

# Leisure

## Bowls

### Bowling rolls on

MEMBERS of Beeston Bowling Club welcomed the Mayor of Broxtowe, Cllr Jacky Williams, to their end-of-season event at the New Venture Social Club last week.

The Mayor presented a Grant Aid cheque for £100 towards the club's running costs from Broxtowe Borough Council before sitting down to share tea with the 48 or so club members present.

The Beeston Bowling Association was set up in 1934, the first clubs

involved were Ericssons (now Trent Vale), Manchester Unity (now Beeston Unity), Beeston Bowling Club and Beeston Boiler (now disbanded).

At present there are seven clubs in the Association and, in 2008, Sandra Tacey was elected as the first lady president. Every year the Association also plays a friendly against Trent Vale Bowling Club at their green at Technology Drive, Beeston. All Association home matches are played on this green thanks to Trent

Vale.

Club Secretary Malcolm Potter said: "The aim of the Association is to provide a pastime/sport for the residents of Broxtowe and at the same time encourage the game of bowls generally. The Association also supports local charities.

"We need to get the youngsters involved and all clubs will welcome new members so that the game of bowls will continue for many, many years to come."

## Softball

### Honours even in Alleycats – Badgers derby

THE Alea Alleycats and Broxtowe Badgers of Broxtowe Softball Club have played their first two derby matches in the second division of the East Midlands Softball League.

The first match, which took place Chilwell Olympia Field in July, was tied as it went into the fourth inning with six runs scored by each team. However, the Alleycats then stepped up a gear and scored eight runs in the bottom of the fifth, something the Badgers never recovered from. The game finished 11-17.

The teams met again the following week, giving the Badgers an opportunity to redeem themselves. Again, the Alleycats made a strong start and were ahead after three innings having scored

ten runs to the Badgers eight. Unfortunately the Alleycats only managed to score another three runs after the third inning. This proved to be costly, because the Badgers produced eight. The final score was 13-16.

The Alleycats and Badgers have also played the Pyro Cubs, which resulted in losses for both teams (28-11 and 17-18 respectively).

The Badgers are currently third in the second division; the Alleycats fourth.

The Beeston Beavers, who are in the top division of the East Midlands Softball League, have had a run of disappointing results. After almost a month's break, the team lined up against the Nottingham Brewers who batted home an imposing 26 runs to the Beavers'

11. Regrettably their form didn't change in their next game against the Sheriffs of Nottingham, which they lost 3-16. These bad results have seen the Beavers drop to last place in the top division. Two tough games against probably the top teams in the East Midlands but a good opportunity to play against the best, learn and improve.

There are only a few games left this season and so, if you are interested in playing or watching a game, please come along.

Games take place most Thursday evenings from 6pm at the Chilwell Olympia field.

Contact [nottinghamsoftball@gmail.com](mailto:nottinghamsoftball@gmail.com) for more details.

## Wildlife Watching

### Local news and views of the natural world

THE government has recently published details of its Bovine Tb Eradication Programme for England.

This ambitiously titled document reflects what was set out in the Conservative party manifesto at the last election. It includes the controversial proposal that farmers and landowners will be allowed to apply for a licence to cull badgers. The killing would then be carried out by either trapping and killing or, more disturbingly, by 'free shooting' – taking pot shots at the animals around their setts or elsewhere.

What the programme does not include is much hope that development of effective vaccination against Tb for both cattle and badgers

will be a major part of its 'eradication'. The minister responsible has stated: "We are working hard to develop a cattle vaccine and an oral badger vaccine, but a usable and approved cattle vaccine and oral badger vaccine are much further away than we thought. We simply can't afford to keep waiting."

What many farmers and have been waiting for is the opportunity to legally cull badgers and the government has now provided it. Although it claims the Tb eradication programme is 'science-led' there is little evidence to support this assertion. A report of a panel of experts on the benefits of this type of culling, could only claim with any confidence that there should

be a reduction of 12-16 percent in new outbreaks in areas where badgers are culled. This is hardly eradication, and the report also states that: "In order to have a significant impact on national disease levels, culling would need to be conducted over a very large area" – something which the government claims is not on their agenda.

Another area where the science is weak concerns how badgers might transmit Tb back to cattle. Some might suppose that badgers are the only animals that carry bovine Tb, but this is far from the case. Many mammals can be infected with it and the data on animals tested for the disease reveal that it can occur in a high proportion of them – including in the domestic moggy! The standout figure is the ratio of deer infected, which is as high as 50 percent of animals tested. One of the arguments for blaming badgers for the spread of bovine Tb is that, apart from cattle, only badgers infect each other with bovine Tb. However, the data on deer suggest

that this also happens within their populations. Add to this the tendency for deer to range over much wider areas than badgers and they look a possible contender for the spread of bovine Tb. Despite this, it is Brock who is in the dock and deer that are (more or less) in the clear.

For many wildlife watchers, an encounter with wild deer can be a magical and unforgettable experience but it is one that may only have been made possible by the sheer numbers of deer that

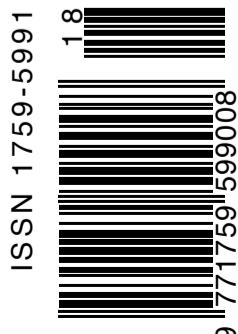
exist in Britain today. It is these numbers that cause conservation management problems particularly in woodlands.

In an ideal world natural predators, such as the wolf and the lynx, would control their numbers but these were exterminated long ago in this country and the chance of their re-introduction is virtually zero. Selling the idea to the public that they have to be controlled by 'other methods' is no easy task.

While the green light that the 'eradication programme' gives to the culling of badgers may relieve the frustrations of affected farmers, failure to fully account for other possible causes of the spread of Tb risks making the slaughter futile, with the modest benefits that are being claimed remaining unachieved. The programme appears to be not so much 'science-led' as 'bad science-led'!

*Jack Smith  
Local ecologist*

### The Beekeeper



#### Thought for the Fortnight

*A little help at the right time is better than a lot of help at the wrong time.*