



Welcome to Denby

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The Newsletter of Denby Bowls Club.

The bowling action may have finished for another year, but October and November have been busy!

The Club has made a major investment to improve the quality of the green, bringing in contractors from Larch Groundwork to scarify, solid tine, over-seed and top dress the surface. These processes are designed to remove “thatch” (dead organic material just below the surface) and allow moisture and air to get to the roots to promote the growth of healthy grass. Early results are encouraging, with green, healthy-looking grass now showing through the top dressing.

This represents the biggest investment in the green for some years but is not something we can afford on a regular basis. The Committee will be looking at how we can do some of this work ourselves in future, and putting together an on-going, rolling programme of work to gradually improve the playing surface over time. The work that has been done is not a silver bullet – we will still need to take measures to control the weeds and clover on the green that are all too prevalent. But, this is a good start and gives us a platform from which we can build a green we can be proud of.

In parallel with the work on the green, the path at the Bottle Brook end of the green has been lifted and re-laid on a bed of sand and cement. Two years ago, all of the paths were uneven and unsafe. This latest work means that all paths around the green are now safe, with no trip hazards, and can be open to members and visitors next season.

We had to cut back the hedge at the Bottle Brook end to give the contractors room to work in. This has exposed another border at that end of the green which is now being planted so, hopefully, we will have another floral display around the perimeter next season.



Grass is growing again after the shock of Autumn restoration work.



All paths are now open, hedge cut and border ready for planting.

New Club Sustainability Policy In Place

Our recently agreed Sustainability Policy begins: “*Denby Bowls Club is committed to the maintenance and preservation of its bowling and club facilities for future generations in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner.*” But what does this mean in practice? Here are three practical examples.

1. The biggest single consequence of our policy is our pledge to introduce sustainable operating procedures and practices to minimise the Club's overall impact on the environment, including **a moratorium on the use of chemicals and weedkillers other than on the bowling green surface.**

Here, for example, is what the Royal Horticultural Society has to say about weedkillers:

- **Weedkillers have a large carbon footprint** from their manufacture, packaging and transportation.
- **Surface and groundwater pollution** is caused by weedkiller runoff, accidental spillages and incorrect disposal. This poses a significant threat to aquatic wildlife.
- **Weedkillers can damage or kill garden plants** if the wrong product is used or if applied incorrectly.
- **There are concerns that weedkillers pose a risk to human health**, and research is ongoing into the long-term effects of exposure to these chemicals.
- **Weedkillers can harm or kill garden wildlife**, including invertebrates present on plants when they are treated, and those, like bees and other pollinators, that feed on treated plants. The loss of vegetation, flower resources and habitat cover through the use of weedkiller can also impact negatively on wildlife.

There is also the risk to domestic animals who may pick up harmful chemicals from areas that have recently been treated. There are, of course, several non-chemical methods of controlling weeds and we will use them instead, as well using non-chemical methods for cleaning paths, maintaining gullies and other areas around the green.

2. Another significant element of our policy is to endeavour to **re-use, recover or recycle materials where practicable.** For example, many bowlers bring their own refreshments to matches or other bowling sessions and often they include bottled water or other soft drinks in recyclable containers. Previously these have gone to landfill via the general waste bin in the shelter. From next season there will be a recycling bin as well as a bin for general waste.
3. **To prevent pollution, and minimise outputs of emissions to the atmosphere**, we encourage the use of car sharing. This might include relatively short journeys to social bowling sessions or home matches, but especially when away fixtures are being played.

From next season we plan to have printed copies of all our policies available in the shelter as well as on the website for those members who prefer to view them on-line.

Questions, questions and more questions.....

1. We will be contacting members in January to ask what teams they wish to be considered for. The teams that we run at present are:

Wednesday afternoon	-	Over 55's
Wednesday evening	-	Doubles Team
Thursday evening	-	Ladies
Saturday Afternoon	-	Saturday Singles

Members can elect to be considered for as many teams as they wish providing they are eligible. Captains will then select the team each week from the players available. Please respect the captain's decisions.

2. We are also considering entering a Tuesday evening team in the South Derbyshire League, which Wayne has kindly offered to organise. There is no more travelling involved with this than in the Belper League matches. This will also be included in the team preference exercise above so that we can gauge:
 - Whether there is enough interest in playing on Tuesday evenings;
 - What impact this would have on the other teams that we currently run.
3. Finally, we will be asking for your opinions on whether we should have a Club Awards scheme in 2025. Awards might include:
 - Player of the year
 - Best newcomer
 - Most Improved player

There may also be (as in 2024) a Club Captain's award for services above and beyond the call of duty.

Would awards be inspirational or would they cause friction and be a source of division within the Club? We will be asking Club members to decide.

Until then.....

