



## **A word from the General Manager**

Dear Members and Hills Club Community,

As of tomorrow, it will be 2 months since we sadly we were sadly forced to close the doors to your community club. We were faced then with the task of having to make swift decisions in period of complete uncertainty whilst experiencing an immense feeling of panic and chaos. The walls were crumbling down around us and we were struggling to see the light. A part of this was the upsetting process of having to stand down all of our valued staff members, putting many in an awful predicament with the uncertainty of the loss of their income, and how they would manage through this period. We also made the difficult decision to terminate the Greenkeeping contract as a result of cost cutting measures due to the uncertainty of bowls. We also know this has been a very challenging time for our suppliers and we must thank them for all of the support they have given us with payment deferrals and flexible payment options.

This period of panic has now passed and we can now see the light with the gradual reopening of the economy. Fortunately, the government I believe has achieved a solid outcome with the job keeper payments which have been a blessing for our staff that were stood down. Australia has become the envy of many countries for how we have managed to flatten the curve and forge through this unprecedented and horrible pandemic. Obviously, we know there is still a journey ahead.

In the first few weeks following the closure period there was a considerable effort put into ensuring the closure response would allow the club to incur minimal losses throughout the closure period allowing long term viability to come out the other side. This included the club board and management working to securing club financially which it has done so successfully in what is a very difficult climate. We are now entering a phase of rebuilding the business with a focus on opening our doors in a post Covid-19 environment.

There have been decisions made since to ensure that the club has made the most of the opportunity we have had through this closure period so that when we do open that there will be many positive improvements to your club. I am sure that you will notice the impact of the changes favourably when we do open our doors again. As you are aware there has been a development process which has been progressing well however I will leave that part for the Chairperson Mr Ken Carroll to update members in due course. I just thought that I would comment that in regard to this there is a considerable time left trading in the current premises which is why I believe it has been important to make some much needed investment into the current operation to see us through the next 3-4 years until a new club potentially arrives.

As a far as bowls is concerned, we're are working on a plan to have roll ups on the green by June 1<sup>st</sup>, just over a week away. I will be communicating more in the next few days with instruction on how this would work. I understand that there have been other clubs that may have jumped the gun on this however the advice from the government that gave clarity on the issue only came yesterday and we don't want to put the club at any undue risk. We have been preparing an online booking system and putting into place all of the measures to ensure we are complying with all government requirements.

I would say a big thank you to the group of members who have been volunteering their time to look after the greens and helping with some maintenance within the club. Our Director David Smith has been looking after the group of volunteers with good spirits and I would hope the members all appreciate their efforts as their contribution to the club is amazing.

Today it was announced that clubs would be able to have a maximum of 50 people dining in their restaurants under strict conditions as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of June. This is a welcome move into the right direction however we do not envisage that we will be opening at this point in time.

We are carefully planning our opening in conjunction with some of the work around the club and we believe that we would need to see a capacity of 50-100 in all areas before opening the doors is viable. We do not know when this will occur however we are expecting at this point it may be sometime in July so we are working towards that timeframe. We understand this has been a frustrating time for many who are keen to be back at your local club however we will be back stronger than ever. There is significant preparation happening so that we can create a fantastic experience on your return.

I appreciate the patience of all our members and I am very much looking forward to seeing you back in the club sooner rather than later!

Kind Regards,



Angus Rimmer  
General Manager  
22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020