Green Side Up

Ringwood Bowling Club | Nov 2026

As most will know by now that I am retiring from full time greenkeeping, although I will still be undertaking some of the more specialised jobs with some of my more weird and wonderful pieces of kit.

I will be leaving Ringwood Bowling Club's greenkeeper at the end of November, and “retiring” for the fourth and last time. I always said, somewhat tongue in cheek, that I would know when the time was right to retire, and I was correct and to be fair I am now looking forward to passing on that responsibility to my successor. I was surprised and honored to be made a Life Member, so a huge thank you to you all.

It is only natural that at this time, I will look back over my whole bowls greenkeeping career. I sort of fell into bowls greenkeeping….. I started up a small company to try to emulate / compete with Green Thumb, so Lawns in Need started. I soon realised that I was not happy with what I describe as “splash and dash” lawn care. I wanted to dramatically improve lawns so quite quickly undertook more specialised complete lawncare. I also found out, very quickly, that I was judged on results, and not what may happen in the future! So I tried, tested and honed my skills on many lawns and found out what worked immediately and what did not!

I had a particularly difficult heavily shaded, very wet garden in Highcliffe and whilst I was having a cup of coffee with the householder, he asked me if I would like to look after his bowling club's greens, just like that completely “out of the blue”! I said no, that I still had a family reliant and I knew very little about fine turf management. Peter was very persistent over the next few weeks and eventually I succumbed and agreed to meet him at Southbourne BC. I was immediately shocked how poor the greens were, no grass on the ends, high levels of thatch and heavy from a bowling point of view. I had never looked at a bowling green before and always believed the myth that a bowling green was pristine, immaculate and had this aura of perfection, well that was completely debunked. I agreed to do a season and made, what many members thought were outrageous, boastful predictions! So to cut a long story short I was correct in my predictions although they did take longer to come to fruition than I would have liked., and eventually I landed up at RBC.

I had not been to the green at RBC since I was a small lad in the early sixties and went with my Dad, Jack Wright to watch the cricket on Carvers field. Dad was busy playing cricket as Captain, so when I wanted a drink I went through the small gate around the bowling green to find my grandfather Harry Wright and have a glass of orange squash!

By the time I took over as greenkeeper I had amassed the knowledge and specialised machinery and was in a position to rapidly improve the green at RBC. And yes I became obsessed in trying to make it one of the best in the area.

Now time to move on into the next and almost certainly, the final chapter in my life. That sounds horrifically final, but I thought I would leave you with a few snaps I took over the years.









