

## WICKHAM MARKET PLAYING FIELD BOWLS CLUB

### ANNUAL REPORT TO PARISH ANNUAL MEETING: 10 APRIL 2026

The Playing Field Bowls Club has been playing green bowls on our outdoor green just beyond the Playing Field children's play area for over 70 years since its formation in 1952.

We are a lively, welcoming, and friendly community resource which is still thriving having, at present, 27 players registered for league games as well as a few 'social' bowlers who do not play in league games. Our season runs from late April to early September.

Bowls is not just a game for the elderly or for retired people. We offer opportunity and activity for both sexes and for all age ranges from upper primary school through secondary school to Senior Citizen. We are moderately successful in the two midweek leagues we play in on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. 2025 was another decent year for the Playing Field Bowls Club. We finished sixth (of eight) in Division C of the Wednesday evening Ipswich Triples League – against clubs with scores of members – some of whom went away from our green having been thoroughly beaten! Although not our best year, we finished on 35.5 points while the winners, California, achieved 59.5 and the bottom club, Hospitals Ribbons Park, 27. It was a tough league this year. In the Thursday evening Fynn League we achieved four wins and 26 points – possibly one of our best results ever. Most new players learning the intricacies of green bowls get to play almost every week in the Fynn League. We also made our second brief appearance in the County Millennium Cup – winning on the away rink but losing on the home rink and overall on aggregate.

In addition to the leagues our weekly club night on Monday evenings, which is just for fun, goes from strength to strength and there are in-club competitions and a number of end of season friendly games for everyone.

During 2026 we managed a complete re-wiring of the club pavilion – including the installation of a new steel wired armoured cable from the meter in order to meet current standards and the requirements of our insurer - as well as a variety of other maintenance and improvement tasks. At the moment we are concluding pre-season preparation of our pavilion facilities and the all-important groundwork on the playing green. The rewiring project required the services of a specialist contractor at a cost of slightly over £5,000. We are **especially grateful for grant aid received from Wickham Market Parish Council, the Wickham Market Partnership, and our District and County Councillors.**

We look confidently to the future. There is a cheerful and supportive atmosphere in the club and there is plenty of space on our membership list for any who would like to join.

Monday 13 April will see our annual open evening when everyone will be welcome to visit us from 6pm to 8pm and try their hand at green bowls for what is known in the trade as a 'roll up' – i.e. a taster trial session. We offer experienced bowlers to assist newcomers to the sport and can also loan all necessary equipment apart from footwear. We have a number of sets of bowls of various sizes (including smaller bowls specifically designed for young people or those of smaller stature). All you would initially need to provide are flat soled shoes (most trainer type footwear will be fine).

***Bruce Laws: Club Secretary***