencing on courts 8/9/10

Our membership remained strong during the year and we have 949 members entitled to play tennis in October 2022 compared with 947 in October 2021.

We have seen a high level of demand for our Mix-Ins, and we have continued to run the Rusty Racquets sessions. We have expanded our coaching classes to provide a pathway to those whose tennis is improving.

We have continued to provide tennis coaching for Disabled children from Evergreen school.

We had a record number of entrants to our club competitions this year and finals day was again well supported despite the weather. Congratulations to the winners of each category, to the rest of us there is always next year.

We held the inaugural Bowen Bowl competition between WBC and Leamington in September at Leamington, and this is to become an annual event. Leamington won this time but Gavin is already making plans for next year.

Our coaching team continues to see a lot of demand from our members and again our coaches remain busy.

Our teams have continued to perform at a high level, and full details of their successes have been reported in the regular All4One publication.

We are planning to install a new membership and booking system before annual renewals take place on 1st April 2023. Members will be advised along the way and a members' forum will be available on the new system for members to share their experiences.

This is my final report as Tennis Captain. It has been a short and enjoyable period for me and I hope that along with the other committee members we have done the things members would have wanted us to do when we were elected.

Mike Parton

Tennis Captain

Rowing Report

A very brief overview of our year.

This year has been business as usual after our necessary world-wide pandemic disruption. This has resulted in some of the strongest squads and crews we have seen for a while! The more recent cost-of-living crisis has not stopped our well costed budget, fronted by Steve Smith, which has allowed us to continue developments to our boat sheds and fleet in the face of a development plan that has been (quite rightly) redesigned and reimagined. A boat has been purchased, named, and sits proudly in the boat shed for members to use. Courses have been run across the warmer months of the year and continue to attract new members to our squads. The courses have provided a perfect example of everyone lending a hand and utilising their skill set to benefit the wider club.

A less brief overview of the year.

When taking up captaincy in autumn 2021, there were a few outstanding items for me and the committee to prioritise. Firstly, the failing condition of the boat shed had to be addressed amongst the ongoing talks of redevelopment. Regardless of the outcome of the development plans, work was required to reclad the large shed, including the replacement of the main doors. Vital work to extend the usable life of the shed while the club development plans were redrawn and re-budgeted. I'd say an early success for the committee as the shed is now watertight again and in a condition befitting the fantastic fleet of boats we have at our disposal.

Since the approval of our last boat buying plan, a new heavyweight Janousek single scull was added to the fleet. After a quick trip back to the manufacturers to fix some snags it is now being enjoyed by members. In addition to the doubles and four which were purchased before autumn 2021 I feel it important to re-acknowledge the hard work our committee puts into discussing the needs of the membership when deciding which boat types to buy. Balancing these needs against cost effective solutions is no easy task, and we hope to enjoy further additions to our coxless four and quad offering in the coming seasons. Our costed budget is approved for the years to come and offers financial sensibility to spending, giving us the space to repair and replace boats for all to benefit.

This national trend to row coxless boats over coxed does come with risks attached however, and we must all continue to play our part in keeping each other safe on and off the water. We have seen some significant crashes this year and we hope the recent coxes' course, and even more recent steersman course provided valuable insight to keep you safe. Communication is key and I trust the incoming committee continue to raise awareness among members and squads to ensure rowing at Warwick is as safe as possible.

Rowing elsewhere is a different story and our Squad captains will touch on the successes of Warwick shortly. As mentioned at the annual dinner, Master's Champs, Henley Royal Regatta, World Masters Champs, and more... this speaks for itself! I've been proud to be captain to the rowing section, to work alongside such devoted squad captains who have encouraged some of the biggest and most successful entries I can remember in my 5 years at the club.

We have continued our spring and summer run learn to row courses and taster days for members of the public, demonstrating our fantastic sport and welcoming club. This is only possible thanks to the hard work of all our volunteers who organise, advertise, and run sessions, building it from strength to strength. While the women's squad is possibly the biggest active women's group I've ever seen, the senior men's squad is noticeably smaller and this will likely be a priority for the incoming committee to address over the next 12 months.

The elephant in the room is the absence of our Junior Squad, and this was another important item to address this year. If you attended last year's AGM you will have heard I was to step down as Junior Coach September 2021. As of today, the squad has been on hold for 13 months 2 weeks, and 4 days which unfortunately is 13 months, 2 weeks, and 4 days longer than we would have liked. This has not been from lack of trying to hire a replacement as all local, national, and (believe it or not) international adverts were left unanswered. Considering this struggle, a group of volunteers were gathered and were arranged into pairs in an effort to restart the junior section for a regular weekly slot. From a safeguarding perspective each member had to be checked for a DBS and needed to refresh their safeguarding training. This was and is a logistical nightmare and took much longer than anticipated with the final documents evidenced to Olivia (our safeguarding lead) only recently. It is hoped an "ordinary member" of the new committee might head up this section under the framework proposed by me, or at the least explore the options proposed in the plans.

Important to mention - The Warwick Regatta

Unfortunately, there remain safety concerns on the landing stage we use to boat competitors in Myton fields for our annual regatta, meaning it was not possible to run an event in the usual format this year. We hope ongoing talks between the committee (Kate Rider) and the council will eventually yield a successful alternative event to run next year, inviting back our local competing clubs to the Avon.

In place of the regatta, we ran a successful punt-a-bbq event this year that used our green tub boats in a round robin style racing format. Should the regatta be unfeasible again it is hoped these alternative events can still take place.

Conclusion

I have enjoyed my 12 months as Captain of Boats, and although it has been a relatively short time at the helm it has been a joy to represent you, the members. We have a talented group of rowers with a penchant for club organisation and management so I know we will all be in very capable hands. I wish the incoming committee every success for the next year and encourage anyone with similar passions to think about joining the committee in the future!

Thomas Garner

Captain of Boats

Squash Report

Committee

During the year Kathy Leahy has re-joined the as Secretary and I am delighted to welcome Jagdish Bains and Kate Pittel as Treasurer and Social Secretary respectively. This leaves two positions vacant, Section Captain and Competitions Organiser.

Squash Captain	VACANT
Secretary	Kathy Leahy
Treasurer	Jagdish Bain
Men's Captain	Jonathan Peak
Ladies Captain	Jessamy Linford
Squash League Organiser	Andrew Campbell
Racketball League Organiser	Jonathan Partridge *
Competitions Organiser	VACANT
Social	Kate Pittel

Welfare

As the designated Welfare Officer for the Squash Section, I can confirm that no incidents have been registered or brought to my attention since our last AGM meeting.

Membership

Our membership numbers have remained broadly consistent against the number report last year with c.500 'entitled to play' across all WBC membership categories) and a 'core' number of regular players in the Section of c.90 players. A point to target for the coming year will be to convert those juniors attending the coaching sessions to fully join the club.

Finances

Our annual budget for the year to 31/03/2023 shows a small surplus for the year. For the six months to 30th September 22 we are showing a loss of £1,029 (£400 less than budget) as a result of repairs and maintenance, which has been 'front loaded' in the first half of the year.

Team Squash

Following our entry of one's men's team last year, we have this year submitted two men's teams (divisions 5 and 7) and a ladies' team (division 2). The intention remains to re-introduce a men's third team as the squad continues to expand. (Pre-season) team training sessions have been introduced for both the men's (Monday evenings) and ladies' squads (Sunday evening) Catering is now provided by Dough & Brew and excellent feedback has been received notwithstanding the increase in match fees from £6 to £8.50 per person.

If you are interested in playing team squash, please contact either Jonathan Peak, Jess Linford or myself. What you must have is an activated England Squash account in order to be eligible, details can be found at www.englandsquash.com

Coaching

Adult 1-2-1 (Thursday evenings) and Saturday group coaching sessions (4pm to 6pm) continue and it is particularly pleasing to report the progress in developing the junior section, assisted by the Warwickshire Squash All-Stars programme, which has brought in over 180 junior in the County over the last 12 months. A particular thank-you to Jonathan Peak and Alison Insley in driving this. Max Peak has been selected for the Warwickshire junior squad and some friendly matches are being lined up with other local Warwickshire clubs. We have also signed up to deliver mixed ability coaching sessions for non-members with sessions planned for the 12th and 19th November 2022.

Competitions & Leagues

The Spring Competitions were held successfully earlier in the year with Paul Jennings (Squash) and Jonathan Partridge (Racketball) winning the 'blue ribbon' events. It is with great pleasure to report

that the Autumn Team Competition has just re-started for the first time post-COVID. The finals afternoon/evening is scheduled for Saturday 10th December 2022.

The internal leagues continue to run. Should you wish to join please contact either Andrew Campbell for squash or Jonathan Partridge for racketball.

Court Availability

An issue that we resolved to keep under review. There have not, at the time of writing, been any issues raised with any of the Section Committee since the last AGM.

Maintenance

The Committee have approved a proper clean, sanding and remarking of both courts to be carried out by Wearwell Courts at a cost of £2,060 + VAT. The intention is to book the works during the spring half-term break or failing that as soon as the winter squash season has finished.

Recently, a roof leak has been identified that has caused the heating system to trip. FM Serv will be erecting scaffolding on the 'Court 11 side' to examine the roof to ascertain what repair works are required. Otherwise, standard maintenance has taken place on the French drain pumps, heating system and the water cooler. I have raised the issue of cleaning of the squash block (non-court areas). This is not being carried out but only requires attending to once a week.

WBC Development Proposals

There has been continued discussion about the extent of development proposals. Realistically, a third squash court will not feature but the intention remains to link the squash court block to the changing rooms. Plans are still being finalised the Development Committee and will be presented to the wider membership in due course.

Social

Below are some highlights from the last 12 months and upcoming events, with hopefully more to be added:--

- Weekend squash friendly with Shropshire Squash CluHost our annual contest with Porthcawl Squash Club.
- Participated in World Squash Day 2022.
- Annual summer BBQ
- 4 day squash camp at Lake Bled, Slovenia.
- Commonwealth Games – games on glass exhibition court at New Street Station to promote the sport.
- Commonwealth Games – Jonathan Peak and Alison Insley were involved in taster initiative for the duration of the squash schedule.
- Participation in the annual Brophy Trophy.

It is with regret that I report no-one has come forward to take over the role of Section Captain. However, after over four years at the helm, it is time for someone else to take up the baton and drive the Section forward. I would like to formally thank everyone for their support and guidance whilst I have been 'in post'. The Committee continue to put in time and effort to try and provide the best squash/racketball experience; please remember, the Section is what we all make it. Therefore, if you are interested in getting involved in any of the matters above, serving on the Committee, or have any ideas or constructive comments, then please contact one of the Committee members.
Regards,

Graeme Mascal

Squash Captain

Bowls Report

This has been a very successful year for the bowls section. During the season we played a total of 73 club fixtures made up of various league and friendly matches. We had an ever-increasing number of teams and individuals entering County and National competitions, our internal club competitions, as well as taking part in weekly galas, club nights, coaching sessions and various club fixtures which all served to make 2022 a busy and successful season for everyone. Throughout the summer months only one game was called off due to lack of available players and very few were cancelled due to weather, the high temperatures being a greater risk of cancellation this year than rain!

The ladies Top Club team started the season on a high by knocking out Welford, the current title holders, in the first round of this County competition. They went on to reach the quarter-finals losing narrowly to Royal Leamington Spa who were the eventual competition winners. It is hoped they can capitalise on their success next season. Indeed, Warwick Boat Club is gaining a reputation within the County as one of the strongest ladies Bowls clubs with more members than ever achieving some success in County competitions and four of our players now selected to play for Warwickshire in County matches. This reputation was enhanced by one of our triples once again representing Warwickshire in the National Championships and some of our other teams and individuals progressing to the quarter-final stages of the County competitions. With a good number of new lady players joining the club and the experience they are gaining through friendly and league matches, this all bodes well for the future.

The strength within the ladies' section has resulted in us entering a third team in the Stratford Herald League with one team in Division A and two now in Division C. Fifteen ladies played in the league, many of them for the first time. The teams came 3rd, 4th and 5th in their respective leagues and will be strong contenders for promotion next season.

After the men's all conquering 2021 season in the Pickering League in which they gained promotion to division two, they began the year with high hopes, particularly after winning their first match 8 - 0. It is fair to say that things didn't go particularly well from that point on in terms of results and after losing on the last shot of the last game against Royal Leamington Spa, the men's team was relegated back to division three. But there is every reason to hope for better things next season.

This year was our third season in the KDL which is widely considered to be the most competitive club league in South Warwickshire. With 8 points available for each game our KDL Captain set a target of averaging 4 points per match and achieving a mid table position by the end of the season. We fell just short of the former averaging 3.8 but this took us over 100 points for the first time, finishing 8th out of 14 teams. We are particularly encouraged by the number of our members who played in these matches, thirty in all, including a number playing for the first time in this league, affording them the experience to be part of many close and exciting matches against some of the County's top bowlers.

The majority of our eighteen friendly matches were played as mixed triples and it is fair to say that although we achieved various levels of success across the season there were plenty of wins for the Boat Club. The enthusiasm shown and the experiences gained stands our club in good stead going forward. We have welcomed sixteen new members to the bowls section this season, all of whom have progressed through our coaching academy and since been given the opportunity to take part in these friendly fixtures against other local teams. This chance for our new, less experienced members to take part competitively cannot be understated and many of them have relished the opportunity to play alongside and against more experienced bowlers.

A highlight of the playing season was the evening our team beat Sherwood Park in the Tony Alcock Trophy. This is a National Competition for players aged over 60 with a playing format of two mixed fours. Sherwood Park came to us with a strong team made up of some of the top County players, but undeterred we held our ground and won a thrilling match by a single shot. Our team then went on to beat Three Spires from Coventry before losing in the quarter final to Welford.

As part of a Commonwealth Games initiative aiming to promote sport among young people, our coaches and some of our members took part in a coaching session at Kingsley School, Leamington during the Summer term. There they introduced groups of schoolchildren to the game of bowls. It proved a very successful venture and one which they now plan to repeat each season. This collaboration with Warwick district Council has led to us being gifted with eight sets of new bowls; a substantial gift worth over £2000 which will be used by our coaching team in the future when coaching both junior and novice bowlers.

Once again, we organised and hosted our annual Warwick Town Triples tournament with fourteen teams entering this year from both WBC and a number of other local clubs. Two of our own teams made it through to the Semi-final stages with one reaching the final where they met Snitterfield. The final proved to be a hard fought contest with Snitterfield the eventual winners.

As part of our programme of internal competitions, a contest specifically for newer members to the club was introduced to this year's schedule. The Hurst Trophy, kindly donated by David and Chris Hurst, was awarded to the winner of a knockout competition open to bowlers who have bowled only for one or two seasons. Twelve new bowlers entered this year with Don Preston the eventual winner.

Our annual Ladies v Gents Match took place in September with the Ladies regaining the trophy this year. This was a most enjoyable day for both players and the many spectators, with raffles and refreshments in addition to an exciting afternoon's bowling. All proceeds, including match fees, proceeds from the raffles etc were donated to the club's Ambulance for Ukraine Appeal.

Our season ended on 24th September and the green was officially closed for play. The final match had been played the previous evening when six triples made up from rowers, tennis and squash players contested the Brophy Trophy. Graham Mascall's team were triumphant at the end of a most enjoyable evening's bowling and we hope to host a similar event next year. Avonmore, our Green contractors arrived the following morning and cut, scarified, treated and re-seeded the green. It will now lay dormant throughout the winter months, although it will still require regular cutting and sweeping by the maintenance team. The new grass is already visible. The sprinkler system has been problematic for some time now and after careful inspection by our green keeper and local engineers, deemed ready for a major upgrade. We are currently in the process of looking at available options, one of which will allow overnight watering to be programmed when the club is at its quietest.

Although outdoor bowling has ceased, many of our members are now bowling in the Avon Valley indoor league at Gaydon and a group of our players will be visiting Potters Resort in Norfolk in November to take part in the Indoor bowls competition held there. Until outdoor bowling resumes in the Spring, weekly coffee mornings will take place at the club as well as a number of social events culminating in our annual presentation dinner before Christmas when the season's playing achievements will be celebrated.

We eagerly anticipate the start of another successful season in 2023 and further success for all our players. Moreover, the opportunity for continued enjoyment of the game of bowls for all who choose to participate at Warwick Boat club.

Di Wood

Bowls Captain