



SECRETARIES NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2025

Dear Members

Welcome to the first quarterly newsletter for Ashford Railway Club.

As summer rolls in, we're pleased to share the latest updates, upcoming events, and highlights for your Railway Club.



The last three months have flown by since I stepped into the Secretary's role, taking over from Tony Fortune, who served the club with remarkable dedication for 25 years. I'd like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Tony for his years of service and for making the handover so smooth and supportive.

I am pleased to report that the new committee have settled in well and have now held three long, but productive meetings. There is a real sense of energy and collaboration as we work together to support the club's activities, plan exciting events, and ensure everything runs smoothly behind the scenes.

We are committed to keeping the club a welcoming and engaging space for all members—whether you're a regular or occasional visitor to the club.

🍺 Bar Price Adjustment

As of **1st May**, we made the difficult decision to **increase bar prices**—our first adjustment in over **18 months**.

This change was driven by a significant rise in operating costs, including:

- A **large increase in the minimum wage**
- Higher **National Insurance contributions**
- A **lower threshold** for when these contributions apply

Together, these changes resulted in an **11% increase in our wage bill**. In response, the bar tariff was adjusted by an average of **3.5%** to help offset the impact.

We want to extend a **big thank you to all members** for your understanding and continued support. These decisions are never easy, but they are made with the long-term sustainability of the club in mind.

🍹 Refreshments & Bar Update

We've made a couple of changes behind the bar that have gone down very well with members:

Draught Guinness is now on tap and proving to be a popular choice. Even better, we've had **zero wastage** so far—fantastic news given its short shelf life. Thanks to everyone for supporting the switch!

On the snack front, **Walkers crisps** have become a firm favourite and will now remain our **stock choice** going forward they are clearly a hit!



⑧ Pool Table Upgrade

April brought a few unexpected challenges, including the need to replace both of our pool tables. Thanks to the resourcefulness of our Club Steward, **Sam Ashman**, we were able to secure a fantastic deal from Dransfield's on two **reconditioned tables**.

The new tables have already proven popular with members and are seeing plenty of use. Not only do they look great, but they're also expected to pay for themselves in no time through regular play and tournament use.

Don't forget, every other Sunday evening is free Pool from 18:00

Starting May 18th, then every other Sunday the pool table will be free to play from 6pm until close for a trial period of 2 months



⑧ Snooker Table Refurbishment

The **snooker table**, a permanent fixture in the clubhouse since it opened in **August 1970**, has recently undergone some much-needed attention. The baize had become worn over time, and unfortunately, an unknown member attempted to draw lines on it, causing further damage.

After reviewing three quotes, we chose to go with our **regular supplier**, who offered the best value. The table has now been **professionally recovered** and is back in action.

Due to the increased costs and the recent damage, the committee has made the difficult decision to:

- Increase the **token price to £2** (up from £1.50)
- Introduce a **£10 security deposit** for the snooker balls

We understand this may be disappointing, but it was felt to be the most practical way to protect the table and ensure its continued use for all members.

Junior Darts Academy

On a brighter note, the **Junior Darts Academy**, held every **Monday evening**, is going from strength to strength! It's proving very popular and is being **brilliantly managed by Mick and Jackie Apps**. A big thank you to them for their dedication and enthusiasm in supporting our younger members.

Parking Update

One of the biggest challenges I've faced so far as Secretary has been **unauthorised parking** at the club entrance and around the garages. After exploring several options, I'm pleased to share that we've found a **zero-cost solution** thanks to **David Seery from Local Carpark Management**.

Here's how it will work:

- A **tablet** will be installed in the **foyer** where members and guests can enter their vehicle registration number. This will grant a **free 24-hour parking pass**.
- **QR codes** will be placed in the **bowls huts**, offering **5 hours of free parking** for players and visitors.
- There will be **ample grace time** for taxis and friends doing drop-offs or pick-ups—so no risk of fines for brief visits.

5.1 Tablet Placement
Club Entrance Lobby.



I'll keep all members informed on the **activation date**.

For those who already have **physical passes displayed in their car windows**, don't worry—these will still be honoured. Staff will add your registration number to a register to ensure there are no issues during the validity of your pass.

👥 Growing Membership

Since **April**, we've continued to see fantastic growth in our membership. We're delighted to have welcomed **43 new members** to the club!

Many of our new members have already become active participants in various sections, including:

- The **Bowls Section**
- A new **Thursday Pool Team**
- A new **Wednesday Night Darts Team**

🎉 Social Events & Fundraising

Our **Sports & Social Secretaries, Charlotte and Yannika**, have been hard at work planning some fantastic events for the summer—bringing the club together for fun, community spirit, and a great cause.

🕺 Dancing Through the Decades

Saturday, 12th July | Dance Hall

Join us for a night of music and memories with **A&S Disco** as we dance through the decades!

- **Doors open:** 7:30 PM
- **Tickets:** £5 Adults | £3 Children (5–17) | Under 5s Free
A great night out for all ages—don't miss it!



**12th July at 7.30pm
with A&S Disco**

💙 Fundraising Day for Pilgrims Hospice

Saturday, 26th July | From 12 PM until late

In memory of our beloved **Keith “Cushty” Wilson**, we’ll be hosting a special fundraising day in aid of **Pilgrims Hospice**. Expect a full day of entertainment, activities, and community spirit.

Any donations—big or small—are warmly welcomed.



🏆 Watch the Lionesses in the Lounge



**ALL ENGLAND GAMES
WILL BE SHOWN IN THE
LOUNGE BAR ON THE TVs**

Come cheer on the **Lionesses** as they kick off their **EURO title defence!** All matches will be shown live in the **Lounge Bar**:

- **5th July, 20:00** – vs. France
- **9th July, 17:00** – vs. Netherlands
- **13th July, 20:00** – vs. Wales

Let's get behind the team and enjoy the games together!

Dancefloor Restoration

Thanks to the efforts of our **President, Brian Saxon**, the club's **dancefloor** has received a stunning makeover. It was **fully sanded back and re-varnished**, restoring it to its former glory—and it truly looks **as good as new**.

This upgrade couldn't have come at a better time, with several social events on the horizon. Whether you're dancing through the decades or just enjoying the atmosphere, we hope you'll appreciate the refreshed space as much as we do.



New EPOS Till System Coming Soon

We're looking forward to the **end of June**, when we'll be introducing **two new EPOS club management tills** to modernise and streamline our operations.

These new tills will bring several benefits:

- **More efficient tab management**
- **Improved card machine integration**
- **Better stock control and reporting**
- **Flexibility to run promotions and offers**

As part of this upgrade, we'll also be moving to **plastic membership cards**, which will make **renewals easier to manage** and help us keep member records up to date.

This is a big step forward in improving the day-to-day running of the club and enhancing the experience for both members and staff.

WHAT'S ON AT ASHFORD RAILWAY CLUB

WHAT'S UP AND COMING FOR JUNE 2025

Mon 2nd	LOUNGE BAR BINGO	LOUNGE BAR	1PM
Mon 2nd	DARTS ACADEMY	LOUNGE BAR	6PM
Tue 3rd	ASHFORD ANGLING	ANNEX	8PM
Wed 4th	SLIMMING WORLD	DANCE HALL	7:30PM
Fri 6th	LOUNGE BAR BINGO	LOUNGE BAR	1PM
Sun 8th	BINGO	DANCE HALL	8PM
Mon 9th	UPA	DANCE HALL	11AM
Mon 9th	LOUNGE BAR BINGO	LOUNGE BAR	1PM
Mon 9th	DARTS ACADEMY	LOUNGE BAR	6PM
Wed 11th	SLIMMING WORLD	DANCE HALL	7:30PM
Fri 13th	LOUNGE BAR BINGO	LOUNGE BAR	1PM
Mon 16th	LOUNGE BAR BINGO	LOUNGE BAR	1PM
Mon 16th	DARTS ACADEMY	LOUNGE BAR	6PM
Wed 18th	SLIMMING WORLD	DANCE HALL	7:30PM
Fri 20th	LOUNGE BAR BINGO	LOUNGE BAR	1PM
Fri 20th	LINE DANCING	DANCE HALL	7:30PM
Sun 22nd	ORCHIDS	DANCE HALL	2PM
Sun 22nd	BINGO	DANCE HALL	8PM
Mon 23rd	LOUNGE BAR BINGO	LOUNGE BAR	1PM
Mon 23rd	DARTS ACADEMY	LOUNGE BAR	6PM
Tue 24th	METAL DETECTORS	DANCE HALL	7:30PM
Wed 28th	SLIMMING WORLD	DANCE HALL	7:30PM
Fri 27th	LOUNGE BAR BINGO	LOUNGE BAR	1PM
Sat 28th	MUGS CLUB HOY BINGO	LOUNGE BAR	8PM
Mon 30th	LOUNGE BAR BINGO	LOUNGE BAR	1PM