

# CLUB CHAMPIONS MAGAZINE

## ILKLEY LAWN TENNIS & SQUASH CLUB

Developing  
future stars

## GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY GRANTS

Access Support  
for your Club



### Kevin Sinfield CBE: A Fundraising Journey

Club Insure's relationship with our ambassador, friend and superhero, Kevin Sinfield



### Inside The Leeds Irish Centre

Famous faces and  
hidden histories





# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



## Grassroots sports and sports clubs are the future.

Clubs exist to promote physical health, to build up communities, to benefit social interaction, and to encourage the younger generation to take part in sporting activities. Sport is vital to maintaining a healthy lifestyle, as well as assisting social contact and combatting loneliness. Everyone needs activities they enjoy and look forward to doing, which in itself is a health benefit mentally and physically. Clubs house these sports and social activities, they are essential hubs for the community.

I used to play a lot of sport in my prime which included football, tennis, rugby and golf. Injuries and age have caused me to vacate from playing. Though I am still able to enjoy golf as and when I can, it's the social interactions I treasure and what keeps me playing. Winter can be a battle to get out and play for both me and many other members, which is why celebrating sports and social clubs is so important – so they can be supported all year round.

The success and continuation of local sports and social clubs is founded on the hard work of volunteers. Every person our team spoke to in the creation of this magazine each showed their passion and love for the organization they were a part of. From professionals to committee members, forward-thinkers to traditionalists, clubs are founded on the efforts and commitment of local individuals.

The clubs highlighted here in this magazine represent a wide range of the UK's sports and societies, and are only a cherry-picked few of the many brilliant organisations Club Insure supports around the country. The Club Champions campaign celebrates the influential individuals that manage these clubs – and I sincerely hope that you, reader, enjoy learning about the secret lives that exist within the walls of these fantastic clubs.

**Adam Lister, Editor of Club Champions Magazine**





# INTRODUCING CLUB CHAMPIONS

by Club Insure



## What does it mean to be a Club Champion?

Club champions are volunteers, general managers, playing professionals, coaches or community welfare officers – People who have given a large part of their lives to the benefit of sports and social clubs, and members who are respected in their local community for their hard work and dedication.

We also recognise the clubs who are making a significant difference through their diverse services and outreach programmes. We look at the clubs championing their sports within their community, but also regionally, nationally, and in some cases, internationally. A Club Champion is:

- Someone who gives their time and effort to the club.
- Someone who helps the club provide a service to the community.
- Someone who offers their experience and talent to the benefit of the club.
- Someone who helps manage the club and shapes the future of the club.
- Someone who is a proud advocate for the club and its services.

It cannot be understated, clubs are disappearing. Sports and social clubs are among the top declining industries, with many club owners now forced to decide between closure, merger or selling up to a conglomerate. Rising costs and reduced incomes have seen club finances deplete. Their loss warns of social isolation and forgotten traditions.

Volunteers are key to the survival of clubs. As are dedicated professionals who use their passion, talent and experience to drive the club toward a brighter future. These people should be seen as champions, giving their time and effort to their dedicated club as well as advocating on behalf of the club's success.

At Club Insure, we interact with these champions every day. We firmly believe their achievements needed to be documented and celebrated. Sports clubs and social clubs hold a whole host of secret success stories which, when uncovered, demonstrate the true value of clubs to our communities.



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# USING A BROKER: START TO FINISH

Contacting a broker is the most effective way to arrange your Club's insurance. We talk to expert Scheme Manager Mark Dearden, who runs us through the whole process from start to finish.

Mark explains why any Club Manager, Secretary or Treasurer should be utilising the service of a broker. He walks us through everything to expect from a visitation, and outlines the costly risks of being underprepared.

## Mark Dearden:

"There are thousands of Clubs out there. Ideally the process of arranging a club's insurance requirements should commence at least three months before renewal. What time of year a club's renewal is due is not an issue, but from my experience, the best outcome is always to use a broker."

"In recent times a number of direct 'online' brokers have launched. The first thing clubs need to be aware of is that the online offerings can not offer any advice on the suitability of their product. It's a 'one size fits all', that very often doesn't fit!



"The process of utilising a broker first starts with a visitation from one of our representatives. At Club Insure we have ten representatives spread all over the country. Each are experts in the social and sports club industry and fully understand the specific risks that require cover.

"The reason for a visitation is to see first-hand the current arrangements that your club has in place. We would perform a brief walk around of the premises; nothing too in depth; in order to make sure the fundamentals are right. The fundamentals include security, checking cameras and alarms are in good working order, details of the machinery, general maintenance of the club and its properties – in fact, we can get a good feel for a club more or less after one visit."

"We provide a bespoke service at Club Insure and aim to build a relationship with our clients. This is because we are in it for the long-term, looking to work with clubs to aid ongoing improvements."

"We look to work with clubs who have laid down five-year plans. This is so we can meet their expectations and adapt the policy where necessary. We also determine whether the sums insured are adequate. At Club Insure, our cover is fully comprehensive but also flexible as to cater for the individual needs of the club."

"It is preferable that a club has someone living on site, whether this is a steward or a site manager – this tends to demonstrate clubs are eager to reduce risks and are aware of what their members require of them. We like to see a club with an active membership, playing and social."

"Our expertise at Club Insure lends to both privately-owned and membership-owned clubs. All clubs should have an asset register or an inventory as to what they own. That's a huge tool, not only for the broker and the insurer, but also for the club management, helping to gauge what they own and what's being utilised. If there is a major catastrophe, having an up to date asset register available will be essential."



"On visitation we take photos of the risks so that we can present evidence to underwriters. We know what to look out for because we see clubs day in day out, building on our degree of knowledge."

"After a visitation the next step is to complete a risk presentation. We as Brokers would then contact our scheme underwriters to discuss terms, terms can then be presented back to the client. The broker recommends a selection of cover types and a sums insured, and Club Insure aims to cover all the activities of the club."



“  
**We know what to look out for because we see clubs day in day out, always building on our knowledge.**  
”



“The cover types include Directors’ and Officers’ insurance, Employers’ liability, Public Liability, Buildings and Contents Insurance, and Grounds Cover. Business Interruption Insurance is also an important cover type, as is Cyber Cover, Legal Expenses Insurance and Personal Accident Cover that has been specifically tailored to sports and social clubs.”

“We are always asked about what clubs can do to reduce their insurance premiums and policy rates. Demonstrating you have a well-managed, well-maintained and well-run club supported by its members will definitely help build confidence with insurers. Honestly, the best option is to use a broker. The role of a broker is to search the market to get the best cover at a fair price for the client.”

“It’s always best to be open, to have open dialogue, that way trust can be developed between club managers and their insurance broker. In the event of a claim, the correct information legally needs to be relayed to the underwriter, therefore truth and accuracy is paramount. Once the cover is agreed, we as a broker will be able to deal with all claims without too much of the club’s involvement. Club Insure only use A-rated insurers, and operates on an open relationship with all our clients.”



“Please contact me at Club Insure if you are within club management and have any questions. Personally, clubs are near and dear to my heart. I understand their importance to society and communities, as do my colleagues. At Club Insure I’m proud to say we do our best to protect clubs, and want to assist in their growth going forwards.”



#### **A bit about Mark Dearden:**

Mark is a Schemes Manager at Club Insure. He has built a career over 35 years in insurance and specialises in insurance for sports clubs.

Mark was better known as a cricketer in the Airedale & Wharfedale Senior Cricket League, retiring in 2019. Now no longer playing cricket, golf is his go-to sport, regularly playing with his brother and local friends. His dedicated club is Baildon Golf Club, but he admits to being a fair-weather golfer. Mark’s been playing golf for well over 40 years and still hasn’t figured out how to fix his slice.

# The next generation of commercial flood insurance is here

Rapid payout insurance is changing the way businesses and social clubs recover from flooding

**Regardless of your flood history, FloodFlash is right for you.**

The FloodFlash sensor will measure flood depth at your property, enabling us to start working on your claim as soon as your policy triggers.

This means a faster response and a quicker payout, helping you recover and get back to business.

“  
**Without question  
the best flood claim  
experience I’ve ever  
had by some distance.**  
”



**World Record Payout**

# THE QUICKEST PAYOUT ON A CLAIM EVER

FloodFlash, the world's first mass market parametric insurer, utilised by the insurance brokers Club Insure, have broken the record for fastest payment of a property flood claim.

On 22nd November 2022, at 9.40am, the sensor at the Stamford property management client detected that their chosen trigger depth of 1m had been met. By 1.30pm, FloodFlash had paid the client in full.

That's 3 hours and 50 minutes between flood water reaching the client's trigger depth and the payout being in their bank account.

This is the quickest a property claim has been paid out, breaking the previous record, also held by FloodFlash, from February 2022.

## How are claims paid out?

FloodFlash has clients install an internet connected sensor at their property. The technology should work on any property, regardless of their flood risk or history. This sensor assists policies, and is the key to FloodFlash's record-breaking success.



The sensor measures flood depths, sending readings to FloodFlash HQ. Those readings provide the basis for claims processing and reduces the time and costs to administer claims dramatically.

Sometimes additional checks need to be made, such as installation issues and damage caused, however FloodFlash pay most claims within 48 hours.

## Why are fast claims important?

After catastrophic flooding to their premises, many small businesses never reopen again. Having a claim paid fast will improve the likelihood of reopening.

Receiving a fast payout benefits businesses by limiting business interruption, allowing businesses to take action, such as repairs and clean up, and then get back to day to day operations.

Damp and mould need to be addressed after a flood, and a quick pay out is essential to prevent further damage being inflicted to the property after the incident.

If claim payments take too long, it can severely affect a business's cash flow. If claim payments are paid quickly, then businesses can overcome the costs of a flood, not letting spend affect business procedures. This also is advantageous in the event of needing to find alternative premises, and paying wages.

Fast claims can also assist against the psychological impact of having your business flooded. Resolving claims quickly reduces the insecurity around finances to a much shorter time.

## How can businesses receive the best flood insurance?

Club Insure have a partnership and relationship with FloodFlash. Contacting Club Insure is the best way to ensure you have comprehensive flood insurance. At Club Insure, clubs receive tailored insurance solution, and ensure all their risks are covered.



80% of the world's catastrophic flood losses aren't insured. That's \$58bn of uncovered damage, and it's getting bigger each year because of climate change and urbanization. Utilising new technologies, such as with FloodFlash, will improve protection and also the information available to insurers. More information ultimately means a faster and better claims procedure.

Contact Club Insure to improve your insurance offering, and discuss the potential of FloodFlash with your handler.



The Club Champions of

# ILKLEY LAWN TENNIS AND SQUASH CLUB



At Club Insure we had the huge pleasure of visiting Ilkley Lawn Tennis and Squash Club. The club host the Lexus Ilkley Trophy, the largest tennis tournament in the North of England. Each year, the world-renowned tournament features both the ATP Challenger and ITF women's events, and is considered one of the highlights of the summer grass court season.

We visited on the precipice of the tournament, and met Chris Harrison, General Manager, who guided us round the grounds and the clubhouse. Inside, there have also been recent improvements and refurbishments at the club, including a new gym and fitness studio, with each improvement adding to the experience of the members.

We were invited to a tour around Ilkley Lawn Tennis and Squash Club. We wanted to learn more about the range of services provided by the club as well as witness the organisation that goes into running a large event. We also asked Chris more about the champions behind the success of the club, and how these individuals have helped shaped the club's future.



Chris said: "Ilkley hosts the LEXUS Ilkley trophy every year, which is a world-class tennis tournament, and one of the UK's largest single sporting events. It is the most northern professional tennis tournament, the only one in the north of England, and gets around 2,500 paying guests per day, or 20,000 guests across the week."



"For the tournament we have built a number of temporary structures, adding more year on year since 2015, as the tournaments grows. The main stand has a seating capacity of 1700, and court one with a capacity of 1000."

"At the club, we have two groundskeepers and a facilities manager who tend to the grass courts all year round. They are our champions and we couldn't put on such an event without our groundskeeping team. The high standard is maintained with support from the All England Club, Wimbledon, and are in line with the STRI's hardness stipulation and grading."

"In the near future, because of the safety concerns of expanding centre court's viewing area, we will be looking to build a purpose-built stadium and relocate centre court. All the temporary structures



are built in three weeks and then taken down the week after the tournament. In those three weeks while they are available to use, we hire out the hospitality function tent. We have NHS Airedale booked in for a 300-person dinner, Leeds Art fund are also booked in, and then after that we have a meet and greet day with former British number one, Andrew Castle."

"Ilkley has had a great year and a fantastic past few months, particularly because of the Lexus Tournament and the influence of Ilkley Lawn Tennis and Squash Club. We had over 100% growth on ticket revenue from the previous year, indicating the event was a real success."



"The tournament brings so much to the wider community. I had a discussion with the owner of Pranzo, a nearby restaurant. They commented on how they weren't expecting so many players, coaches and fans to dine at their restaurant all week, it provided a huge boost and now they want to arrange pop-ups with us. For hotels, the week of the tournament alone brings 1,950 nights worth of accommodation, that's hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of local hotel revenue."

"We can also see success through our successful outreach programme during the tournament. 2,000 children from different schools and communities attended Ilkley and had a session with our coaches. 40% were from IMD 1-3 postcodes which is really important to us and for the sport of tennis as a whole. This initiative was led by Gavin Sutcliffe, our Head of Rackets and Development."

**Turn to page 36 to read more from Gavin Sutcliffe.**



“  
To run a successful sports club business, you need a champion in each area.  
”

**I asked Chris about his role and the challenges as General Manager of a prestigious tennis club.**

Chris said: “The challenges of my role include balancing the committees within the club. Historically, we’re a member’s club; we are committee led, and I’ve got to weigh up what’s good for member’s today versus what’s good for the club in the long run. Recently we’ve benefited from the closure of another site, but that’s because our offer is good and competitive. We are a 140-year-old club and people trust us as a business. It’s about building trust with the members and in return you gain their commitment.



My role is about growing the club and growing the sport. Tennis has got its struggles – for example it’s difficult to play and requires a few lessons to even perform a short rally. It’s a game that isn’t accessible if you’re not at an adequate level. But I actually think its growth can come from the support of the other racket sports, such as padel and pickleball.

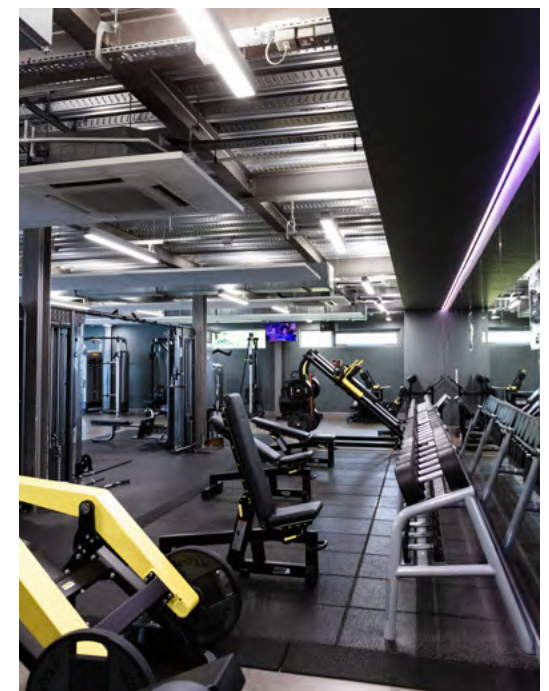
**I asked Chris about the individuals behind the success of Ilkley Lawn Tennis and Squash Club**

Chris said: “In each area of our business, we have a champion. Gavin is a champion, heading up all of rackets and development. Kyle Brasington is a champion – he was former 800th in the world as a tennis pro, and is now our head coach.”

“I could include a 9-year-old player, Isabelle; she’s a very promising young player who is currently the best in her age group.”



“Marcus Whitehead is a champion of the club; he leads the gym side of our business offering. He organises contractors for the Pilates and other independent instructors. Marcus leads our team of Personal Trainers, servicing our 1,900 gym members.”



“Two more club champions include Zoe Judkowski who does our marketing, and Nicola Bayne who looks after the admin and back-of-house management.”

“To run a successful sports club business, you need a champion in each area, and if ever anyone stepped away, it would certainly be felt by myself and the club.”



The Club Champions of

# THE LEEDS IRISH CENTRE



The Leeds Irish Centre is a well established social club on York Road. Distinctive and iconic, one merely has to scratch the surface to discover this Leeds landmark is bursting at the seams with a deep history and culture. Once an internationally recognised music venue and indispensable Irish travel agency, the Irish Centre now serves as an archive for a wealthy heritage in East Leeds. The club currently has a membership north of 1,150 people; indeed, you'd be hard pressed to find an individual in Leeds who hasn't visited the club for a wedding, birthday party, anniversary or society meeting.

Club Insure took a tour of the Leeds Irish Centre with Secretary Rena Cosgrove and Manager Tommy McLoughlin MBE. Our guides discussed the history and services of the centre, and we asked them about their vision for the direction of the club.





It's fair to say, upon our entrance to The Leeds Irish Centre, Tommy pulled no punches:

"Here's where Noel and Liam Gallagher showered," he'd say casually – "This is where Jools Holland stood on stage." – "Here's the room where the first televised Crucible of Darts was held." – "This is when honorary member Jack Charlton visited." – "That's a picture of Gabby Logan being made Leeds' Rose of Tralee here in 1991."

The tales and name-drops were endless. We were given exclusive access to club's secret and historic rooms, as well as a detailed description of every framed piece of memorabilia. "Leeds Irish Centre is now firmly entrenched in the city's history and culture, having opened its doors to people of all religions and backgrounds. I am proud to have been a part of it," stated Club Manager, Tommy.



#### For the readers benefit, we've condensed the tour into a bitesize history lesson:

The Leeds Irish centre was the first purpose built Irish centre in England. It's a special social community club connected by country, culture, religion and heritage. Indeed, Leeds has historically always been a popular home for Irish migrants, with 80% of mid-19th century Irish migrants to England making Cross Green their home. Mines, mills, railways, canals, ports, factories, and then later, NHS hospitals, schools, motorways, power stations – this is the legacy of the Irish working class.

Much of the vast history of Irish migration and life in Yorkshire is recorded in the Leeds Irish Centre's archive. Here they host Irish literature, memorabilia, photographs, drawings, war records, census records, maps, and numerous extractions from Irish-born citizens – each of which has been collected and preserved. The archive has been added to throughout the club's lifespan, which stretches back to its opening day on 23rd January 1970. The archive is now used by researchers and schoolteachers, with their collection used for displays at events across the city and country.



Perhaps what the Leeds Irish Centre is most famous for is its concert nights as a local music venue. Many a Leeds local will tell you that they were there the night Oasis played at the Irish Centre – 10th August 1994. Famous faces were mixed in with Irish-born national stars, curating a cultured and exciting setlist week to week. Nathan Carter, Ocean Colour Scene, Jools Holland, DJ Chris Moyles, The Beautiful South, Curtis Mayfield and many, many more.

**One story goes: John Cooper Clarke recited his poem 'Evidently Chickentown' which largely utilises the f-word, and one of the senior committee members rushed out to the reception and said "We can't have language like that on stage, it's where the priest has done mass!"**



their time and still to this day, the club's leadership team have pushed charity work and initiatives. It's estimated that the centre has raised £5 million for charity since its formation. Initiatives such as school lunch boxes, fundraiser walks, community housing for the elderly, and The Tuesday Lunch Club charity raffle have been commonplace at the club for decades – and still are to this day, alongside recent initiatives including aid sent to Ukraine and NHS fundraisers.

#### I ask Rena and Tommy about their recent refurbishment and the positivity surrounding the club:

Indeed, up-and-coming and world-famous acts have both performed on the Leeds Irish Centre's stage. Tommy and Christy (Power) have promoted countless artists in their 45-year tenure and became widely regarded as very good talent-spotters. Sellout nights were a common occurrence in the 90s, with long queues stretching beyond the main entrance car park.

Though music talent was a big part of the club's appeal, the management never lost sight of the true purpose of the Irish Centre – as an outlet and beacon for the local community. Throughout

"We've had a very good year," said Rena, "We're lucky to have fantastic management. They are hardworking and honest, and they employ their staff. It's a fantastic advantage we have."

"We saw more popular clubs than ours, such as the local working men's clubs, being forced to close because of the pandemic and recent economic struggles. We have people come from all over, from the likes of Manchester and such, because they've lost their club. Modern Irish centres are now too small for the services they hope to provide."





Tommy explained how the club has diversified: "This past year, we've been using more tribute bands; we've found they're excellent at bringing in new people who may not have visited our Irish Centre before. Also, we have started putting on shows at Sunday afternoon, serving up carveries and dancing, and we've moved the finish forward to 5 o'clock. This has meant older people are now more interested in coming, generally they are not keen on a late night, but also site-workers can now have an early night after a drink."



"We try to take each day as it comes. The influx of Irish migrants has slowed. The majority of what we've seen from our members, is that their young families have started to move away, perhaps to

the outer reaches of Yorkshire, for better housing and better schools. The Irish always want to better themselves. We are losing the local community, but you can't blame them. Instead it's better to focus on how we can attract new members and visitors."

#### **What can social clubs and working men's club learn from the Leeds Irish Centre?**

Tommy: "You've got to move with the times, and don't be afraid."

Rena: "The management see this not as a place to work, not just a weekly wage, but as satisfaction – satisfaction which they gain through the success of the club. For many of us, this club is our life's work."

And as Irish centres, social clubs and community hubs are closing down due to reduced financial support and profits, it's all the more important that centres such as The Leeds Irish Centre survives. It's rich heritage only exists because of the generosity of local members and the dedicated efforts of its management team. The club's champions will hope to preserve the centre well beyond its upcoming 55th anniversary.

“  
**The Leeds Irish Centre is one of the nation's most iconic and successful community clubs.**  
”



# 5 WAYS TO INCREASE PROFITS AT YOUR SOCIAL CLUB



## 1. Increase what's happening at your social club

Run events that you never used to do, such as quiz nights, special events and coffee mornings, and member's dinners.

A good idea is to have themed food nights. This could be with pizzas, curries or any sort of cultured food choices. Put on events and entertainers for society's or groups to come visit. Tribute bands are fantastic, as are small indie artists. Offer your venue to grassroots music and performers.

## 2. Rent your function room

A great function room is such an essential asset for a club. Consider renting it out for weekend or weekday events to help boost your revenue. Publicise it to the local community, through word-of-mouth, flyers, posters, letter box marketing, social media and websites. Your event space could be a perfect affordable alternative for weddings, wakes, parties, and group activities.

**How does this help build membership?** - A social club's core membership is the most important aspect of a club, for both income and longevity, so advertise your function room rental to your members. Also try to get to know your visitors, help the bar staff learn their names, and make a special effort to appease their wants and needs. Build up the membership by asking them to pass on the good news of the club by word-of-mouth. Tell them of upcoming events and allow them to invite guests.





### 3. Take advantage of your outdoor space

If you have outdoor space, make sure it is utilised. Do not keep your garden space a secret – if you have it, make sure it is advertised at the front of the clubhouse. Beer gardens are very desirable, especially during good weather, and a pleasant outdoor space will attract custom.

Ensure you have your planning permission in place and health and safety and risk assessments completed to allow for outdoor service.

If you regularly have live music inside on a Saturday evening, consider occasionally having it on a Sunday lunchtime in the garden.

**What are the benefits of serving cocktails?** – A cocktail offering is excellent for providing a premium drink offering to those who don't prefer beer, lager or ale. Cocktails are easy to provide, with good quality pre-made canned versions or you can easily pre-mix some cocktails like Negronis in advance.

### 4. Improve your bar snacks and wine collection

Improve on the crisps and nuts with an offering such as olives and meze, or ciabatta and humous. Elevate your offering in order to delight your regulars and impress newcomers

Perhaps once a week, suggest an offer of free food to anyone who attends. When cooked in bulk, many foods are relatively inexpensive, and will be worth the increased drink sales. These could be pork pies, mini cocktail sausages, bread and dip, salsa, or many other options.

Have a selection of wine to offer your distinguished guests. Wine tastings are excellent for profits and are very fun for guests. Your wine collection does not need to be extensive – often a small menu with more detail is more impressive.

**What about Non-Alcoholic Options?** – Stock up on non-alcohol alternatives including diet cokes, blue beers, virgin cocktails and juices. Many responsible drinkers need an option to enjoy their visit without feeling left out or unsociable. Kombucha cans, herbaceous spirits, seltzers and complex mocktails are very popular and are all non-alcoholic.

### 5. Encourage return visits

Clubs are often busiest in November and December. Why not give everyone who visits during these months a voucher for a half price drink in January and February to encourage them to keep visiting the club during the quieter months.

Consider offering 10% off drinks for the evening. Make this a recurring event on a particular night. Offer a certain food with each drink bought, or visa versa. It could be a free packets of crisps to share between two when they buy drinks. And remember, if you are holding beer prices, which means to reduce or to not increase the price of beer, to the benefit of your members, then tell people – many social clubs are cheaper than local pubs, and offering a drinks tab for a private event is a great option.



Running events, festivals and fairs at your club is the best way to fundraise and increase revenue. Whereas offering out your premises for private functions is excellent for both profits and engaging the local community. It's crucial that your event organisers have the correct insurance. Event insurance can be purchased with Insure Our Event. Their flexible quote form provides an instant quote for any parties, events and functions which require insurance liability.





The Club Champions of

# WETHERBY SPORTS ASSOCIATION

Wetherby Sports Association was created in 1999 by the local rugby and football clubs who required a home they could call their own after years of playing out of concrete bunkers by the river and holding meetings in local pubs. The outcome was the Lottery and FA funded building on Lodge Lane, which is used extensively by the local community and continues to provide a base for fledgling societies.

Jo Ribbons, Committee Member of Wetherby Sports Association, discusses the club's key members, including the projects they've pioneered and the success they've achieved.



## **We asked Jo about the structure of Wetherby Sports Association and the services available:**

"We have many football teams and rugby league teams, but also a running club, a pétanque club and an angling club. We host both junior and senior teams. Junior football is the biggest, and the running club is pretty big as well."

"We have around 28 football teams, with around 250 junior male members and 250 junior female members. Last year the number of female players actually exceeded the number of male players, which is fantastic credit to our coaches and volunteers."

"There are a number of influential members of the club who have each brought success through their time and effort. The main person for leading the growth in girls' football was Phil Wilkinson, who's family all played here; his children played as well as refereed. The original girls' team, the first ever started as juniors, have just finished their u18 season, and it's all credit to Phil. He managed to get more and more people involved, more girls coming along. He's been amazing for the growth of girls' football in and around Wetherby."

"Another key member of the football club has been Mike Sheerin. He has been here forever and is responsible for organising the galas. The galas are a massive fundraising event for junior football. Thousands of children descend here on

gala weekend, and the galas are vital to keeping the club afloat. Mike has dedicated such a large part of his life to the club and has been pivotal in shaping our journey."

"Andy Hunter, the Chairman of Wetherby Sports Association, is a champion of ours. He is keen on community projects and is heavily involved in WISE, which is Wetherby in Support of the Elderly. Andy also runs Sunday afternoon bingo, which is seeing a resurgence."

## **We asked Jo about how Wetherby Sports Association has diversified to improve income:**

"Only with the government support was the club able to survive through the pandemic. Since then, we've had to restructure, and rethink our financial plans. We refocussed our energy toward events and hiring out spaces and pitches, and having done this, the club has found its feet again. Positive change is visible, with a diverse spectrum of groups and societies utilising our clubhouse and premises."

"How many events we have throughout the year heavily dictates our success. From ToddlerSense to yoga, Hearing Dogs for the Deaf to general fitness classes, we are booked up but always actively taking on new groups."



"Other than our football galas, we mainly cater to smaller private events. We have the occasional wedding reception, frequent birthday parties, and a few wakes. I'm looking forward to the food festival, an external event that we are hosting. They will utilise our car park and we have offered our clubhouse space alongside. We also host the Wetherby fireworks show every year around bonfire night organised by the Town Council."





#### Jo recounts a story of a successful recent event:

"One weekend we had a wedding here, and then the day after we had an event in conjunction with Wetherby Town Council. It was a funfair with live music and fireworks and local food vendors, all organised by the council. We set up a barbeque and outdoor bar, and people were eating and drinking on our veranda, overlooking the music."

"Needless to say, it was an idyllic weekend, and a credit to all the volunteers at the club that we can host events like these. The veranda has just been refurbished which again was due to one of our voluntary committee members. Ann had applied for a competition on Absolute Radio, the winners were voted by the public and amazingly she won! The competition was in partnership with Wickes, and so we won a £10,000 prize pot

which accelerated our plans to refurbish the front of the clubhouse."

"The refurbishment ended up costing more than the £10,000 pot, yet members and volunteers offered their services and connection so the plans could be finished."

"Put simply, the club wouldn't exist without volunteers. None of us get paid. All the clubs are run by volunteers, as is the Association. We do pay wages to bar staff and kitchen staff who are part-time, but most of the labour is performed by volunteers."

"We are where we are now because of the people behind the club. Our ranks and associated groups keep growing, and we will continue to provide a home for sports clubs and societies in need."

“

**The resurgence of the Sports Association is mainly down to the hard work of a dedicated committee of volunteers who have reorganised the club, reduced expenditure and are working to increase income.**

”



# DEVELOPING A GRASSROOTS PROJECT AT A SPORTS CLUB

**After our interview with Chris Harrison at Ilkley Lawn Tennis and Squash Club, we sought out their club champion Gavin Sutcliffe to learn more about the grassroots project.**

Gavin walked us around the many facilities available to juniors at Ilkley, and spoke, racket in-hand, about his plans for the future of the grassroots project: "My title at Ilkley Lawn Tennis and Squash Club is Head of Rackets and Development. I've been enrolled at the club for 2 months now, but before that, I supported the club for 10+ years as a point of contact with the LTA (Lawn Tennis Association)."

"We have 250 active members on our development programme. We also have our performance programme, designed for those at the top level who visit several times a week. At Ilkley, we have 8 coaches, as well as part-time squash coaches and padel coaches. Our coaches manage both the performance programme and the general development programme for grassroots; both are equally as important to us. Interestingly, the high-level performance programme doesn't generate the club money, in fact it just about breaks even financially. The grassroots development programme does, yet the purpose of it is to grow the sport and fuel higher programmes."







"We also have an outreach programme. Our coaches do pop-ups at local parks that host tennis courts, but we also visit schools, and invite schools to our club for one-off free sessions. 48 primary schools all got a chance to play tennis with our coaches at the Lexus Ilkley Trophy. That's 2,000 children, 40% of which came from IMD 1 to 3 areas (Indices of Multiple Deprivation)."

"You never know, if one of the children who benefits becomes a future star, then that's all the more reason to outreach."

"Councils need leadership on how to execute these community tennis activities, which is where I feel Ilkley Lawn Tennis Club can come in. Barriers need to be broken down, particularly with tennis as the sport has an elitist tag. There are two reasons why: Firstly – to make it as a tennis player is incredibly hard. All the money is at the top of the game and if you're not top 200 in the world then you're barely breaking even; you're not earning a living. It's also a very early specialist sport. Children need to be county level by age 8, European level by 14, and international level age 18. To get there requires 10,000 hours of individual coaching, which is very costly."

"Secondly – the bedrock of tennis is members' clubs. The word 'members' creates a barrier in itself, associated with needing to be wealthy or needing to be talented. It's on tennis professionals to provide better ways for non-members to try tennis; to help people self-serve."

"For the sport to grow, tennis clubs across the UK need to invest in their outreach projects. The

overall goal, shared by the LTA, is to adopt and create more local community champions who can drive tennis forward."

#### **We asked Gavin: Is tennis a viable solution for sports clubs looking to expand?**

"It's definitely possible, but it requires funding. To install a tennis court, with groundwork and time, it's probably around £40,000. That's per court."

"As a better use of space, I would recommend padel. Building a padel court is also expensive, around £75,000 per court; that being £37,000 for the groundworks, a concrete base and ring beam to support the outer foundation, and then £38,000 for the side panels, astroturf and floodlights. However padel stacks up against tennis well because there's less space taken up and more people playing at once with shorter games."

"This is why I see pickleball taking off. It's massive in Florida, but I don't know of anyone in the UK yet who has taken the plunge. I was a sceptic of padel 4 years ago, and yet you see how popular and profitable it is - now we are at that point with pickleball. Pickleball has even more people playing per square foot; it's an entry level racket sport and suits the older generation."



"Expanding and diversifying can be a difficult call for sports club – should they follow trends and try something new and experimental, or keep with tradition? Tennis, after-all, is a game for life."

"Of course, sports and social clubs looking to learn more about tennis are welcome to get in touch with me at Ilkley Lawn Tennis and Squash Club."

“  
**You never know, if one of the children who benefits becomes a future star, then that's all the more reason to outreach.**  
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The Club Champions of

# GARFORTH GOLF CLUB

Garforth Golf Club is a members only golf club based in Yorkshire. They have a 700 strong membership of both social members and playing members. Busy all year round, Garforth's management team have a clear idea of how they want the club to operate. Events are restricted, to the benefit paying members, and community outreach is prioritised, alongside sustainability projects.

Stuart Carnie, Managing Secretary, tells us how he likes to operate Garforth Golf Club, nodding to the importance of having a cohesive team and building relationships. He also discusses why it's vital for golf club managers to understand their membership base and have an eye on conservation and sustainability.



"As Managing Secretary of Garforth Golf Club, my main responsibility is the day to day running of the golf club – that includes the bar, the golf course, and the organisation of competitions. I provide a facility for our paying members to come and enjoy."

"The staff I mainly see day to day are the Head Greenkeeper, Catering Manager, the Head Pro and the professionals in the pro shop. They all report into me. We have weekly team-meetings where we go through our diaries for the week – it's at 10 o'clock every week and lasts up to 45 minutes. We discuss any issues in their departments, and I talk through resolutions with them. In this way, we all work cohesively as one team."

"At Garforth, bar sales make up over 50% [of our total sales]. We don't offer a venue hire service, but we host a lot of members functions. We do 4 to 5 weddings a year – which are requested by members – I know other courses do more. Some clubs rely on venue hire income, but because we've got such a sound membership base we are able to set out our budgets for the year."

"We are not greedy. We could have a wedding every weekend if we wished to, and if we advertised it, but that would be at a detriment to the members. Members pay for access to our facilities, and so a wedding or christening event would negatively affect their experience."

"We do take on a lot of away days for certain golf clubs, as well as society groups whose members use our facilities on an annual basis."



"A typical away day would include a sandwich and 18 holes of golf, then enjoying a drink in the environment of the bar, as well as a meal of their choice. This can vary from a formal sit-down meal to an informal buffet or barbeque. Our Catering Manager, John Kirk, is fantastic!"



"We also offer a quick try in the sim room where we play nearest-the-pin or another interactive game. This would need to be negotiated beforehand. We are proud to have PGA Head Professionals here at Garforth - Gareth Johnson is our coach who heads up The Golf Room. Our state-of-the-art indoor performance studio, which features the new TrackMan 4, is ideal for both professional lessons and as a bonus at an event."

**I asked Stuart how Garforth serves the wider community, and what conservation efforts they've made:**

"We often put on dinners for societies and groups based in the local community. We provide a service and support the community through vouchers and special offers for charity events."

"We have to be conservationists as golf course managers - Those who don't, it's to their detriment. At Garforth Golf Club, we have deer and birds-of-prey, in fact we have many species of birds"



"We have a beck that runs through the golf course. It's quite a wet golf course because we are clay-based, hence the heavy rain and course closures. We are currently engaging with water management companies in regards to drainage of the golf course because I think we are all aware that the winters are getting warmer and wetter."

"This past winter was a 1 in 100 episode, but we'll see it become more frequent. We've been looking at ways in which we can store water through the summer, so when we get droughts, we can use the stored water for irrigation. We will essentially become self-sustainable."

**I discussed with Stuart the importance of sustainability and finance management at golf clubs:**

"Financially the club is in a good position, but everything has shot up in price. Machinery needs constant review, and the club house and car park need constant maintenance. Sustainability can go a long way to reduce costs, yet it demands all departments to work cohesively."

"We aim to become more self-sufficient, so we've been exploring solar panels. We are looking at putting up a solar farm on the fields at the far side of the driving range. This would generate our own power that can also be sold on to local farmers. We are in the process of solar panel installation on the roof our clubhouse and other buildings."



"Garforth has got an excellent reputation that we need to maintain. Richard Scott, our Head Greenkeeper, he's been with Garforth for only 2 years, but has made a massive impact on the golf course. He doesn't just cut the grass - he firmly believes his job is a science. He's a club champion, as are the whole team; they are all fantastic and we have a great relationship."



## Claims Story

# RAINFALL ON GOLF COURSE TRIGGERS MAJOR CLAIM

Following extreme rainfall in the winter months of 2023 and 2024, Garforth Golf Club suffered extensive losses and damages to their premises. We were given access to the official documents for the claim, but also wanted to discuss the issue with Stuart Carnie, Managing Secretary of Garforth Golf Club. The flood at the club caused severe business interruption and impacted play over the winter period.



Stuart explains: "It happened immediately after Christmas on the 27th December 2023. Because of extensive rainfall, the car park flooded, and our trolley store where member's store their trolleys which is situated beneath the clubhouse, it was completely awash."

"This was a major one-off incident for the club. We had to pay contractors from Wakefield to come and pump the residing water away into tankers. We used the insurance claim to cover the cost of hiring these contractors. Thankfully, the process was straightforward: We put a claim in with Club Insure, the loss adjustor came to see us, I was with him for half an hour, and he took some photographs. It was a very easy and straightforward process."

### The Situation

In the official notes for the incident it was pointed out that the rainfall was so excessive that rain continued for a number of days. The trolley store at the club flooded, damaging both the equipment, golf trolleys and the grounds. The rain kept on falling, worsening the damage and the club's surrounding buildings were waterlogged.

Essential areas of the golf course were heavily affected, including the putting green, car park and the 18th hole. This caused major interruption to daily operations and effectively closed the club.

### The Cause

In the investigation, it was discovered that rainfall was not the only reason why the golf course was so abnormally affected. There was blocked gully which usually drains away onto the road gully immediately outside the golf club. The club's representatives contacted Yorkshire Water, Leeds City Council and Highways to resolve the issue.

Stuart recounts: "The drainage channel into the neighbouring farmer's field was partially-blocked and needed to be jet washed away. Whilst the water was residing, we had to pay contractors from Wakefield to come and pump it away into tankers. We used the insurance claim to cover the cost of hiring these contractors."

### The Claim

Thankfully, the golf club were prompt with their claim and Club Insure were able to quickly understand the situation. At the time, Stuart and others in the golf club's management team were resourceful, having offered a visitation and provided pictures of the damage. Club Insure gave guidance on the next steps to be taken, and confirmed to the club that their insurance would cover the cost of the services they required.

The services cost approximately £3,000. The golf club also arranged for a local golf professional who specialises in repairing golf trolleys to attend the club and assess all the trolleys that were in the trolley store.



Stuart notes: "The process was straightforward: We put a claim in, the loss adjustor came to see us, I was with him for half an hour, and he took some photographs. It was a very easy and straightforward process."





The Club Champions of

# YARNBURY RFC

We met with Richard Wharton and Phillip Wray, key members of Yarnbury Rugby Union and Football Club in Horsforth, Leeds. We discuss Yarnbury's recent claim and how it has affected their service offerings. We also wanted to learn more about the key figures behind the club and what projects they are running.



Richard takes the lead: “May Day of 2024, a storm of biblical proportions hit the club. Yarnbury sits at the highest point in Leeds, you would never expect to get flooding here. The sheer amount of rain caused a flash flood, the water penetrated the club through three doors and left the place awash.”

“I think the first person to see the damage was the secretary, Lauren (Morgan), who came up the day after. And she, obviously, was alarmed by it and sent pictures to us all. Initially we thought it was fixable, we got a chap in to clean and suck the water back up. But then we realised the floor had lifted up and so for health and safety reasons, we had to close the club. The smell was terrible!”

“I didn’t immediately realise the full impact of the damage to the club caused by the flooding, or the timescales concerned. It was only when we began discussions with Club Insure about the severity of the damage and what was needed to rectify the situation, that I understood how much business we could lose. This was early May, and we needed to reopen by July because of a large beer festival we were expected to host. So the restoration process needed to started happening, fast.”



Club Insure arranged for Rainbow Restoration to begin work – Richard indicates over to Phillip Wray, Yarnbury RFC’s Facilities Manager, who has been present every day to witness the restoration process.

“First to go were the carpets in the lounge which were the source of the smell,” says Phillip, “The main floor was fly-boarded, they had to lift and strip all the wood that was swollen. They then brought in the big industrial driers, which were left on for a couple of weeks. The amount of water they sucked out was amazing, I know because I



was coming every day and emptying the big 5 gallon plastic drums.”

“To make ready in time for the festival, Rainbow put down some temporary flooring – but there was an added complication. When the ply was taken up, we found the original floor tiles underneath, which were suspected to contain asbestos. When they were tested it was found that they did. We had to have these removed.”

Richard continues – “Despite all the delays, the festival went ahead. It was a cracking event – it’s held annually and is easily our biggest event of the year. It ended up being better than the previous year. To miss it would have been catastrophic for the club; the profit it generates is around £25,000 to £30,000.”

#### **I ask about the size and services of Yarnbury RFC:**

Richard is quick to produce the numbers, reeling off stats about the club from memory: “Membership is at about 500 right now. We have 100 senior players and around 200 junior players. We have many student members as well, and also non-player members such as myself.” Richard laughs; “There are at least 200 non-player members like me knocking about.”



“We’re only one of 2 clubs in this area with the artificial grass pitch. That’s a big pull for us particularly in the in the winter months. We have someone using the pitch every day all year round – they are well used! Pitches can see 2 or 3 games on a Saturday, with each team using our facilities. I’m surprised it’s not being used as we speak.” Richard looks out over the rugby fields.





Richard is eager to talk about the services of the club – “It would be easier to say what we don’t do! Obviously we’re used for rugby and football, but other sports such as American football and hockey can commonly be seen here. Leeds Chargers have played here, and we have a connection with Leeds Beckett University who often visit us.”

“Any university event is a pretty big event for us because they play mid-week – we usually get several hundred people up here at a time – all using the clubhouse and the bar. The big teams play here 4 or 5 times a year and we do quite well out of it.”



“We have started to offer catering services, we didn’t use to but now we have a skilled caterer who will supply a three course sit down meal.”

#### **I ask who are the key figures behind the club success, growth and in shaping it’s future:**

“We’ve got a committee of 15, each of them a champion and advocate for the club. The majority of them are older people; we’ve all been members of the club a long, long time.” says Richard.

“Our Club Chairman, Phil Addy, he’s been here 40 years, as have his parents before him. The Club Secretary, Lauren Morgan, is relatively new but a major part – she has pioneered the successful Ladies Team. Lauren is the Yorkshire committee spokesperson for women’s rugby, and helped us achieve the dedicated women’s changing room installed here a year ago.”

“We can’t forget our President, David Hornby, and also John Riley who’s work doesn’t go unnoticed; we’ve got quite a few.” Richard smiles. “Oh, and you too Phil!” Richard is quick to add, gesturing to Phillip Wray.

Phillip Wray cuts in – “You’ve been here the longest Richard, a natural choice as treasurer with your banking history.” Phillip motions to Richard who replies – “Yes I was a banker a long time ago. When I left banking I became involved in the debt industry. I represented them at select committee hearings – I even went to London once to meet Angela Rippon and Gloria Hunniford on Rip Off Britain. We did an hour’s interview, and when it came on telly they showed about 10 seconds.”

#### **I ask what projects Yarnbury RFC has coming up and what efforts they are making to diversify the club:**

“Rugby 365, that’s what it’s all about. The artificial grass pitch cost £1,000,000 to install - it all came about as a result of the 2015 World Cup; they asked for bids and we applied and won. By having an artificial grass pitch, teams are able to play all year round.”

Richard walks me through the many other projects Yarnbury RFC currently run and financially benefit from: “A big road engineering company is doing some levelling, and they are using our car park at the moment. They need somewhere local for storage, but that’s only over the summer months.”

“We have a scheme with the local students, we provide car parking for the local houses. It’s amazing how many students have cars! The whole car park can be full in the peak of term time – that’s two to three hundred cars. It’s chock-a-block.”

“It’s a work-in-partnership with the universities, and obviously we get reimbursed for the privilege of letting them use the car park. It’s controlled by security guards, and there are parking attendants – it’s a big project.”

“We also have a relationship with a film company. They leave their wagons here, use the facilities and we sometimes provide catering for the crew. They film dramas and they use us as a base. A few times they’ve filmed here, we’ve been a backdrop for Gentlemen Jack and a few other shows featuring Suranne Jones.”





# GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY GRANTS

Romero Group Charitable Trust – Investing  
in Grassroots Sport & Local Communities





At The Romero Group Charitable Trust, our mission is to help support the communities Club Insure work with across the country. We recognise the cultural, emotional and physical benefits of grassroots sport and social clubs, and we're focussing on funding projects that help clubs and community groups invest in their future.

The Romero Group Charitable Trust has been designed to offer investment in local projects, such as the future of grassroots sport. As the cost of living impacts the potential for clubs and community groups to fund new projects and keep up with rising costs, The Romero Group Charitable Trust has set out a grant campaign intended for sports and community projects.

If your club or community centre has a new or existing grassroots project that is in need of funding, this grant campaign is for you.



### What funding is available?

The Romero Group Charitable Trust will provide grants of up to £500 per organisation throughout this grant giving campaign.

## Which projects are eligible for funding?

### Grassroots Community Projects

The purpose of these projects will be for the betterment of the local community in which the applicant is based. This could be related to helping facilitate the social wellbeing of vulnerable or isolated individuals, creating safe spaces or introducing opportunities for individuals to spend time focussing on their physical wellbeing. This could include projects such as building a playground in an area underserved by outdoor activity options for children, funding a warm bank for elderly or isolated individuals or funding a woodland regeneration project to help local people and the environment through offering therapeutic activities, education in nature and the environment, and boosting social connections.

The core of any of these projects, must focus on improving the mental, physical and social wellbeing of the community in which they take place.

### Grassroots Sports Projects

These projects will aim to grow and develop the engagement with sports for children and young people, as well as individuals who previously have not had the resource or exposure to engage with sports. This could include buying kit and equipment to be used by participants, funding the creation or regeneration of sports facilities or reaching groups unrepresented in grassroots sport participation.

*Please read the above carefully before applying. Applications must be able to evidence how you plan to engage the community and demonstrate the impact your project will have on your community. Applications must be able to demonstrate how the requested funds will be spent, preferably providing itemised quotes demonstrating where the funding will be used.*



### Your project must:

- be submitted by an applicant aged 18 or older
- be UK based and for the benefit of UK communities
- not be for the benefit of any one individual
- not be used for commercial gain of an individual or organisation (the project raising funds which are reinvested into the project is acceptable)

### Your organisation must:

- be registered in the UK as a charity or social enterprise
- have a bank account in its own name and have been operating for at least 12 months
- have an annual income no higher than £2,000,000 and can be evidenced by publicly accessible documents (e.g. HMRC, Charity Commission, Companies House)

### What happens if my application is successful?

If you are successful in your application, the Romero Group Charitable Trust will transfer the requested funds, up to £500, into your organisation's named bank account.

### How do I apply for the grant?

Easy, just visit [www.romerogroupcharity.org.uk](http://www.romerogroupcharity.org.uk) and fill out your details and the details of your organisation to apply.



The Club Champions of

# MENSTON CRICKET CLUB



Menston Cricket Club is a local amateur club which sits boldly on the side of the A65 in West Yorkshire. Nestled between the towns of Guiseley, Burley in Wharfedale and Otley, the club has strong ties to the community. They compete within the Airedale and Wharfedale Senior Cricket League, hosting multiple senior and junior teams. Visible from Ilkley Moor, the cricket club is well-loved, popular and is home to a storied history.

Run by dedicated volunteers, the club features a fully licensed bar, state-of-the-art cricket nets, and a refurbished pavilion. A true community hub, many touring teams from Australia and the Caribbean visit the little town of Menston because of their longstanding connections.



Menston Cricket Club recently made a claim with Club Insure for a significant break in and theft of their groundskeeping equipment. We joined a visitation of Menston alongside Club Insure Schemes Manager Mark Dearden, and Senior Claims Handler Lewis Jackson, who were meeting the club's senior committee members. Mike Pratt, President, and John Stones, Chairman, wanted to share with us their experiences of running a local club as well as the pressures of ensuring the organisation is financially sustainable.



#### Tell us about your recent claim:

John walked us over to the site of the break in. "It all started because the rail company were deforesting the railway line, and they cleared the trees covering the back of the groundsman's garage. The woodland was providing natural security. Intruders vaulted the now exposed fence and broke into the outbuilding."



The thieves severely damaged the garage door and made off with three lawnmowers and associated cassettes. The value of the stolen equipment was £19,000.



John continued: "Why would someone steal lawnmowers? These are specialised pitch mowers, so are of no use to the ordinary man. Even selling the parts, it wouldn't be worth the trouble of stealing. Pitchmowers last a cricket club a lifetime, so to lose three was significant."

The club contacted our Club Insure claims department to pursue a claim on their Club Insure policy for the cost of the replacement mowers and a new garage door which was beyond repair.



#### What security features and risk management procedures have you installed at Menston cricket club?

Mike explains: "We've got security fencing, security lighting, we've upgraded our CCTV system and are installing a louder alarm system. The problem is that we don't want to fence the whole way around the facility. The cricket club is part of the community, we want people to see it and feel welcome."

Mark Dearden, Club Insure Schemes Manager who attended the club, notes: "It's important for clubs to think about the most effective methods of deterring crime. These are specific to each premise's needs. It's all well and good to have the products in place to catch criminals, such as SMARTWATER, however we want to deter crime before it happens. Alarms and signage are the best way to put off intruders."



#### What services do Menston cricket club provide?

John quickly lists all the teams the club supports and the services the club provides: "We have 250 members at the club, 50 are social members. We have 5 men's senior teams and a ladies senior team. We have a fantastic junior membership, hosting over 130 junior members. Our junior project is something we've been really investing in and working on these past few years."

Mike discusses the club's premises: "A local cricket club folded just up the road. They demolished their pavilion, but we've been using the grounds for additional games. Currently we're having to use a portacabin for changing rooms, however we've petitioned for new facilities. Leeds City Council won't provide us a grant next year so we are exploring options on how to fund it."

#### Who are the champions behind Menston cricket club?

Sat down in Menston's new patio area, an extension to the renovated clubhouse, Mike and John discuss the other champions who are

influential to the success of the club. "Many of our key members have families, children, who are also members. Ben our secretary, his three boys play who are very good cricketers – Ben is essential to the running of the club."

"Dave Holder has been our junior coach, but he'll be leaving the role because his sons are now seniors. Dave also organises many of our social events, including golf days, club dinners and our quiz nights."

John then indicates to Mike, "I'd say Mike is our club champion. The President would typically play a ceremonial role, presenting prizes and speaking at dinners, but Mike has really got involved in the club. He shoulders much of the admin for the club including managing our finances and the insurance."

Mike then interrupts; "We have many champions at the club, but in the past couple of years we've seen quite a bit of turnover. A difficulty we are having is recruiting new volunteers to help manage the club, which I imagine is a common struggle for many clubs of our size."



### Have Menston Cricket club had a financially successful season?

"We've seen a significant rise in costs for both operating the club and putting on games," said John. "Electrical costs have gone up, as has everything else. We also recently took out a loan with the ECB so we are paying that off each month. We are having to manage our money carefully, and are planning the next fundraiser."



"But yes we've had a good season this year. We have a funday around Easter before the season starts which sets us on our way. This year we saw 700 to 800 people turn out and enjoy the fair. This helps pay for grounds maintenance; we usually pay for a groundsman to work 2 to 3 times a week."

Mike says: "Our success can vary on the weather. The cost to put on a game is around £180, that includes umpire costs and teas, and we have multiple games on a weekend. We pay scorers £40, and a new ball can be £35. Revenue at the bar on a Saturday can be anywhere from £250 if it's raining to £2000 if it's sunny."

John claims: "We've now got the best beer garden in Menston, with the refurbishment. Drinks here are cheaper than the local pub, however we've found our members want premium drink, such as a cask ale or craft beer, so that's what we source. The membership card offers 10% off."

### What's your advice to other cricket clubs?

John notes: "Do what works for your club in order to sustain success. Menston has a history as one of the top clubs in the league, but we have never paid a lot of money to players. Some clubs have had wealthy benefactors but as soon as they left it would suck the progress and motivation out

of the teams. My focus was to build a friendly atmosphere where everyone is rooting for each other. Our Firsts got promoted this year and everybody came out to see the win; there was a real buzz."

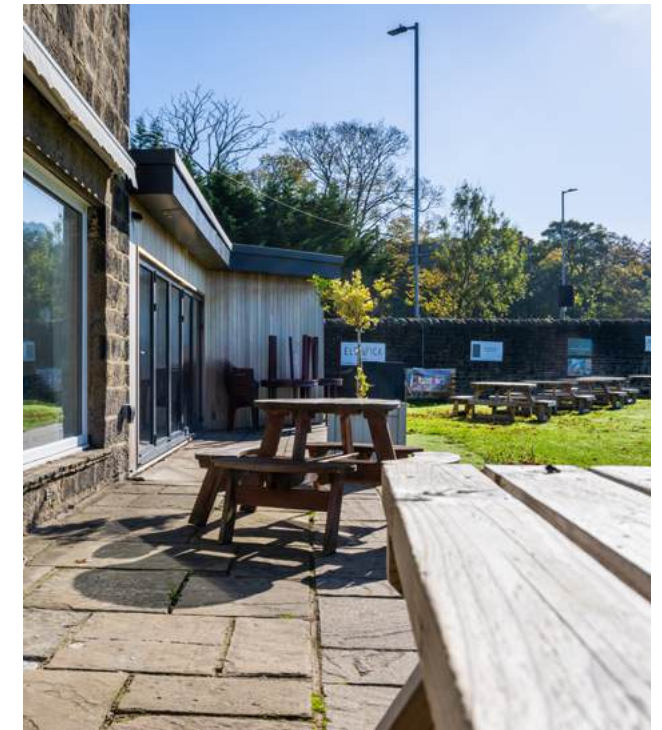
Mike said: "We are having to review all expenditure. We need to recruit more volunteers, similar to all clubs. Investing in our juniors has been our focus, hoping they stay with us and benefit our men's teams. We've installed new state-of-the-art outdoor batting nets, and we often play promising juniors in our senior teams, showing a positive example."

John continues, "We know where we are as a club - and that's my advice to other cricket clubs. Ensure you've got a strong foundation, a good groundworks team, and put in the hardwork. Our missions we've set out are to support our juniors, see succession and give players a chance. We are a community club after all; I sometimes have to remind players - this is village cricket."

"Thankfully, because of Club Insure, the claims process was smooth and the incident this year won't affect us. I'm looking forward to our future projects, and with our First's promotion, I can proudly say: Menston cricket club is coming back!"



Lewis Jackson, Senior Claims Handler at Club Insure: "If the worst should happen, Club Insure are here to help, and your dedicated claims handler will liaise with your insurer to get you back up and running as quickly as possible. That is what we're all about."



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**There's no better  
beer garden than  
at a cricket club.**

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# CRICKET CLUB BANS SIXES BECAUSE OF INSURANCE CLAIMS

**A cricket club in West Sussex have made the decision to ban their players from hitting for six, after complaints and warnings by their neighbours.**

After numerous incidents of balls hitting cars, windows, sheds and roofs, residents near Brighton complained about damages caused by Southwick and Shoreham cricket club. And, as a very unique solution, the club produced a ban on hitting the ball over the boundary, essentially blocking the scoring of six points.



Players were warned by the club – the first six they hit would not score, and the second would mean they are out. Not only is this a long stretch away from the rulebook, it also significantly hampers the enjoyment of the sport.

The club argued that they had to enforce this to try to reduce the number of incidents involving cricket balls and damages. They've had history with their neighbours, who have made many complaints, and so the directors have taken measures to save the club's finances.



Veteran cricketers will know that a fair few cricket clubs around the country have brought in idiosyncratic rules to suit the unique features of their boundary line. Be it fallen trees, stone walls, or main roads; boundary lines are rarely regular.



Tommy Campbell, Account Manager at Club Insure, has dealt with many public liability claims on behalf of sports clubs and social clubs. Tommy has seen every manner of claim and complaint, and also acts as a risk management advisor to clubs.

"Typically, if a ball goes out of the ground, be it a cricket ball or rugby ball, the insurance of the club will cover it. The process is similar to a car collision – the property owner would need to get in touch with their insurance provider. So that's the home insurer for a smashed roof tiles, or the car insurer for dented side panel. The insurer would then get in contact with the club's insurance provider."



"Who handles the claim very much depends upon the policy that has been agreed. Many cricket clubs arrange their public liability through us at Club Insure, and so we would handle the claim and pay out. However some cricket clubs arrange their liability through the ECB, in which case the ECB would need to be contacted and have to deal with the claim."

"As with many cricket ball claims, cricket clubs decide to pay out for the damages themselves. This is because the payments tend to be minor and it is not beneficial to have these claims recorded on a club's insurance history. However I can see how these payments stack up and begin to have a greater effect on a club's finances."



LLOYD  
PINDER  
HOUSE



# KEVIN SINFIELD AND CLUB INSURE

Club Insure's relationship with our ambassador Kevin Sinfield





Club Insure exists as part of The Romero Insurance Group who hold a partnership with longstanding friend, Kevin Sinfield.

We are very proud of our partnership with the Leeds Rhinos rugby legend. Kevin has been on an amazing journey in recent years, raising money for charitable organisations. He ran seven marathons in seven days in December 2020; the following November 2021 he ran 101 miles, going the extra mile. The Ultra 7 in 7 involved seven ultra marathons in a row, 40 miles a day, from Edinburgh to Old Trafford in Manchester.

The 7in7in7 Challenge saw Sinfield and his team run an ultra-marathon every day for seven days in seven UK cities.

Sinfield and his team have raised over £8 million for the MND Association. For each fundraiser, we have full-heartedly supported Kevin, as well as donating £10,000 every year. Furthermore, a portion of each Club Insure policy renewal goes toward Prostate Cancer UK, another association of which Kevin is an ambassador. Club Insure will also give £10,000 toward the next challenge, Running Home for Christmas.



## 2020 - 2021

The famous 7-in-7 received praise from across the world. The initial target of £77,777 for Rob Burrow and the MND Association was smashed early on in the challenge and following Sinfield's seventh marathon the fundraising total reached over £2,000,000. The total now stands above £2.7 million, that's 3528% of the original target. Kevin received an OBE from the late Queen.

Kevin also announced his partnership with Romero Insurance and Club Insure. He spoke in an interview with us on the themes of loyalty, determination, resilience.



## 2021 - 2022

Kevin Sinfield's next challenge – The Extra Mile Challenge – saw Kevin run from Leicester Tigers' home at Mattioli Woods Welford Road to Emerald Headingley Stadium in Leeds in 24 hours. The total was 100 miles, but it ended up that the team needed another mile, and so it was dubbed the extra mile, running a total of 101 miles.

In September of 2021, the Club Insure team undertook our own fundraising challenge, and cycled the coast to coast route. We raised £15,000, having cycled 173 miles in two days from Morecambe to Bridlington. The ride was in memory of late Club Insure Director, Lloyd Pinder who was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Kevin sent a video recording in support of the team, and also congratulated them at the annual golf day at Moor Allerton Golf Club in 2021. He also helped us launch our new branch in Harrogate.

## 2022 - 2023

We again supported Kevin by donating £10,000 and sponsoring his shirt for his most recent fundraising challenge, the Ultra 7 in 7. Kevin's 280-mile route took him from Edinburgh to Manchester and saw him run more than 40 miles every day for a week.

He then went on to found and promote the Rob Burrow Marathon in May 2023. This was Leeds' opportunity to give back, take part in our own 'Sinfieldian' challenge and also show Kevin how much our Humble Hero meant to us. Many members of the Romero team and Club Insure family took part at the marathon, finding the experience emotional and overwhelming.

Prior to the Rob Burrow Marathon, Club Insure had the opportunity to sit down with Kevin and reflect on his recent achievements. In another interview, Kevin discussed his success in the Gallagher Premiership with Leicester Tigers, onto becoming England Rugby Defence Coach.



Kevin inspired us to up our own fundraising efforts. He endorsed Club Insure's fundraiser, The Pinder 200; a 200 mile cycle ride in 2023 raising £25,000.





## 2024 and beyond

Kevin's next challenge, Running Home for Christmas, will start on 1st December 2024. Kevin and his team will cover over 50 km per day, running 7 km on the hour, every hour.

In June we lost Rob Burrow CBE, who died from motor neurone disease at the age of 41. Kevin's team are hoping to raise £777,777 in memory of Rob, who will be at the heart of this latest challenge. At Club Insure and Romero Insurance, we are deeply looking forward to once again sponsoring and supporting Kevin Sinfield, as we have done for each of the past challenges.

Kevin Sinfield - "In December, we go again. It's all about getting people, and members of the MND community, out of their houses. Come and meet us, share your stories with us."

"The world has lost a great man and a wonderful friend to so, so many. You fought so bravely until the end and became a beacon of hope and inspiration, not only for the MND community but for all those who saw and heard your story. I would always say that you were pound for pound the toughest player I ever played alongside, however since your diagnosis, you were the toughest and bravest man I have ever met."

"I hope they remember Rob forever."

## Watch the Full Movie – 7in7in7: The Inside Story



7in7in7: The Inside Story provides an exclusive behind-the-scenes look into Sinfield's fourth and most difficult fundraising challenge. The challenge saw him run seven ultramarathons in seven days across seven locations in the UK and Ireland. He has raised over £1 million for the fourth consecutive year for his chosen Motor Neurone Disease charities – and still wishes to raise more.

# CLUB INSURE AND PROSTATE CANCER UK

Club Insure's partnership with Prostate Cancer UK



Upon the renewal of our partnership with Prostate Cancer UK, we talk to our relationship manager, Jake Maloney-Cox. Jake has been assisting Club Insure with our Prostate Cancer UK partnership for five years, and is now the Senior Corporate Partnerships Executive at the charity.

Our mission is to raise awareness of prostate cancer and showcase the important work Prostate Cancer UK does. We want to make sure more men know the risk factors, know when to see their GP and how to receive treatment.





### **What is it about the Prostate Cancer UK charity that has inspired you?**

"The work that we do inspires me. Our nurses are probably one of the things I'm proudest of – when you speak to members of the public who have experienced prostate cancer." You'll often hear stories of how amazing our nurses have been. And our helpline is the most tangible impact we have for most men who are experiencing prostate cancer."

"Prostate Cancer UK has a free helpline that anyone can call. Perhaps you're concerned about a member of your family. You might even have prostate issues. And what they'll do is they'll give you support if you need it and they'll give you the information you need to make choices. You don't know how hard it is to make decisions until you're in that situation."

### **Since working with Prostate Cancer UK, what's the achievement you are proudest of?**

"I think seeing a plan for a big fundraising event come together is always absolutely incredible. I've worked on some enormous fundraisers; I always say that the hard work is done by our supporters, I just help them and guide them along the way."

"Whether it's the cycle ride that Club Insure have done, or when I helped organise a vintage train ride. The train raised nearly a quarter a million pounds; it went all over the country, it sold out in ten minutes. The different things people come up with to do to support our charity; the things people put themselves through; I'm always amazed."

"Sometimes people will come to me with an idea and we'll expand on it, taking elements from other challenges. Finding the fun element helps people recognise what they're doing as something unique."

### **What are some of your favourite projects with a commercial partner you've worked on?**

"The best one I ever got involved with was a company called Keyline, who did a classic car rally - a Top Gear challenge. We drove on one of the hottest days of the year down to Italy and back. I was in a convertible, which sounds good, but when it's 40 degrees and there's no air conditioning you're getting cooked."

### **What do commercial partners bring to Prostate Cancer UK beside the funding?**

"It's always about us reaching a new audience because it's all about the fundraising. We always try to go where men go – whether it's the clubs they're signed up to through Club Insure, whether it's going to the darts, football, rugby. We always look for partnerships with those who have relationships with our core audience."

"By sharing the risk checker, our information literature, or by sharing the risk factors to their customers, it's amazing to reach a group you might not have ever reached before. I always use the example of railway enthusiasts; because when you think about it, those who are into trains tend to be older men."



### **What are some big projects you are excited for?**

"We've got the biggest prostate cancer trial for twenty years coming up, the TRANSFORM study. It's going to be a £42 million investment from Prostate Cancer UK and the government. We'll be looking at diagnosing the pathways which already exist or have recently been developed, and try to find out which of those are going to be the ideal one to reach a screening programme."

"The issue is the PSA test has far too many false positives and false negatives, which the government has deemed is doing the general public overall harm. So it's about combining techniques, such as a PSA test with an MRI scan, to make it more accurate and bring that ration of harm down. It will prove to NICE, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, who make the decision for the NHS, that our determined pathway is the way to screen for prostate cancer."

### **How important are the personal stories and personal relationships for impacting the work Prostate Cancer UK do?**

"Having a close personal connection to cause is such a huge part of our partnerships. Especially someone as incredible as Lloyd Pinder, who did so much for the charity, and was so dedicated in his mission to raise awareness for men, and make sure that other men and their families don't have to go through this in the future."

"It touches you and it galvanises you to be dedicated to the cause. It's difficult to express through statistics – you hear 12,000 men die every year – but as soon as you know that personal story, and what it's put people through, who knew them and how many people loved them, it puts a human face on such an awful thing. It brings it home."

“  
**I think seeing a plan for a big fundraising event come together is always absolutely incredible.**  
”



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With special thanks to **Kevin Sinfield**

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## ***It should not be underestimated, the effect sports clubs and social clubs have on strengthening a community.***

Learning about the champions behind a sports club or social club is one of the highlights of my role at Club Insure. It's a privilege to talk to these fantastic people, and I firmly believe each club deserves to be listened to and celebrated. Clubs are the heartbeat of a community, and deserve to be protected.

For those who have not heard of Club Insure and our services, we are the leading provider of comprehensive insurance for sports and social clubs. We work with a panel of A-rated specialist insurers, to make sure our clients are comprehensively covered if the unexpected happens. We conduct visitations and tailor our insurance to your club; no policy is ever the same.

I'd be delighted to speak to you about your club's insurance policy. Renewal can be a stressful time of year, and making a claim is one of the most pressurising and time-sensitive periods a club can go through. With Club Insure we will provide guidance on risk management, health & safety, HR issues, and new legislation; utilising our partner network where necessary. To get in touch, my personal details are written below.

I thoroughly hope you've enjoyed reading the Club Champions magazine. The team and I wanted to give each club the depth and publicity they deserve. It's been a pleasure reading the content our team have put together, as well as meeting the many great champions mentioned. This campaign wouldn't have been possible without our amazing contributors and the hard work of our marketing team.

Until next time,

**Adam Lister**

Business Development Manager

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CLUB INSURE  
INSURANCE SPECIALISTS

## OUR PEOPLE, PROTECTING YOUR CLUB.

Few brokers understand social & political clubs like Club Insure. We don't protect clubs like yours because you're another policy on the bottom line. **We do it because we're passionate about what you do.** To other brokers you might just be a premium. To us you're a person, and we care about getting the best for your club.

Our award-winning team have been offering industry leading personal service to clubs like yours for over 20 years. Fighting for the best outcomes to ensure you get competitive premiums and unparalleled service & support.

So join Conservative Clubs like yours across the country and benefit from:

- Personal reviews with our award winning team
- In-house claims team for faster settlements
- Health & Safety and Risk Management services
- Discounted HR and Employment Law
- Competitive finance packages
- A-rated UK insurers

“*Thank you to Club Insure for your help in the process of renewing our insurance policy. It was a pleasure to have you on site as our meeting was very useful and you were able to answer all our questions in an informative way that we understood. You were very professional and helpful and it was great that you could take the time to meet the trustees and explain our policy in detail and sort out the best price for our business.*”

- Cookley Village Hall

Call **0344 488 9204** for a comprehensive review, or visit **[club-insure.co.uk](https://club-insure.co.uk)**

OFFICIAL SUPPORTER OF  
[prostatecanceruk.org/clubinsure](https://prostatecanceruk.org/clubinsure)

