



Bowls Development Seminar

Bowls Cornwall and Bowls Development Alliance

Agenda

Welcome and introductions

Aim for the day

BDA programmes

Frequently asked questions – Member recruitment and grant funding

Bowls England resources

Successes of local clubs – Wadebridge

Creating a development plan

Future support

Questions and open discussion



BDA Programmes And Projects



Bowl For Health

Bowl for Health aims to support community wellbeing by offering individuals a free, weekly session, which helps to support both physical and mental health.

Atherstone Grove Bowls Club

Club report

Overview

Bowl for Health, the BDA's flagship outreach programme, is a great way to help people of all ages and abilities to try bowls for the first time whilst allowing them to meet people from their local area.

Atherstone Grove Bowls Club delivered an 8 week Bowl for Health programme funded by Think Active to provide free weekly sessions to participants from the local community over July and August 2024.

This initiative is aimed at fostering physical and mental wellbeing, while reducing social isolation. A community-based programme, where participants enjoy an hour of informal bowls followed by a social gathering over tea or coffee in the clubhouse creates an inviting atmosphere. It not only introduces people to the sport in a relaxed way but also helps build connections and a sense of belonging within the club.

Atherstone Grove Bowls Club emphasised a fun, relaxed and social approach which serves as a great entry point for new members and encourages consistent engagement, which is important for both individual health and wellbeing but also community spirit.

Learnings & Success

Each weekly session was very well attended with most people returning each week. Over 40 people participated in the programme with around 22 of those returning on a weekly basis. Participants ranging from juniors to 79 years old were supported and coached by friendly and enthusiastic members of the club.

The high level of participation, consistent weekly attendance, and the mix of age groups show that the sessions were engaging and accessible. The contribution of the 7 volunteers and the club's friendly atmosphere clearly played a key role in keeping people motivated and creating a positive experience.

Signing up 14 attendees as social members is a great outcome, and the prospect of forming a further ladies' team and another Sunday side next year speaks to the lasting impact of the programme on the club's growth and community involvement.

Think Active and the BDA supported with a promotional campaign for a programme. From feedback, Facebook was the most effective platform for attracting positive engagement and attention.

Benefits

Over 40 local residents attended the programme

Around 22 people returned each week to participate in the sessions

The club gained 14 new social members at the end of the programme who then continued to meet up and play on a Monday afternoon

Club volunteer feedback

Barry Stone, volunteer at the club "some lovely Monday afternoons which everyone who attended including the volunteers fully enjoyed themselves and at the end of the 8 weeks all bowlers improved their bowling dramatically".

Steve Brown, volunteer at the club "It has been a pleasure coaching people with no bowls experience. In just a few weeks their bowling techniques improved substantially and they gained confidence with more time spent on the green".

Lisa Chapman, organiser and volunteer "the event was well organised in a relaxed and friendly environment which was reflected in the positive feedback from all the participants. To see their enthusiasm for the sport and to hear them voice their disappointment when 3pm came with the end of the session was also very rewarding.

The club membership has gone up along with the bowls membership and the bowls club received £800 in the process, less outgoings to then put towards new machinery.

As a bowling club to gain so many new members 'in one go' is amazing. This would not have happened without this event and the help we received from the BDA and Think Active. Time spent in helping to organise and carry out the sessions has all paid off, and which we intend to continue in future years".



“As a bowling club, to gain so many new members 'in one go' is amazing.”

Get in Touch

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Club Health Checker

The Club Health Checker is a free, online self-assessment tool that will identify the challenges faced by your bowls club and highlights areas for targeted growth.

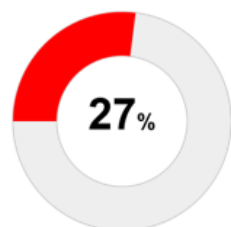
What are the benefits to your club?

1. Detailed self-assessment.
2. An opportunity to understand a club's strengths and areas for development.
3. Bespoke report – Feedback on answers and resources.
4. Regular support sessions on our week of learning programme.
5. Support from your Club and Community Development Officer to discuss your report.

Assessment Summary

Dear ...,

Thank you for completing the *Bowls Development Alliance Club Health Checker Self-Assessment Tool* on behalf of



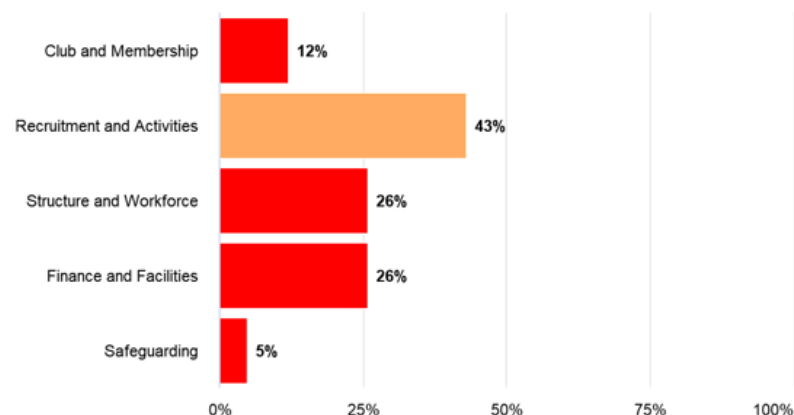
Your overall score was 27%

Your overall **Club Development Score** is **low**. This means your club has a lot of room for improvement. The good news is that we can help you with that! In this report you can read how you scored in each health checker section and where you need to improve on the most.

Keep in mind that your score is a product of your responses rated against a 100% score.

Each recommendation advises what action your committee can take as a next step in the club's development, and each is supported by a learning resource that will help you implement it.

The Health Checker Self-Assessment Questionnaire was divided into four parts. See below how you score for each one of them:



Club & Membership

The **Club and Membership** section assesses what your club membership offer consists of, as well as the membership size, diversity and trends. Your overall score in this section is **low**. This means that your club may be at risk due to the size, decline or average age of your membership.

To help you reduce your risk and improve your score, we have prepared a list of recommendations below.

Key Recommendation	Resources
Your Club Ownership Score is low.	
<p>Your Membership Offer score is low. This can be due to a combination of factors, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">You don't offer your new members a Welcome Pack: Offering new members a Welcome Pack helps them to settle into the club quickly.You are not formally consulting your members often enough. It is important to seek your members' feedback about how the club is run, the activities they are being offered and their general experience as members at least once per year.Improve your data collection. Having the right data about the club membership is vital for the running of the club. Have a look at our resources to find out what information is essential and how to collect it from your members.Offer a better variety of membership options. People's motivations, participation preferences and time commitments differ. To attract a larger, younger and more diverse audience to your club you need to offer them different membership options.	<p>Click the link: Understanding your participants</p> <p>Click the link: Benefits of Affiliation</p> <p>Click the link: Membership Options</p>

Week Of Learning



- Our Week of Learning Programme offers free webinars to members of clubs affiliated to one of our partner NGBs.
- The next sessions take place in January with the following taking place in March.

Week Of Learning Sessions

Crowd funding and the Movement Fund

- Monday 26th January 10am-11am
- Thursday 29th January 2pm-3pm

Premier 3s

- Monday 26th January 1pm-2pm
- Tuesday 27th January 6pm-7pm
- Wednesday 28th January 1pm-2pm

Dementia Friends Awareness

- Monday 26th January 6pm-7pm

What Should High Quality Coaching Look Like?

- Tuesday 27th January 10am-11am

Funding Portal

- Tuesday 27th January 1pm-2pm

Play Bowls Platform

- Wednesday 28th January time tbc

Introduction to Big Bowls Summer

- Wednesday 28th January 1pm-2pm
- Thursday 29th January 10am-11am

Easyfundraising

- Friday 30th January 10am-11am

Adult Safeguarding

- Friday 30th January 4pm-5pm
- Saturday 31st January 10am-11am

Frequently Asked Questions

- **How to recruitment more members?**

Recruiting and retaining members can sometimes be challenging but it is key to helping your club develop and thrive in the long term.

- **How can our club achieve this?**

Running regular recruitment events/open days

Attending local fetes and events

Offering free coaching sessions

Asking your members what they would like from their club

Engaging with other community groups within your local area

Frequently Asked Questions

- **How to access grant funding?**

Successful funding bids can assist club's in undertaking new projects such as facility improvements, purchasing new equipment and financing events like open days or community sessions.

Bowls England funding portal shows available external funding and is free to use for affiliated clubs and updated daily.

The Sport England Movement Fund is a great funding programme that offers grants for projects under £15,000 that meet the criteria. The programme is aimed to help increase participation in the community and focuses on projects that help to reduce inactivity, tackle inequality and reduce barriers to participation.

- **How should our club approach a grant funding application?**

Align with funders priorities.

Provide evidence of a genuine problem or struggle.

Show clear planning and realistic budgets/timescales.

Demonstrate community benefit.

Plan for sustainability after the grant.

Bowls Cornwall & Bowls Development Alliance



Bowls Club Development in Cornwall

Preparing for the future in 2026

Planning steps to move your Club forward

- What do you want to achieve
- How can this be done
- When would you like to achieve your ambitions
- Producing a '**Club Development Plan**' will enable improvement proposals to become visible and transparent

Writing your Club's Development Plan
does not entail writing volumes

It is always important
to keep your Club
Plan focused



A potential model design for your Club Development Plan

- An Introduction with a current situation analysis
- The way forward: Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Objectives
- How might this be achieved: Include Membership Recruitment & Retention, Club Governance, Development Proposals, Financial Management & Sports Play
- Show the Club's Management Structure
- Include a strategy statement of proposed initiatives with SMART Objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Targeted)
- Prepare an Action Plan
- Create Key Performance Indicators for monitoring
- Your Club Development Plan to cover the next three years ahead

How will my Bowls Club know how to write a Development Plan

- In February 2026, a one-day Workshop is proposed to be made available in each of Bowls Cornwall's four Group areas to assist clubs by discussing their individual identified needs
- It will be an opportunity for Clubs to share their own experiences in development planning so that all Clubs might be able to take something positive away from the day.



Useful Guidance and Information

- **BOWLS ENGLAND - 'BENEFITS OF AFFILIATION'**
- **FIT FOR THE FUTURE: BOWLS ENGLAND 2021-2026 STRATEGY**
- **FIT FOR THE FUTURE: BOWLS ENGLAND 2021-2026 STRATEGY - SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**
- **Visit the funding portal funding: [idoxopen4community.co.uk/ bowlsengland](https://idoxopen4community.co.uk/bowlsengland)**



Bodmin Bowls Club Disability Access

This case study highlights the success of Bodmin Bowls Club in receiving grant funding to undertake facility improvements, to ensure accessible facilities for the community.

Project Overview

In 2015, Bodmin Bowls Club created a development plan to improve facilities and by the commencement of 2025 had achieved the internal refurbishment of both the indoor bowls hall and clubhouse and the refurbishment of the large clubhouse flat roof with additional thermal insulation and resurfacing. The club aimed to improve the heating system in the indoor bowls hall and this was achieved by the end of September with a National Lottery Community Fund Grant.

Bodmin Bowls Club identified the importance of improving access to the club with set a goal of making the club more inclusive. The club produced a proposal to construct a wheelchair and disability/pedestrian walkway access ramp near to the existing flight of steps, providing direct access to both the entrance door of the clubhouse and the outdoor bowling green. These improvements were achieved through receiving substantial grant funding. In addition to the facility improvements, through obtaining further grant funding, a range of disability bowling aids were purchased, including two bowls wheelchairs.

Successes & Learnings

Bodmin Bowls Club has a Sport Development Sub-Committee that creates development proposals for the club to consider. Forward planning has always been considered very important to be able to prioritise the timing of projects and is based on year-to-year need and funding availability.

Regarding seeking grant funding, it is essential to consider the funding eligibility criteria set out by potential funders and where possible, discuss the project with one of their advisors prior to making a grant application. This will allow you to ensure your club/project is within the specific grant's guidelines, giving you the best chance to be successful in your bid.



Future Support

The next step is to deliver a series of local workshops in February/March where clubs can come together to gain practical support and guidance. These sessions will be specifically tailored to the unique challenges of the clubs that attend. By offering these hands-on workshops, we hope clubs will ask questions, gain knowledge, share ideas and current good practice, support one another and learn from other's experiences.



Workshop Details

- 5th February at Bodmin
- 19th February at Chacewater
- 28th February at St Stephen
- 7th March at Bickford Smith

All workshops running 10am-1pm

Contact



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