COVID-19: GUIDANCE FOR LAWN BOWLS
Issued: 18th September 2020

We're delighted so many clubs have been able to open their doors this season in a Covid-friendly manner. Not only have existing bowlers returned, but we've also heard fantastic stories of many new people giving our sport a go for the first time.

We understand the challenges you have faced this summer, and have been providing regular updates to ensure that clubs and players who wish to do so have been able to return to the green.

We are therefore pleased to issue the latest update to our guidance following receipt of additional information for the sport sector (updated 15th September 2020).

We would particularly highlight the following revisions (full detail may be found within the relevant sections of this document):

- **Use of rinks and format of play**
- **Gatherings**
- **Social activities/Spectators**
- **Short Mat Bowls**
- **Committee Meetings/AGMs**

We recommend that all clubs consider this document together with the Government guidance. All items may be adapted as necessary to meet your club's specific circumstances, so long as your actions remain consistent with Government advice and social distancing requirements.

With the end of the current summer season fast approaching, it's time to look ahead positively to 2021. The past few weeks have proved that there is little doubt in the appetite for people to enjoy our sport in a social and informal manner, which is complimentary to work and family life. Through national support and communications, and by empowering existing club volunteers and players, we can encourage new people to come along to our clubs, take part and be active.

Our research shows that over 20 per cent of bowlers begin playing off the back of club open days. With this insight, and following the success of our Let's Roll marketing initiative, plans are already underway for a national recruitment initiative ear-marked for the Spring Bank Holiday of the 2021 season.

Sign-up to our e-newsletter to be the first to hear about it.

Contents

INTRODUCTORY GUIDANCE 3
Support Bubble 3
Symptomatic/NHS Test and Trace 3
Shielding – Changes from 1 August 3
Local restrictions 3
Crown Green, Indoor and Short Mat Bowls 3
GUIDANCE FOR PLAYERS 4
Social distancing 4
Face masks 4
Hygiene 4
Equipment 4
Travelling for bowls 4
GUIDANCE FOR CLUBS 5
Use of rinks and format of play 5
Gatherings 5
Social Activities/Spectators 5
Short Mat Bowls 5
Committee Meetings/Annual General Meetings 5
Changing Rooms/Toilets 6
Bars and Restaurants 6
Communicating clearly and consistently 6
Flexibility and innovation 6
Keeping members and visitors safe 6
Keeping facilities and equipment clean 7
Maintaining hygiene, through handwashing, sanitisation facilities and toilets 7
USEFUL INFORMATION 8
BOWLS ENGLAND 8
SPORT ENGLAND 8
SPORT & RECREATION ALLIANCE 8
DEPARTMENT FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT 8
DEPARTMENT FOR BUSINESS, ENERGY & INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY AND DEPARTMENT FOR DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA & SPORT 8
FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY 8

INTRODUCTORY GUIDANCE

Support Bubble

Single adult households are now able to form a support bubble with one other household. If you live by yourself or are a single parent with dependent children – in other words, if there is only one adult in your home – you can expand your close support network so that it includes one other household of any size. For the purposes of this guidance, all references to 'households' also include their support bubble. From 14 September, if you form or continue in a support bubble, you cannot then change your support bubble. It does not have to be the same support bubble you may have been in previously.

Symptomatic/NHS Test and Trace

The opening up of the economy following the coronavirus outbreak is being supported by NHS Test and Trace. You should assist this service by keeping a temporary record of your participants for 21 days, in a way that's manageable for your organisation, and assist NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed. This could help contain clusters or outbreaks. An organisation isn't required to do anything until NHS Test and Trace contact you for further details. Arrangements should also be put in place to support test and trace efforts by collecting information from spectators which is detailed enough to allow NHS Test and Trace to contact them if necessary.

Shielding – Changes from 1 August

From 1 August, the government paused shielding unless the transmission of COVID-19 in the community starts to rise significantly. You may still be at risk of severe illness if you catch coronavirus, so stay at home as much as you can and continue to take precautions when you do go out. You can do this by washing your hands regularly, avoiding touching your face and keeping 2 metres away from people outside of your household or bubble wherever possible.

Local restrictions

This guidance applies to England. You should always consider whether there are local restrictions in place in your area. If you live, work or volunteer in an area that is experiencing a local COVID-19 outbreak and where local restrictions have been imposed, different guidance and legislation will apply. You should consult the local guidance for further clarification on the number of people allowed to gather, and types of activities that can and can't take place. Please consult the local restrictions pages to see if any restrictions are in place in your area.

Crown Green, Indoor and Short Mat Bowls

We are the National Governing Body for flat green outdoor bowls. The British Crown Green Bowling Association, English Indoor Bowling Association and English Short Mat Bowling Association have produced separate advice for their affiliated clubs. Please refer to their websites for specific information.

GUIDANCE FOR PLAYERS

Social distancing

Social distancing guidelines should be followed between people from different households wherever possible. This means a distance of 2m between people from different households, or 1m plus mitigations (such as face coverings or avoiding face-to-face contact) where 2m is not possible. We recommend that players maintain social distancing of 2m.

Face masks

There is no current requirement from the Government for face masks to be worn whilst participating in sport and physical activity outdoors. Clubs may consider the use of face masks as part of their risk assessment if they determine that 2m social distancing is not possible.

Hygiene

Hand sanitise at regular intervals, especially if you have to touch communal surfaces or equipment. Once you are home, remember to wash your hands thoroughly.

Equipment

Try to avoid using shared equipment whenever possible. If you are sharing equipment, for example jacks/mats, practise strict hand hygiene. Should measuring be necessary, players (or marker if used) must use their own measure.

The following items can be utilised during any session:

- Mat
- Bowls
- Jack
- Rink markers
- Gloves
- Scorecards (these should be retained by one person only if required)
- Bowling arm/lifter (for use by one person only if required)
- Bowling aids (for players with a disability if required)

The following items are deemed optional – it is for individual clubs to permit their use or otherwise:

- Scoreboards
- Bowls pushers
- Ditch markers
- 2m distance sticks
- Chalk (Spray chalk only)

Travelling for bowls

You can travel, however you should not travel in a small motor vehicle with someone from outside your household (for example you should not give a lift to any players from outside your household nor accept one). You should also consider all other forms of transport before using public transport.

GUIDANCE FOR CLUBS

Use of rinks and format of play

Bowls England recommends the following formats of play:

- Singles, Pairs or Triples
- Clubs may use every available rink but must give consideration social distancing at all times
- Players must limit the size of their group to six when undertaking the sport of outdoor bowls with people they don't live with. It's illegal to do so in a larger group and participants may be fined

Gatherings

Clubs must ensure that participants remain within distinct groups of no more than six people and social distancing is maintained (part of the Covid-secure requirements). It is for individual clubs to determine how they wish to operate within these requirements.

Social Activities/Spectators

Clubs following Covid-secure guidelines can host more than six people in total, but no one should participate or socialise in a group of greater than six. People must remain within distinct groups of no more than six people. It is also important that people from different households or support bubbles meeting in a single group remain socially distanced. This includes off-green activities.

More guidance for clubs that manage ancillary facilities (such as club houses, bars or restaurants) is available on the working safely during coronavirus page of the government's website. Arrangements should also be put in place to support test and trace efforts by collecting information from spectators which is detailed enough to allow NHS Test and Trace to contact them if necessary. See the maintaining records guidance for more information.

The Recreational Team Sport Framework sets out that supporters, parents, and other spectators should remain socially distanced whilst attending events. Spectator groups must be restricted to six people and spread out, in line with wider government guidance.

Where it's anticipated that an activity will attract spectators, there should be a named person or persons with responsibility for ensuring adherence with these guidelines and ensuring the facility is Covid-secure. The person should carry out and publish a risk assessment for the activity which limits the number of spectators and focuses on the need to maintain social distancing on arrival, for the duration of the activity, and on departure.

Short Mat Bowls

Clubs wishing to participate in short mat activity during the closed season should follow the guidance issued by the English Short Mat Bowling Association.

Committee Meetings/Annual General Meetings

We recommend that all meetings are conducted virtually until further notice. Sport specific guidance on organising virtual meetings, including Committee Meetings and AGMs, is available from Sport England Club Matters.

If you deem that a physical meeting is essential:

- Only absolutely necessary participants should physically attend meetings and should maintain social distancing guidelines (2m, or 1m with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable, is acceptable)
- The maximum number present in person for any meeting should not exceed six persons

Changing Rooms/Toilets

Indoor facilities, apart from toilets and throughways, should be closed. When accessing and leaving toilets you should wipe down areas of contact, wash hands thoroughly, use paper towels where possible and avoid touching any surfaces in transit. Where clubs deem changing facilities necessary, they must set clear guidance on use, ensure they are kept clean, clear of personal items and that social distancing is adhered to. If changing rooms are to be used, players should use the facilities as quickly as possible.

Bars and Restaurants

We welcomed the easing of restrictions that the Government announced with regard to bars and restaurants, and this has enabled members to gain refreshment after their game of bowls and clubs to generate much-needed income. We released a checklist for clubs on the re-opening of bars and restaurants as part of our 'Back2Bowls' guidance.

If bar/catering facilities are open respect social distancing whilst queuing for food and drink. Ensure clear signage is in place so people can find their destination quickly. Look at how people walk through your club and consider how you could adjust this to reduce congestion and contact. For example, queue management or one-way flow, where possible. Using outside premises for queuing where available and safe, for example car parks.

Do not share food items, cups, plates or eating utensils with anyone else. Consider mandating contactless or at least card payment, to avoid handling cash. Ensure social distancing between customers and servers when food or drink is handed over, and consider using screens.

Communicating clearly and consistently

Communicate clearly and regularly with members to set out what you are doing to manage risk, and what advice you are giving to individuals to do likewise.

Flexibility and innovation

Clubs should be ready to strengthen or relax measures at short notice (for example in the case of a 'local lockdown'). Clubs are encouraged to think creatively about how best to organise bowls within the guidelines. We will continue to share examples of good practice over the coming weeks.

Keeping members and visitors safe

The Government has published guidance to help workplaces operate as safely as possible. You should refer to this guidance. Relevant points are:

- Carry out a COVID-19 risk assessment
- Maintain social distancing by re-designing spaces or by opening more entrances and exits
- Reinforce cleaning processes, cleaning more frequently and paying close attention to high-contact objects like door handles and keyboards

- Provide clear guidance on social distancing and hygiene to visitors on arrival; for example, signage and visual aids

Keeping facilities and equipment clean

Cleaning protocols should be put in place to limit coronavirus transmission in public places. Touch points (e.g. handrails and gates) should be particular areas of focus for increased cleaning.

Maintaining hygiene, through handwashing, sanitisation facilities and toilets

To help everyone maintain good hygiene, consideration should be given to the following items:

- Using signs and posters to build awareness of good handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing frequency, avoid touching your face and to cough or sneeze into your arm. Consider how to ensure safety messages reach those with hearing or vision impairments
- Providing regular reminders and signage to maintain hygiene standards
- Providing hand sanitiser in multiple locations in addition to washrooms
- Setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and social distancing is achieved
- Enhancing cleaning for busy areas
- Providing more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection
- Using disposable paper towels in handwashing facilities where possible
- Minimising use of portable toilets
- Provision of automated hand sanitising dispensers in public places

If you have any questions, please e-mail: enquiries@bowlsengland.com. We are here to help and we will endeavour to respond within three working days.

THIS GUIDANCE NOTE REPLACES ALL PREVIOUS VERSIONS ISSUED BY BOWLS ENGLAND

USEFUL INFORMATION

BOWLS ENGLAND

Coronavirus Guidance
www.bowlsengland.com/coronavirus-guidance/

SPORT ENGLAND

Sport England
www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/coronavirus
www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/coronavirus/return-play/frequently-asked-questions-return-sport-and-activity

Club Matters (Club resources including reopening toolkit, risk assessment and social distancing guide)
https://learn.sportenglandclubmatters.com/course/view.php?id=71

SPORT & RECREATION ALLIANCE

General guidance
https://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/news/covid-19

DEPARTMENT FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Guidance on the phased return of sport and recreation
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-phased-return-of-sport-and-recreation

DEPARTMENT FOR BUSINESS, ENERGY & INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY AND DEPARTMENT FOR DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA & SPORT

Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19)
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19

FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY

Reopening and adapting your food business during COVID-19
https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/reopening-and-adapting-your-food-business-during-covid-19?fbclid=IwAR1qB85YWlIBSHV4J8Zfnb2BlS76kpOGS2P-0AJnIn8DqPFXghoq3q2SbRM