

In September 1987, Ayton resident, Mrs E. M. Roper led a group of villagers, together with representatives from Sport England and Hambleton DC on a tour of the village to look at possible sites for a bowling green. None were found, but in 1994 June Imeson saw the opportunity to secure suitable land in a negotiation between Ideal Homes and the Friends School during the planning of Leven Court.

In 1994, having secured the land, June Imeson and David Goodwin from Hambleton District Council set up a series of public meetings to explore creating a Bowling Club for the village, with the aim of it being for Ayton residents who might be new to bowling, rather than for existing bowlers from far afield.

In 1995 a formally constitute club was established with

- Chairman: David Wilson
- Secretary: Janet Smith
- Treasurer: Ken Stevens
- Committee members: Ken Walton  
Margaret Stevens  
Margaret Hopper

One of the first actions of the Club was to install June Imeson as President.

Working in partnership with Hambleton DC, the Bowling Club established designs and a specification for a green and a pavilion. At this point four issues became apparent:

1. Topography and drainage of the land would make things very difficult.
2. There was a need to purchase an additional two-metre-wide strip of land on three sides of the green, from the Friends School.
3. An electricity pylon would need moving.
4. The estimated cost of development would be in the region of £200,000.

The first two practical issues were resolved with the help of Robert Campbell and John Roberts from the Friends School, and with what proved to be excellent advice from a bowling green company in York called Innturf. Hambleton DC contributed some £160,000 which helped persuade Sport England to grant aid a further £38,000.

In 1995 June Imeson cut the first piece of turf, and then Moody and Sons, building contractors, together with Innturf began construction of the pavilion and green respectively.



Shall I start here?

by Councillor John Dennis, Chairman of Hambleton District Council. The first game of bowls was played between a President's team and a Chairman's team. This date, since the start, has been known as Presidents Day, at which 2 teams, the Presidents team and the Chairman's team play

Meanwhile, the Club began fundraising for equipment, and visited other bowling greens to establish how they would operate the new facility. Significantly, Ken Walton agreed to go on training courses to prepare himself to become the Club's first green-keeper.

G.A.B.C. took charge of the green on 1st. June 1996. On the last Sunday in July 1996, the new facilities were opened



How much more to do?



a fun bowl for the Presidents Challenge Cup. Ten years on, and a dinner was held at Middlesbrough Football Club's Riverside Stadium, at which David Goodwin was the guest of honour, to mark a highly successful ten years of operation.

The bowling season starts in late April and lasts until early September. The Club is a member of several leagues , there

are matches every week day, sometimes two, this gives the members good opportunities to play competitive matches. There are also internal knockout competitions, which run throughout the season, and one day competitions. There is a Club Night at which members who do not wish to play competitive league matches can come and enjoy an evening of bowls. This also is a good time for new and inexperienced members to learn how to play.



Dress code: Bowls shoes must be worn on the green. All league and competitive matches are played in grey and white. When members are not playing in matches, the rule is smart casual, no shorts or leggings.

During the season the green is cut three times a week, by a team of volunteers who carry out any work required on or around the green, supervised by the green keepers.

**Committee for 2011**

- |                   |                        |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| President         | Ray Hopper             |
| Vice President    | Margaret Stevens       |
| Chairman          | Margaret Stevens       |
| Vice Chairman     | Janet Smith            |
| Secretary         | Gordon Hetherington    |
| Treasurer         | Mike Myers             |
| Fixture Secretary | Ray Hopper             |
| Greenkeepers      | Ken Walton, Peter Hart |

(note: Mrs E. M. Roper is now deceased, but did enjoy quite a few games of bowls)



**Robert Campbell receiving the peppercorn rent which in fact was an acorn!**