

Hexham Bowling Club

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023

In presenting my annual report to the members of this club I look back on a rather eventful 22-23 year for your club which has resulted in an Operating Profit of \$728,183 compared to last year's profit of \$335,317. This year we also achieved a NET Profit (After Depreciation) of \$63,327 compared to last year's NET loss of (\$345,184) which sees us in a financial position where we see more than \$1.5 million in our bank accounts – a considerable amount of cash on hand in anyone's view. This solid financial position allows us to undertake our planned alfresco extension without taking out any loans. Whilst we have critics who quote a depreciation figure way below in our Annual Statement, we should all be aware that the depreciation figure is only on paper and does not affect our bottom line in reality. This position must be the envy of neighbouring opposition clubs but is the result of careful financial management over the past few years. It is also a year which has seen our membership increase to the 9000 mark which is also ensuring that we remain one of the largest bowling clubs in our region.

We have had the frustrations of waiting for the work to commence on the planned extension that is the result of the contractors desperately trying to clear a backlog of work which eventuated from acute labour shortages from COVID days. Aspects of the planned extensions that members of our staff have been able to undertake have been completed such as the relocation of our bowls office. We also see the new fencing around our greens area in readiness for the outdoor area. We have also endured the frustrations of awaiting the completion of the Wastewater Treatment plant that seems to be forever ongoing – but as we have said before is within sight of completion whilst I cannot put a date to that.

Many members would have heard in news items through the media of the impending introduction of a cashless gaming card that could spell the death of licenced clubs throughout NSW as we know them. The previous government in NSW had this as a policy but with the change in government there will be a new policy regarding trials etc of the cards which will bring about a little breathing . space for clubs. With this in mind we have to move our club away from a reliance on gaming dollars to keep our business flourishing. This is the reason – or one of the reasons - why we are looking to introduce our outdoor area which will include a dining facility as well as increased seating capacity which is something that we desperately require especially on Friday and Sunday raffle and membership draw evenings.

Our upstairs auditorium continues to be a popular venue for many events. The wedding reception aspect of our venue continues to attract couples seeking comfortable and affordable accommodation for their big day. Chef Scott and our events co-ordinator Barbara are to be congratulated on the quality of their work in this aspect of our club's offerings to members and the public.

On the bowls front we see a growth in bowling memberships which is most pleasing. Being able to field three teams in the district pennants competition bucked the trend across our region of falling numbers whilst we grew. Whilst not achieving any winning status all teams gave strong accounts of themselves in true Hexham fashion. We hosted the NSW Arm Bowlers Singles championships this year and have been invited to do so again in 2024. Our Triples Challenge Tournament was washed out in '23 but is scheduled to run again later this year.

I truly believe that this club will continue to grow and flourish especially when we are able to complete our extensions and the WWT plant. The realisation of both these projects will greatly enhance our earning capacity and allow your Board and Management to focus on other pressing issues such as our Harrington cottages and property.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank our staff who I believe to be an outstanding team placing Hexham BC head and shoulders above the staff of comparable venues in our region. I believe also that the leadership of our General Manager, Jennie, is the catalyst for our great staff and the service provided by them. I include the staff of the amazing Riverside Bistro with Ricky and Lily in my gratitude.

To my fellow directors I say a big thank you for your diligence and input throughout the year and sincerely trust that 2024 will be bigger and better than ever. Les Carter - Chairman