

## **Red Triangle Community Bowls Club.**

The club only plays friendly matches so members can enjoy a relaxing game of bowls without the pressures of league match fixtures and commitments. We play bowls clubs ranging as far away as Felixstowe, St John's in Ipswich, Aldeburgh and the White Hart in Stradbroke. Prior to the Covid pandemic we typically would play about 19 clubs each year with away and home matches.

The Red Triangle Bowls Green is a small sheltered green behind the old vicarage at the bottom of Crown Lane and is leased from the Church Originally the club played on a green behind the White Hart Hotel and part of that green is the lawn in Mr & Mrs Philip Revett's garden. The club is the original bowls club in Wickham Market and is well over 100 years old.

We are not certain of the beginnings of the Red Triangle Bowls Club but in 2007 we played a 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary friendly match against Melton bowls Club so the club pre dates 1907.

The origin of the name Red Triangle is also uncertain but one story is that soldiers staying at the White Hart Hotel named the club after a bottled beer by Bass with a Red Triangle on the label.

Sometime before 1957 the Club moved to the present grounds at the bottom of crown lane behind the Old Vicarage and also around this time the Playing Fields Bowls Club was split off so that the more competitive minded members could play in league games

The Red Triangle Bowls Club is a registered Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) and membership of the club is open to the whole community without discrimination.

There are three classes of membership:

- a. Junior - Membership for players under 18 years old. Junior members must be accompanied by a full or non-playing adult member, for Safe Guarding reasons.
- b. Full Member - Standard membership
- c. Non Player Member - Members who do not play bowls but join to participate in the social activities.

In addition to friendly matches the club has internal cup matches and organised internal matches between members as well as informal roll ups and games organised between members.

In the last few years before 2020 and the Covid pandemic we were opening the green, usually on Tuesday afternoons, for children in years 3 & 4 at Wickham Market Primary School. We hope to renew that arrangement in 2022. The staff at the School said that the children really enjoyed playing an alternative sport and that it was also open for more children with disabilities that could not participate in other more traditional school sports.

Some Children were very keen and we had started a new junior section in 2018 unfortunately Covid also stopped that activity but again we hope to start that section again this year.

The Covid pandemic has had a severe impact on the club, in 2020 we completely closed the green following lockdown guidance and also of course for the safety of the members. This had a significant financial impact with very little income but still ongoing expenses. Projects planned to improve the facilities were also put on hold some of which we hope to restart this year. During 2021 we did re-open but had to play restricted matches and membership reduced so a further financial hit. Matches were played with smaller teams and manage to play 8 of our regular clubs, a number of clubs were reluctant to play interclub games. Another significant financial loss for both 2020 and 2021 due to Covid was the inability to host the two open tournaments that we hold each year, these events attended by players from the club and many of the other clubs we play throughout the year are a major fund raiser for the club.

The reduction in member numbers last year makes the membership levels for the coming year uncertain and we will need to actively try to get more members to start playing bowls and enjoy the outdoors activities, visit other villages and meet new people who become friends sharing the enjoyment of lawn bowls. It is a game for all ages and all abilities.

### ***Drives***

In addition to the friendly matches and cup matches we also hold a number of drives during the season usually held on Saturday afternoons. These are very friendly games played like a match, purely for the enjoyment of the game and are very much social events.

### ***Come and try it***

For people unsure of lawn bowls but would like to give it a try, we hold Wednesday afternoon (from 2:00pm) and Friday evening (from 6:30 pm) practice sessions, these are open to the public for anyone wanting to try out the sport, just come along and give it a try.

David Payne  
Chairman RTBC