MINUTES OF ECWBA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4TH NOVEMBER 2026
AT THE MILLENNIUM HALL, GREAT BADDOW AT 2PM

PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS: President Dot Pope welcomed everyone to the AGM and thanked them for attending.

A minute silence was held for Janet Howson (Brentwood B.C.)

APOLOGIES: These were received from Wendy Buckingham, Jane Preston, Pauline Adams, Kings Chase, Haynes Park, Harold Hill, Aveley, Upminster, Thorpe le Soken, Great Wakering, Clacton on Sea, Silver End, Hainault, Lionmede, Rainham, Sth Benfleet & Canvey and Hadleigh.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: These were agreed and signed.

Proposed by: Kim Wiggins Seconded by: Carolyn Barry

MATTERS ARISING:

- The affiliation forms for 2027 are currently being prepared and will be emailed to Club Secretaries shortly. The completed forms must be returned, preferably by post, to the County Secretary and County Treasurer by the 31st December 2026.
- The competition portal is now open for the 2027 entries and will close on 28th February 2027. Please be sure to use a personal email address when making the entry.

CORRESPONDENCE: No correspondence received.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

This had been previously circulated. With sincere apologies, please add Carol Heavin (Silverthorn) to the list of ladies who received their County Badge this year.

Adoption of the report: Proposed by Pat Barrett Seconded by Colleen Moss

TREASURER'S REPORT: Jenny Hyland reported that:

- Linda Drewe had kindly audited the accounts. Unsigned copies had been distributed, but Jenny had signed copies available. Linda had audited the accounts for 8 years and was standing down. A new auditor will be needed for next season.
- Income and Expenditure. The 2025-2026 Accounts show a profit of £1222.87. The budgeted profit for the year 2024-2025 was £20. Last year Jenny reported that we would have to contribute to the Portal Running Costs, but the EBA Treasurer, Stephen Hill, decided that the EBA would fund this cost. The exact cost is not currently known.
- The 2025-2026 budget included WI Sponsorship of £1500, less the cost of the advert in our handbook. Essex WI are happy with how we are using their funds and fingers crossed that there is no reason for them to withdraw their sponsorship. We may incur some expenses in updating or renewing our Essex WI Banners to depict our new clothing design at a possible cost of £500.

- Competition income was slightly lower which may have resulted from some ladies being reluctant to use the portal. Hopefully this will improve next year.
- County Friendlies showed a small profit of £255 as we only needed one coach in 2026.
- The number of affiliations dropped again this year by 54 members.
- 83 tickets were sold for the 200 Club, 33 less than last year. £415 went to the ECWBA and £415 given in prizes.
- New Competition shirts were ordered and distributed, retaining some for stock.
- Bank Current Account stands at £3,495.41 and £28,000 in the Deposit Account, which includes £2500 Herring Fund.
- Those attending the Annual County Luncheon were extremely generous and enabled the raffle to make £805. Jenny thanked everyone who provided the prizes and bought raffle tickets.
- Valence Bowls have recently withdrawn their facility to hold and sell our County Friendly Blouses and Jackets. The Executive will be organizing an alternative source for next season.
- Fees agreed for 2027:
  Affiliation fees – Bowls England £7.60, County £2.90, EBA 25p, Total £10.75 per player.
  County friendly matches - £18 home and away by coach. £12 away by car.
  Intergroup matches - £10.
  Patrons' Day - £10 per patron, £11 per non-patron.
  Benevolent Triples - £15 per triple.
  Johns Trophy, Walker Cup, Amy Rose – depending on agreed charges with the opposition.
  Championship Singles, Pairs, Triples, Fours, Senior Fours, 2 Wood Singles - £9 per person.
  Championship Junior Singles, Championship Junior Pairs - £5 per person.
  Champion of Champions, Unbadged Singles, Unbadged Pairs - £5 per person.
  Albert Crabb - £12.
  County Top Club - £17.
  Essex Patrons - £1 per person.
  County Handbook - £4.
  County Administration - £7 per club.

Adoption of the report: Proposed by Maureen Norgate Seconded by Jackie Barham-Holt

200 CLUB DRAW:

1st Prize £49.80	No. 39	Pat Barrett (PML)
2nd Prize £33.20	No. 8	Michelle Carlin (Clockhouse)
3rd Prize £20.75	No. 1	Marie Houlding (Aveley)

BENEVOLENT FUND REPORT: Brenda Bowyer reported that:

- In October 2025 £9,000 was transferred to a Deposit Account, to which had been added £182.27 monthly interest giving a balance of £9182.27. The Current Account stands at £874.30.
- Brenda wished to thank the ladies who had entered the Benevolent Triples this year. The funds raised by the raffles amounted to £920.50. The fund is used to send plants, flowers and a hamper to ladies who had been ill or injured. M & S gift vouchers are given to the winners and the runners up in the Benevolent Triples, which is a good incentive to enter.

- Some confusion arose when "bereaved ladies" were added to the criteria for qualifying for a benevolent gift, as some thought that this had replaced the previous qualification. Brenda clarified that any of our affiliated ladies who fall ill, have operations or are bereaved of their partner qualify for a gift. Clubs can apply throughout the year for a gift to be made.
- Brenda asked the ladies to continue to support the competition and their fellow bowlers.

Adoption of the report: Proposed by Kim Wiggins Seconded by Phyllis Bridge

BOWLS ENGLAND REPORT: Marie Houlding reported that:

At the counties meeting on the 24th October 2026 a lot of information was given on the merger of Bowls England and the English Indoor Bowling Association. The main points were that more money from Sport England would be coming into bowls. There would be 8 area hubs spread across England with 3 full time staff employed in each hub. The new National Governing Body will be called England Bowls and would deal with clubs directly as the English Indoor Bowling Association currently do. This leaves the counties with just the running of their competitions.
The counties have been asked to vote next February, just on the Articles of Association. There is no information that has been agreed. The question was asked on how the annual fees would work – Indoor only, Outdoor only or Both together. The answer was, "We will work them out later." We were told that nothing would change for about two years. This means that the England Bowls can do whatever they like in future without having to ask. When this was explained at the Essex Bowling Association Board Meeting last month, the feeling was that Essex should vote against it.

Adoption of the report: Proposed by Jenny Hyland Seconded by Sue Harrington

PROPOSITION: Proposed by Wanstead Central B.C. and seconded by Clockhouse B.C. that, "A regulation design of Skorts in white or registered club/county colours be added to the County Dress Code as optional wear alongside skirts, shorts, full length trousers or cropped trousers. Jeans or tight fitting trousers may still NOT be worn."

Result of the voting: FOR 33 AGAINST 9 ABSTENSIONS 0

Proposition was CARRIED. The County Dress Code will be amended.

PRESENTATIONS: Thanks and presentations were made to the following Officers who have retired from their roles:
Bowls England Delegate Marie Houlding
C Area Secretary Pat Barrett
C Area Selector Sheila Brickel
Hon. Auditor Linda Drewe
B Area Selector Maria Nicholls had been thanked prior to the meeting.

President Dot Pope was then thanked and presented with her Past President's Badge. Dot again said how much she had enjoyed her year as President, meeting and making many friends and creating memories. £4,600 had been raised for her Charity, the Air Ambulance and she was looking forward to visiting one of their headquarters to meet the crew. Dot thanked everyone for making her year so special.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2027:

No nomination had been made prior to the meeting for President. As no offers came from the floor Janice Fortune proposed Dot Pope (Romford) to hold the office again for 2027. Dot said that she would be delighted to represent Essex again next year. Dot was duly appointed as President for 2027.
SVP, JVP – remain Vacant.
Hon. Secretary and Hon. Competition Secretary – Jill Polley. Prop. Cherry Richardson, Sec. Bobby Bruce.
Hon. Treasurer – Jenny Hyland. Prop. Dee Bates, Sec. Liz Wilson.
Hon. Ass. Sec/Match Sec. – Sue Harrington. Prop. Jeff Jones, Sec. Martin Cahill.
Hon. Ben. Sec. – Brenda Bowyer. Prop. Janice Soar, Sec. Jill Polley.
Bowls England Delegate – VACANT.
A Area Secretary – Janice Fortune. Prop. Dot Pope, Sec. Marie Houlding.
B Area Secretary – Brenda Bowyer. Prop. Kim Edwards, Sec. Rita Fabbri.
C Area Secretary – Karen Thompson. Prop. Pat Barrett, Sec. Jill Polley
D Area Secretary – Pauline Adams. Prop. Jan Brandis, Sec. Wendy Harvey.
A Area Selector – Jane Preston. Prop. Lynn Farrugia, Sec. Annie Barrett.
B Area Selector – VACANT.
C Area Selector – VACANT.
D Area Selector – Maureen Norgate. Prop. Sylvia Bloomfield. Sec. Jackie Barham-Holt.
Essex Bowling Association Board Members – Jill Polley, Jenny Hyland, Sue Harrington, Janice Fortune.
Pat Barrett has agreed to sit on the board until a Bowls England Delegate is appointed.
Hon. Auditor – VACANT.
Safeguarding Officer – Emma Chapman.
ECWBA Representative on the Essex Coaching Board – Rita Fabbri.

The above named officers were duly appointed.

ANY RELEVANT BUSINESS:

- President Dot will let us know her chosen Charity for 2027.
- County Day Trip – the date is booked for Monday 12th July 2027. Venue to be confirmed, but is likely to be somewhere in Norfolk. As soon as they are available the booking forms will be emailed to club secretaries and delegates. A copy will be published on the County website.
- Reminder that photographs of the County Winners are needed by Jill for the 2027 County handbook by the 1st December 2026. Please send good quality photos via email.
- The Essex Bowling Association AGM will be held on Saturday 5th December at 10.30am at the Falcon Bowling Club. I hope that the ladies will be well represented at this meeting.
- It has been agreed by the Executive that Royal blue bottoms will be worn with the new County Competition top for Johns Trophy, Walker Cup, Amy Rose and by the competitors at the National Championships held at Leamington. Jenny Hyland will hold a small stock of the tops, but the royal blue bottoms will be purchased by the players.
- Phyllis Bridge (Great Baddow) asked if ladies who had previously been long standing members of the ECWBA, but are now social members of their clubs, could be included to receive gifts from the Benevolent Fund. As these ladies no longer pay an affiliation fee to the County they cannot be eligible to apply for a Benevolent gift. Unfortunately there has to be a line drawn somewhere. With the circumstances of these ladies it could be a drain on resources. It was agreed that a gift from their club would be appropriate.

- Rebecca Smith (Clockhouse) asked if the contact telephone numbers for the competitors could be included in the County Handbook. With only one contact number given for team games, it wasn't always easy to make the arrangements for the next round of the competition. With the affiliation forms, which could give this information, having to be returned by 31st December 2026 and the Competition Entries not closing until the 28th February 2027, it could be difficult to obtain this information in time for the handbook changes to be sent to the printers. Jill will look into the feasibility of this and make the changes to the affiliation forms if necessary.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT: 3.25 pm

THANKS TO THE CHAIR:

Proposed by Kim Wiggins Seconded by Marie Houlding

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 7TH APRIL 2027 AT 2.00PM IN THE MILLENNIUM SUITE, GREAT BADDOW MILLENNIUM HALL.