



### IN THIS ISSUE: COVID-19 - CLUB DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME - LOVE FISHER BROWN AWARD - JUST BOWL

Welcome to the spring edition of the Bowls Development Alliance newsletter.

In the last few weeks while we were putting together this newsletter our lives have all changed dramatically. I had written about the excitement of the coming season and the 161 clubs (a record number) that had applied for Play Bowls Package funding and who were planning their open days over the coming months and running their four weekly follow up sessions. Now all clubs are closed and we are being told to stay at home.

The BDA team are all continuing to work during this very difficult period - many of them will be in touch by phone or email to see what support they can offer.



We are encouraging all those clubs we work with to postpone their open days until July or August in the hope that the whole season will not be totally wiped out.

The Just Bowl team are unable to visit care homes so they too are looking at the work they can continue with for the next few months.

The next three months are going to be very difficult for everyone but we hope that by following the Government's guidelines we will come through it and still get to enjoy a good summer.

Keep safe everyone and keep fingers crossed that we will see some bowling later in the year.

Susan Cooper, Development Director

### Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Following the advice issued by HM Government, Public Health England, Sport England and the NHS the Bowls Development Alliance (BDA) have been looking at ways to best support clubs that have been actively engaging with our programmes through this difficult and unprecedented COVID-19 outbreak. With that in mind we have decided to take the following action:

#### Club Development Programme

The Club Development team remain 'open for business' however, our Club Development Officers will not be able to visit clubs for face to face meetings and therefore any meetings or workshops planned until the end of April 2020 are postponed. We are also recommending to all clubs that are part of the Club Development Programme and have any open days planned until the end of April that they are also postponed.

The Club Development Team are all at the end of the phone and will be working to continue to support clubs on any aspects of a clubs Club Development Plan that do not require face to face meetings. We are also able to hold skype meetings or conference calls if appropriate.

#### Play Bowls Packages including Women Can Packages

Our Play Bowls Packages scheme has once again been heavily subscribed with applications from clubs since the window opened in February. With immediate effect we are postponing all funding for events planned from today until the end April 2020. To ensure that clubs are not disadvantaged, clubs will be able to simply email in to [packages@playbowls.org](mailto:packages@playbowls.org) with re-arranged dates once the advice from relevant bodies is changed. We are from today removing the package window closing date and will be leaving the package window open through the year. To ensure that we can support clubs once the advice is changed, applications will be accepted 7 days before the first event (Open Day).

#### Women Can and WI Groups

We are again recommending from today that all activities are postponed until the end of April 2020. We suggest that clubs keep the communications between the club and the WI group ongoing so as soon as the advice is changed activity can restart.

It should be noted we are currently working on a month by month approach to ensure that we are as flexible as we can be in this situation so that as soon as the advice from the relevant bodies changes, we are ready to support clubs with recruitment and development. We will be issuing a further statement regarding events already in the diary in May, on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

Please keep an eye on our website [www.playbowls.org](http://www.playbowls.org) and our social media accounts on Twitter and Facebook for the latest advice. We will also be publishing any information we receive from Sport England regarding any support available to clubs from central sources to help you through this challenging time.

## Club Development Programme Update

The BDA Club Development Programme is entering the last year of its 2017-2021 delivery phase and is going from strength to strength!

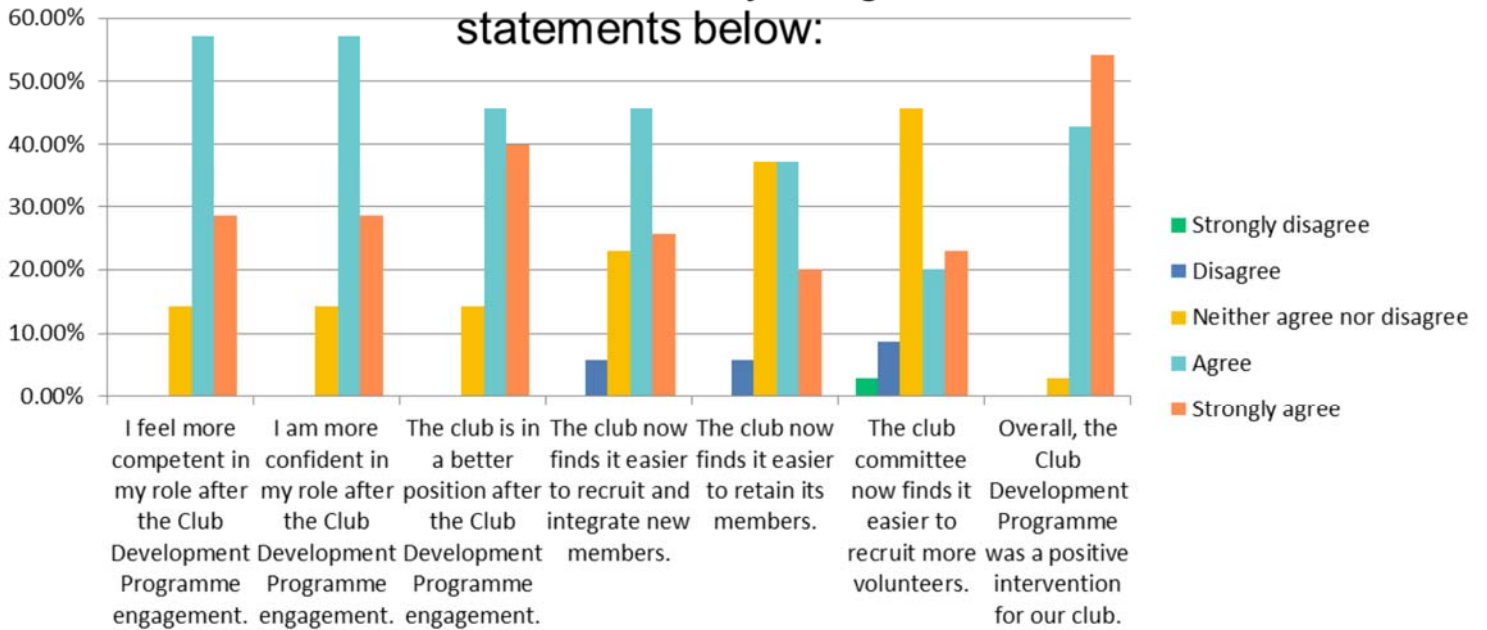
Since the beginning of the calendar year, 47 more clubs have joined our Club Development Programme, bringing the total number of clubs involved with the programme to over 150!

67 clubs have already completed their engagement with our programme. We have conducted research about the impact of our programme on the clubs that have completed their engagement over the past few years.

Our findings confirm that the positive effects of taking part in the programme are long-lasting. There has been an average of 5% membership increase for the clubs one year after they concluded their participation in our programme. Also, 80% of the clubs who took part in the survey had continued stabilising or growing their membership.



### Please select to what extent you agree with the statements below:



Of the club committees, 86% claimed that following their involvement with our programme they are now more confident and competent in the running of their clubs. 71% find it easier to recruit and integrate new members, whereas 67% find it easier to recruit new volunteers at the club. Overall, 97% of clubs have indicated that the programme had a positive impact on their development.

A good example of the positive influence of our programme on a club can be seen on the next page, where you can read about the story of Calne Bowls Club.

The application window for outdoor clubs to join the programme ends on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. Indoor clubs have a few more months left to apply to take part – their application deadline is 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020. For more information on how to apply, please visit our website <http://playbowls.org/clubs/club-development-programme>

### New addition to the team with focus on the Women Can programme

Louise has recently joined the team as the Women Can Club Development Officer. Louise has worked in sports development for almost 20 years. Having completed her degree in Secondary Physical Education Louise worked within British Cycling's coach education department before a move back to her Irish roots as National Development Officer for Irish Gymnastics. After returning to England she worked in British Gymnastics in both sports development and performance roles. Returning to British Cycling as Education Manager she managed the strategic direction of all officials and volunteers within cycling. More recently she has lead the workforce strategy for Great Britain Wheelchair Rugby. Louise has always enjoyed sport, having been national champion in gymnastics she has competed internationally as a track cyclist and more recently has taken to marathon running.





## A Growing Community Bowls Club in the Heart of Wiltshire – Calne BC

*Theme: Individual Well-being / Community Development*

**“The committee was enthusiastic but had no real experience in recruiting. The officer support from the BDA and the development plan gave us direction, and we have increased our membership by 30%, even getting people joining as late as August.”**

**Barry Wicks, chairman, Calne Bowling Club**

### A club in transition

Calne Bowling Club was formed in March 1914 and, as well as many enjoyable years of bowling, it has seen many changes over this time. The small outdoor club in Wiltshire went through a transition period recently when they changed their entire committee. The club was having difficulty in retaining members, as well as recruiting new ones. There was a need for change, and a revitalized committee was determined to reverse the club's decline. This led them to apply to join the BDA's Club Development Programme.

### A fresh start

The new committee were determined not to let their problems overwhelm them, and they realised that to progress they would need:

- the backing of their local authority;
- to build a new club website to increase their online presence;
- to improve the state of the club green;
- to train their members to be able to run and support successful open days.
- recruit and integrate enough new members to reverse the decline.

The committee pro-actively followed the club development plan which was agreed by the club and the BDA Officer. They are now working in close partnership with the town council to help develop the club as an inclusive community facility. The club committee knew it was a priority for the state of the green to be improved and maintained and therefore encouraged new members to become involved in greenkeeping. A new website has been developed which could rival any sports clubs in design and content, showcasing bowls as an inclusive sport for all, and therefore attracting a much broader audience from its modernised and easily accessible online presence.



# Transforming Lives Through Sport & Physical Activity

October 2019

## Learning & Successes

- Calne BC was faced with urgent challenges that needed to be addressed to prevent the club going into further decline. The result of re-focusing the committee and pro-actively taking on the actions set out in their development plan was that they welcomed 34 open day visitors, of which 17 joined as new members.
- The committee understands that being able to offer social and participation opportunities all year round is integral to the future of the club. That is why a regular short mat bowls session was introduced at the Beversbrook Sports Facility in the off-season to allow members to keep bowling together. This has now turned into a year-round club and has encouraged members of the public to begin bowling, both indoors and outdoors.
- The general ethos at the club has changed for the better and the club's success story is a perfect example of what can be achieved when everyone is working towards the same goal, creating a friendly environment to retain and recruit new members.



## The Club Development Programme

Through the BDA's four-year Sport England-funded strategy, the Club Development Programme offers bowls clubs across the country a unique support programme to develop and better sustain their membership numbers.

Every club involved in the programme receives direct support from the BDA to create a Club Development Plan that will help the club to not only provide the best experience for its present members but support new recruitment initiatives to increase their current membership.

There are now over 100 clubs that have been part of the programme since April 2017. It has so far contributed to the recruitment and integration of over 1000 new bowlers, 100 new coaches, 100 new volunteers and 650 new club helpers.



**“The support given from the Club Development Programme is invaluable and I would recommend clubs in a similar situation to us to apply to this programme.”**

**Barry Wicks, chairman, Calne Bowling Club**

### Further information

Bowls Development Alliance  
T: 01664 777001  
E: [office@playbowls.org](mailto:office@playbowls.org)  
W: [www.playbowls.org](http://www.playbowls.org)

Calne BC:  
[www.calnebowlsclub.co.uk](http://www.calnebowlsclub.co.uk)

Sport England, 21 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3HF  
[www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org)

## The Winners of the 2019 Love Fisher Brown Award are Announced!



The Griffin Bowls Club in Harlow, Essex, were awarded the 2019 Love Fisher Brown Award for their outstanding work championing disability sport and integrating disabled bowlers to the club. The award, sponsored by Para Handy and Drakes Pride, was created to recognise clubs that provide disabled participation opportunities for their bowlers. Some of the club's achievements include hosting weekly sessions throughout the summer for an Alzheimer Society's group and a Harlow Youth Group for young people with additional learning needs. In addition, they have invested heavily on inclusive equipment and volunteer training. Half of the club members have at least one impairment, and they are all included in all of the club's activities. Moreover, some of the members have been empowered to develop themselves further and train to become coaches or compete at a national level.

**Ann King, the Griffin Bowls Club's secretary reacted to the news on behalf of the club:** "We are very excited to have won this award. So many people have worked very hard this year to achieve so much in such a short time!"

After careful consideration and thought, the Disability Steering Group panel, comprised of representatives from the Activity Alliance, Bowls Development Alliance, Bowls England, Disability Bowls England and English Indoor Bowling Association, selected the following 3 clubs as the winners and runners-up, from the 12 strong nominations received in 2019.

**2019 Love Fisher Brown Award Winners – The Griffin Bowls Club**  
**2019 Love Fisher Brown Award Runner Up – Kempston Park Indoor Bowls Club**  
**2019 Love Fisher Brown Award Runner Up – Lincoln & District Indoor Bowls Club**

**On behalf of the award panel, George Babalev (Club Development Manager and Disability Lead for the Bowls Development Alliance) said:** "For a second year in a row the standard of the nominations was exceptionally high and the nature of the activities detailed within them were both inspiring and humbling. I congratulate all of this year's nominated clubs for their commendable efforts towards making the sport and their clubs more inclusive. I hope they all continue to build on the successes of 2019 and progress even further next year in their endeavour to provide opportunities for disabled people to participate in bowls."

The 2020 nomination window will open later in the year. For more details about the Love Fisher Brown Award, contact [disability@playbowls.org](mailto:disability@playbowls.org) or go to <http://playbowls.org/disability-bowls/love-fisher-brown-award>

## A New Module Is Launched To Help Clubs Include Disabled People in Bowls

The Disability Bowls Steering Group is delighted to announce the re-launch the Working with Disabled People in Bowls Module. Under a new title – **'Supporting Inclusion – Including Disabled People in Bowls'** this 3-hour module is for all club volunteers, whether coaches, club helpers or committee members that would like to make their clubs more inclusive. The workshop focuses on practical ideas to include all bowlers in activities, regardless of disability. It encourages clubs to understand why people play bowls, how activities can be modified or adapted and how to help bowlers progress.

The new module has added content on how to:

- Understand what inclusion means and the importance of being an inclusive club
- Recognise how to make your club more inclusive
- Understand what disabled people want from sport
- Explore the Activity Inclusion Model in bowls and the implications on your club activities
- Identify actions for your club

For more information please visit [coachbowls.org](http://coachbowls.org) or contact **Coach Bowls** on 01926 334910 or email: [courses@coachbowls.org](mailto:courses@coachbowls.org).



# JUST BOWL

Since Christmas it has been an exciting time for Just Bowl with the confirmation of Sport England funding, an exciting sponsorship deal, new equipment and new partnerships with various organisations such as Headway, the Stroke Association, Sanctuary Care, Gracewell and Livewell.

January started with the exciting news that Sport England had agreed to fund Just Bowl for a further 3 years. Strand one of the work is for the team to deliver a 12-week programme within 200 care homes and in doing so target over 2000 participants. In order to accomplish this, Just Bowl have been working with various care home providers as well as North Devon NHS Care Services and East Devon NHS Care Services team to identify care homes to work with. The second strand is to work with our partner Sheffield Hallam University to carry out research with Headway, the Stroke Association and several care homes specialising in dementia to establish the impact that Just Bowl has within these targeted groups.



January also brought about Just Bowl's first ever sponsorship deal. The initial deal with Utility Bidder is for a year but it is hoped that this will develop into a long-term partnership. More information on what Utility Bidder do and how they can benefit your club or facility can be found at <https://www.utilitybidder.co.uk/>



Finally, Just Bowl have recently received a shipment of new equipment that were designed by Senior Just Bowl Officer Kevin Else and are aimed at bringing enjoyment and fun to the care homes. They are also designed for people with dementia in mind as their bright and colourful features are purposefully targeted at stimulating the participants. The new equipment is also available to clubs and is perfect as a community engagement tool as well as a coaching aid for both indoor and outdoor clubs. For information on how to purchase the equipment please contact Ian McCombes on [ian@justbowl.org](mailto:ian@justbowl.org)



For the latest **Sport England** guidance on COVID-19 please visit <https://www.sportengland.org/news/coronavirus-information-sector>

The **Sport and Recreation Alliance** also have published a number of documents to help the Sports sector through the COVID-19 pandemic <https://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/>

### STOP PRESS

Sport England have just launched the #StayInWorkOut website, with advice and guidance on how to keep fit or get active in and around your home. Join the movement at <https://www.sportengland.org/stayinworkout>



GET ACTIVE, HAVE FUN, PLAY BOWLS

[WWW.PLAYBOWLS.ORG](http://WWW.PLAYBOWLS.ORG)