

HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 2023

Madam President and Ladies,

Essex County Women's Bowling Association has made an excellent recovery following the difficulties of the past few years. This has given us hope for the future for our sport of Lawn Bowls.

President Joan Barrett began her busy year with her President's Day at the beginning of May. Officers of the County, club representatives and friends joined her for the opening drive, followed by a delicious meal.

MEMBERSHIP – is now 2286. This is a rise of over 60 members, which is really good news.

MATCHES. I welcomed the return of the round robin format for the Johns Trophy this year, thus giving the selectors the opportunity to try some new combinations of players. After three exciting matches the team qualified for the National Semi-finals where they played Devon. This was a closely contested match and Essex, after digging deep, just lost by only 6 shots.

We played Northants again in the Walker Cup and with a draw over the 2 rinks an extra end had to be played. A win on this end took us to the Regional Finals, where our journey finished this year. Our Amy Rose Bowl team included some new players and they all did well. With new players coming into the Johns Trophy, Walker Cup and Amy Rose teams and gaining in experience, we look forward to building on these successes next year.

Ten County friendly matches were played with honours being equally divided, winning 5 and losing 5. Two mixed celebration games were played and enjoyed at Woodford and Romford. We concluded with our annual match versus the Essex Men and I am delighted to report that we won by 19 shots. Well done Ladies.

As always my thanks go to Witham and all the clubs who have hosted events for us this year. Your hospitality was terrific and greatly appreciated.

COUNTY WINNERS 2023:

Singles winner Elaine Score (Essex County), r/up Donna Law (Silver End). Pairs winners Elaine Score, Emma Chapman (Essex County), r/up Doreen Butcher, Tina Howard (Dunmow). Triples winners Hayley Kenny, Michelle Carlin, Rebecca Smith (Clockhouse), r/up Edna Woods, Steph Heard, Judy Bohannon (Tiptree Jobserve). Fours winners Hayley Kenny, Michelle Squires, Serena Madgewick, Rebecca Smith (Clockhouse), r/up Lyla Horley, Sue Ockwell, Cheryl Williams, June Linehan (Holland-on-Sea). Two Wood Singles winner Rebecca Smith (Clockhouse), r/up Helen Grant (Loughton). Champion of Champions winner June Linehan (Holland-on-Sea), r/up Carol Heavin (Silverthorn). Unbadged Singles winner Fiona Emms (Wivenhoe), r/up Debbie Jones (Wanstead). Unbadged Pairs winners Jeanette Edmans, Debbie Shrimpton (Silverthorn), r/up Maureen Kendrick, Cheryl Williams (Holland-on-Sea). Senior Singles winner Sylvia Bloomfield (Harlow), r/up Debbie Sales (Dunmow). Senior Pairs winners Sue Kemp, Elaine Score (Essex County), r/up Tina Fisher, Rose Kerridge (Colchester West End). Senior Fours winners Sue Knowles, Sue Clark, Carole Riley, Pauline Lowe (The Springhouse), r/up Edna Woods, Heather Shadbolt, Steph Heard, Judy Bohannon (Tiptree Jobserve). Benevolent Triples winners Sue Knowles, Carole Riley, Pauline Lowe (The Springhouse), r/up Edna Woods, Steph Heard, Judy Bohannon (Tiptree Jobserve). Albert Crabb winners Rochford, r/up Holland-on-Sea. Top Club winners Clockhouse, r/up Fairwood. Essex Patron winner Jane Plumley (Carreras). Intergroup winners A Area.

INTERNATIONALS AND NATIONALS: We did not have any ladies representing England in the Internationals this year, but there is always hope for the future.

Congratulations to all our players who qualified for the National Championships this year. We had 3 disciplines reaching the quarter finals at Leamington, Elaine Score (Essex County) in the Singles, Sylvia Bloomfield (Harlow) in the Senior Singles, Hayley Kenny, Michelle Squires, Serena Madgewick and Rebecca Smith (Clockhouse) in the Fours. The Clockhouse triple of Hayley Kenny, Michelle Carlin and Rebecca Smith reached the semi-finals, losing by 3 shots to Surrey. Well done on these accomplishments.

COUNTY BADGES: Congratulations to Jane Bouch (Arclight), Sarah May (Bocking Alliance), Carolyn Barry, Julie Watkins (Buckhurst Hill), Sue McKay (Colchester West End), Sonia Prior (Falcon), Linda Deighton (Frinton), Eleanor Coupland (Great Baddow), Christa Finch (Harlow), Jean Palmer (Ingatestone), Alison England (Kings Chase), Julie Jones (Radwinter) and Rita Fabbri (Stock & Buttsbury) who were awarded their badges.

ESSEX BENEVOLENT FUND AND BENEVOLENT TRIPLES: Thank you to everyone who supported our Benevolent Triples and President's Charity Day this year. Thanks to your generosity the County Benevolent Fund is healthy and a donation was made to the President's charity, Children in Need. Wendy Buckingham has been the Secretary/Treasurer of this fund for the past 11 years and has been able to send gifts to the ladies of the county who have been unwell. As she takes up another mantle she is passing the Benevolent Fund on and we thank her sincerely for the love and compassion that she has brought to this role.

ESSEX PATRONS' DAY: We celebrated Essex Patrons' Day at Aveley and Chelmsford this year and my thanks go to these clubs for hosting it. The ladies participating in the bowls drive and enjoying the opportunity to meet fellow bowlers, had a wonderful afternoon. I do hope we have lots of support next year.

PRESS OFFICER: Dave Jarrold has again worked hard behind the scenes, keeping the county website up to date. I know that the ladies are using it more and more and it continues to be a valuable asset. Thank you Dave.

FINANCE: Jenny Hyland has had a busy year dealing with our finances and all the ups and downs created by them. We were pleased to have sponsorship from the Essex WI and delighted that they will be sponsoring us again next year. We thank them sincerely. Thank you Jenny for your hours of hard work and I look forward to next year.

AREA SECRETARIES: Pat Barrett has completed her first year as C Area Secretary and is getting her head round what the job entails. Grateful thanks to Pat Barrett, Pat Brown, Brenda Bowyer and Pauline Adams for their continued hard work. What a great job they all do and I couldn't manage without them. Thank you ladies.

SELECTORS: Often in the firing line, but our selectors spend hours watching players in different situations and recognising their potential to be a part of our Johns Trophy/Walker Cup squad. Their diligence was rewarded by the successes that we had this year and I thank Pauline Mount, Jenny Paternoster, Sylvia Bloomfield and Wendy Buckingham for the roles they have played. Sylvia will not be standing for re-election, so I thank her for her help and wish her well. I am still hopeful that D Area will find a selector to represent them next year.

LUNCHEON: Our President Joan Barrett, accompanied by her husband Gordon, were welcomed into the banqueting suite at Stock Brook Manor for our County Luncheon. The tables looked wonderful

and the meal was superb. In order to show our appreciation to the Essex WI we were joined by Verity Brome and Lesley Crisp, two of their trustees. It is always an honour to recognise our unsung heroes and 8 Certificates of Merit were awarded this year. After presenting the trophies we had our raffle. Thank you to everyone who supported the raffle by bringing prizes and buying tickets. Thank you to Witham for running the raffle for us. Joan concluded another successful luncheon with her personal speech.

I send congratulations to all the clubs who were celebrating special anniversaries. Long may you continue to thrive.

I thank everyone who has worked for their club and county, often behind the scenes, only being noticed when they are no longer there. If everyone does a little it turns into a lot and will ensure that lawn bowls continues to be played in our communities.

I sincerely thank my Assistant Secretary/Match Secretary Sheila Brickel and Treasurer Jenny Hyland for their support and help. The wheels of the county wouldn't turn without you and I am truly grateful for your assistance and friendship.

2023 has been a memorable year and President Joan has been an absolute rock. Not having the support of either a Senior Vice-President or Junior Vice-President she has done the work of three people. I know she and the executive are grateful to her husband Gordon, who has been ably supporting her throughout. Joan has had a wonderful year creating memories, which she has shared with her family. Thank you Joan for always being there, immaculate in appearance and doing a magnificent job.

I thank you all for your support and friendship. Stay well and I look forward to 2024.

Yours sincerely,

Jill Polley

Hon. Secretary E.C.W.B.A.