

Coronavirus Update 1 – Club Closure

The committee have been in discussions over the last two days regarding how we respond to the current difficult situation regarding coronavirus.

There has been a step change by the government in their advice. The measures announced on Monday included strong advice that everyone should be avoiding social contact for the foreseeable future – they are initially suggesting 12 weeks.

Whilst the committee will review the situation based upon any new advice, it has made the following decisions for the time being:

- The club is closed with immediate effect – this means you should not visit the club unless you have property there that you wish to collect (please do so by the end of next week). We will review the closure date regularly but initially we will remain closed until the end of May 2020;
- The following scheduled events are postponed:
 - Short mat finals night – Saturday 21 March 2020 (we hope that we will be in a position to reschedule this for the start of the winter 2020 short mat season);
 - Subscriptions night – Thursday 26 March 2020;
 - Curry night – Friday 3 April 2020;
 - Cleaning and green opening day – Saturday 4 April 2020;
 - Bingo and competitions draw night – Friday 1 May 2020;
- We will not be collecting annual subscriptions at this stage;
- We will not be taking entries for club competitions at this stage;
- We await advice from Bowls England – they have met this week and will be issuing a statement – we can all keep up to date with this by checking their website;
- We await advice from Worcestershire county, in particular regarding county competitions;

Of course there is still a lot for the committee to consider and over the next few weeks we will be doing just that. We want to keep everyone in the picture and initially we will concentrate on two areas. We will be taking a detailed look at the following:

Finances – Whilst the club is closed we will still have to meet significant expenditure. In particular we cannot allow our green to deteriorate as to bring it back to its current standard would incur significant expense. Therefore we will need to continue to use Avonmore at a cost of circa £8000 per annum. There are other costs that we need to cover including repayment on the kitchen, insurances and utilities whether we are bowling or not. We will be carrying out a detailed financial forecast to establish our projected position if we found ourselves in a position where we could not bowl. We will advise all members of the implications of this exercise.

Bowling – Our fixtures are scheduled to commence in April - This will clearly not be possible. We will be working closely with other clubs, league organisers and county officials to put in place contingency arrangements should we be able to re-commence bowling after the 12 week 'moratorium' or at some time after that date. There are possibilities – for example the Redditch Triples league and Interberga league replicate the first half of the season fixtures in the second half. The second half of the season commences on 6 July and 30 June respectively so that might be a possibility. Bowls England have today announced there will be no national championships this season – we expect Worcestershire county to follow suit. In longer time we will consider the possibility of individuals going down to the club and rolling up provided they do not break the social contact advice....but that isn't for now – we need to see how advice develops.

In addition it is vital that we all support each other – This is an extremely difficult time for all of us particularly for those who live alone. We all have many friends at the club so although you aren't bowling, do stay in touch with each other and make sure everyone is OK.

I think that is about it for the time being but we will keep in touch with everybody regularly.