**Comments from Will Matthews, Chair, Bowls Surrey – April 2025**

It’s very nice to connect with the Area representatives – I hope, like me, you’re looking forward to the 2025 season.

I’ve been bowling in Surrey now for around 15 years – I started playing at the age of 10 in Gloucestershire (where I was the youngest captain at club and county representative level, as well as representing them in Middleton Cup before moving to Surrey due to work). I’ve played at Camberley outdoors and indoors, Wey Valley indoors, and currently play for Woodbridge Hill where I also fulfil the chair responsibilities.

Having bowled for 43 years and been part of other committees and working groups in my time – I am very keen to give back to the sport that I love the most.

I am keen and want the way the county is run (in all aspects) to be as transparent as possible without being noisy or a distraction during the season. The memberships of all 116 clubs should feel that the county is run responsibly, and the board is in control across the finances, governance, representation with Bowls England and other related responsibilities.

County success isn’t just about bowls results (although it’s a very important element!), it’s about being a responsible and forward-thinking county, both in the eyes of member clubs, but also in our influence of Bowls England.

As you are aware, and as John will reinforce in the area meetings, we are in need of support in some key roles – at the moment John (in particular) is doing a lot of the heavy lifting for the county and needs some help. Please do encourage your clubs to think about supporting the board and the management committees.

As I said, I am keen for a more transparent approach to running the county, but we need to deal with any concerns appropriately by raising directly with a board member. Recently there has been a few very public discussions on social media that haven’t helped so really keen to get that under control

I would like to have a more active presence in what’s happening across the county, working with the board, management committee and area representatives to share success and benefit from a wider awareness. Success is a habit and celebrating all our progress across the county is key.

Good news is important and something that we need to celebrate. We would like to hear all good news so Charlotte and the board and management team - particularly the presidents - can support and share.

So I am here to support and serve the county as appropriate, and very happy to have a discussion with anyone – club, individual or area – that has an idea, point of view or recommendation that will help continue Bowls Surrey to grow and develop.

**Thank you!**

**Will Matthews**

**Bowls Surrey Chair**