



GET ACTIVE, HAVE FUN, PLAY BOWLS

Bowls Development Alliance

Play Bowls Strategy
2017 - 2021





BOWLS Development Alliance Team

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PLAY BOWLS: 2017 - 2021

GET ACTIVE . HAVE FUN . PLAY BOWLS

The Bowls Development Alliance (BDA) was formed in 2009 with the aim of bringing all the National Governing Bodies (NGB's) responsible for bowls, together in order to ensure the future growth and sustainability of the sport. Over this seven year period there have been many changes and challenges but throughout as an organisation the BDA has shown themselves not only to have a significant influencing role on the sport but also to be an effective deliverer.

Moving forward to 2017-2021, the BDA will continue to act as the umbrella organisation for flat green bowls but with a focus on delivering two core investment strands identified within the Sport England strategy, "Towards an Active Nation".

The BDA will remain the primary point of contact for the sport and any areas of work which fall outside of the BDA's focus will be signposted to the relevant National Governing Body and a key point of contact within them.

The "Play Bowls" brand will be refreshed ready for a new focus and a new challenge. In addition new partners will be identified who can enhance the effectiveness of the board and bring specific skills and experiences to the table.

The BDA presently has a green rating around governance and in light of the recently launched new "Code for Sports Governance" will be working towards the new requirements over the next few years.

Bowls England (BE) and the English Indoor Bowling Association (EIBA) are fully committed to sustaining the previous four years delivery of the BDA and supporting the new business plan which will focus on delivering the "Sustaining the Core Market" and the Inactive to Active investment strands as identified by Sport England.



Figures taken from the Age UK "Later Life in the UK" publication (Oct 2016) shows that there are over 23.6 million people aged 50 years and over which is a third of the total UK population. Their data also shows that 76.1% of those aged 65 and over do not take part in any sport but around 20% would like to get more physically active. Bowls sits alongside golf, cycling and swimming as the most popular activity for older people.

Research from the Chief Medical Officers report "Start Active Stay Active" (Aug 2011) showed that older people want to stay healthy and fit enough to continue doing those things that are important to them:

- o **Stay pain free**
- o **Maintain capacity to get out and about**
- o **Retain independence**
- o **Stay engaged with the local community**
- o **Make a useful contribution to family, friends, and society in general.**

The BDA aims to be inclusive in all areas of delivery and the demographic of the sport allows for this. Bowls is well placed when it comes to engaging older people and in particular those who have a disability. The recent Sport England "Mapping Disability" research paper states that one in five people in England have a long standing limiting disability or illness and 70% of disabled people are over 50 years old. With this data in mind all of the delivery detailed in this document will be entirely inclusive. There will no longer be any separation, in terms between disabled and non-disabled people other than when reporting data back to Sport England and the National Governing Bodies of the sport. Bowls can be played by anyone, regardless of disability, age, gender or race and all of the BDA's funded activities will reflect and promote this inclusivity.

With over 2,500 bowls clubs across the country, the opportunities are there to sustain membership alongside supporting continued growth which will allow the BDA to help strengthen the resilience of the sport. There are thousands of volunteers within these clubs who play a variety of roles including committee member, coach, club welfare officer, grounds person and tea-maker to name but a few. Play Bowls has tools available through "Coach Bowls" that can increase the number and quality of volunteers, which in turn would impact on both sustaining participation alongside a small amount of annual growth to take account of the drop off caused by ill health or death.

This strategy will focus on showing how the BDA intend to deliver the outcomes as identified in the Sport England's "Sustaining the Core Market" investment strand and the Inactive to Active funding pot.

Summary of the Last Four Years 2013 -2017

Track record – Getting People to keep a habit and sustain it

The last four years has seen the BDA engaged in bringing new people into the sport of bowls, developing a habit of participating a minimum of two hours, once a week and then sustaining that habit for the rest of their active life.

In December 2012, the BDA was awarded £2 million to engage more people in the sport. Sport England set external targets, via the Active People Survey (APS) of:

- 245,078 regular participants aged 55 and over
- 64,800 regular disabled participants aged 16 and over

By October 2016, APS reported the following figures for bowls participation:

- 205,500 regular participants aged 55 and over
- 43,300 regular disabled participants aged 16 and over

55 and over participation is reported to be in steady decline, whereas disabled participation has stabilized within the past 2 years. It is important to note that APS measures across all codes of bowls whereas the majority of the BDA's work has focused on the flat lawn green game. Therefore, there are multiple factors influencing APS in addition to the BDA. With this in mind, the BDA also set internal targets to give a more focused measurement of performance for the interventions delivered by the BDA between 2013 and 2017.

Internal targets were agreed as:

- 10,810 new regular participants aged 55 and over
- 2,800 new regular disabled participants aged 16 and over

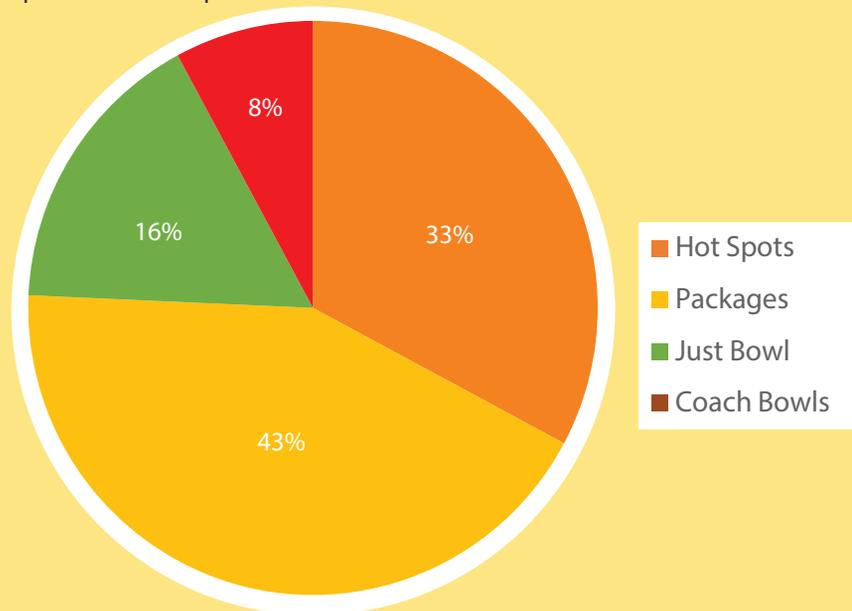
As of October 2016, the BDA had recruited:

- 11,794 new regular participants aged 55 and over
- 2,924 new regular disabled participants aged 16 and over

As a result, the BDA have been able to recruit over 14,500 people in the last four years. However, the BDA's true impact extends further than this as over 1,000 coaches and/or volunteers have been upskilled during this time resulting in well over 15,500 people have been positively influenced in the past four years (not including the number of people the 1,000 coaches and/or volunteers have worked with/influenced).

Impact of Interventions 2013 - 2017

The package scheme has been the strand which has recruited most new participants in this four year period, but this is to be expected as it also has the widest reach of any strand. Clubs applied direct to the BDA office for funding and if they satisfied the criteria they were approved and received an information pack to assist them with their events. However, the CSP Hot Spots strand has probably been the most successful, if not in numbers, then in terms of impact. The Hot Spots were selected on the CSP's ability to successfully meet outcomes, but mainly for the fact that the areas were showing low signs of engagement with the BDA. By working in partnership with the CSP's, the BDA has been able to identify and remove whatever barriers there were to engagement and work with clubs to bring new people into the sport.



The 2013-2017 plan saw the first official disabled participation target set for the sport of bowls. This resulted in the BDA operating a dual focus, split between increasing the number of disabled people taking part in the sport on a regular basis and delivering strategic improvements for the benefit of the whole sport in the longer term.

In addition to the 2,535 new regular disabled participants recruited to date since 2013 through the CSP Hot Spots, National Package Scheme and Just Bowl initiatives, the BDA has also led on:

- The creation of the first Disability strategy for the sport, titled "National Disability Strategic Action Plan" (NDSAP).
- The creation of a cross-sport steering group to oversee the implementation of the NDSAP.
- Launched the "Love Fisher Brown Award" which identifies, recognizes and rewards clubs and community organisations, delivering participation opportunities for disabled people.
- Created and piloted the Disability Club Kitemark which seeks to make it easier for disabled people to understand which clubs are operating to agreed minimum standards which will ensure a quality experience for disabled bowlers.
- Conducted two national surveys in relation to disabled participation.
- The creation of a "Working with Disabled People in Bowls" module which provides training for coaches and volunteers who are, or wish to, work with disabled bowlers.

In order to grow the sport it was identified that those being introduced to the sport for the first time must have a high quality first experience and that means having the right people who can make that initial session fun and engaging.

Back in 2013 there were no qualifications in the sport for bowls coaching. A voluntary led organisation organised training for coaches and awarded a certificate following attendance. The courses differed in content and quality of delivery across the country and in September 2013, Bowls England and the English Indoor Bowling Association removed their funding and re-directed it to the BDA for the development of nationally recognised qualifications for the first time in the history of the sport.

The "Coach Bowls" brand was introduced. This included a membership scheme for all coaches and access to a suite of nationally recognized qualifications. Modules were also developed to assist coaches with their delivery but also as a means of upskilling club volunteers to give them the confidence to make their club more welcoming especially to those with a disability.

Over the next four years the BDA will continue to build on the achievements since 2013 as well as driving forward the new focus aimed at encouraging people to stay active through playing bowls, well into later life.



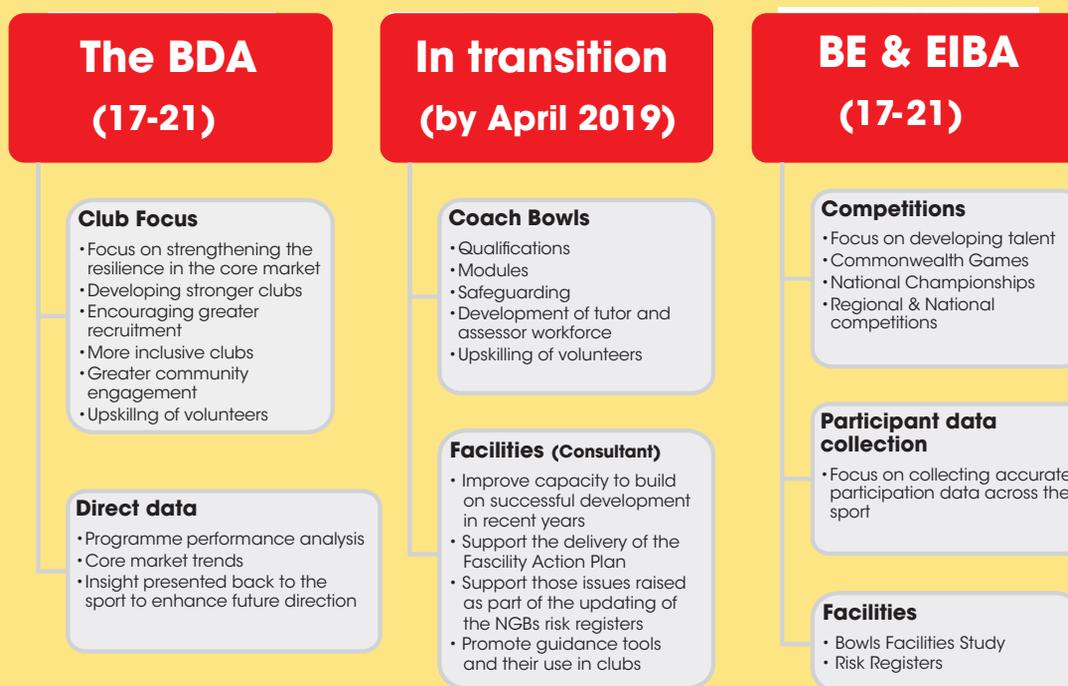


The Organisation

The Bowls Development Alliance will continue to act as the umbrella organisation for flat green bowls.

Moving forward there will, be a clearer division of responsibilities (shown below) which will enable the BDA to focus its resources on the delivery of the “Play Bowls” strategy.

Division of responsibilities 2017 - 2021



To show true sustainability and less reliance on Sport England funding, the work focusing on coaching will become the administrative responsibility of the two NGB's from April 2019. In order for the switch to be smooth, a transitional document will be developed and implemented gradually throughout the first two years. This will then ensure a seamless transition of this key area of work. The upskilling of the workforce remains a focus throughout the four year period as part of the Club Development Programme.

The Facility Consultant will work alongside the BDA and the two NGB's over a two year period to add much needed capacity to the work and to build on successful development and funding applications of recent years. They will focus on working with the two NGBs on the prioritised actions as identified in the newly developed Facilities Action Plan as well as promoting guidance and tools available for clubs to use.

The new Club Development Programme will support this work around facilities throughout the four year period as clubs will receive direct support with any facility issues raised as part of their audit and subsequent club development plan.

Market Understanding

There are currently 198,349 people playing flat green bowls. They play within a club environment of which there are currently 2,503 affiliated flat green clubs. 294 of these are affiliated to the English Indoor Bowling Association and the remaining 2,209 to Bowls England.

From insight work undertaken by the BDA, it is known that over half of participants play both indoor and outdoor codes and on average participate at least once a week for a period of two hours each time. The formats that are available are aligned closely to the traditional game of either a set amount of ends (18 or 21) or a set amount of target shots (21). At present, within the club structure there is not a widely played shorter format which may appeal to those unwilling or unable to participate through the traditional formats on offer. From the National Participation Survey it has also become clear that motivations for play are dominated by the wish to be social and to gain health benefits, with competition identified as not a priority motivation.

As a demographic breakdown, the BDA is aware that the following is true of the current participants of flat green bowls:

Demographic Data

Age Breakdown

- 92.3% 55 and over
- 11.1% - 55 - 64
- 49.0% - 65 - 74
- 32.2% - 75 and over
- 7.66% 55 and under

Gender Split

- 66.8% Men
- 33.2% Female

Disability Split

- 41.4% Disability
- (estimation based on responses to 2015 National Disability Survey)

It is important the sport of bowls clearly identifies who their core market is, how they think and feel, how they behave, who they are and what prevents them from taking part currently. This data is taken from current affiliation records but it is acknowledged by the BDA and NGB partners that this quality of data must be improved. As such the BDA Board, including BE and EIBA have agreed to the development of a data strategy that will deliver improved accuracy and allow for more effective insight to be provided over the next four years.

Identifying the 'Core Market'

How do they behave?

- Activity taken up on retirement
- Long lapse from taking part in sport
- Activity takes between 2-3hrs per week with majority playing twice per week
- 52% play both outdoor and indoor
- Some general active lifestyle -rambling

How do they think/feel (attitude)?

- Aware of health benefits of being physically active
- Social Interaction
- Assists with independent living
- Opportunity to remain competitive well into older age

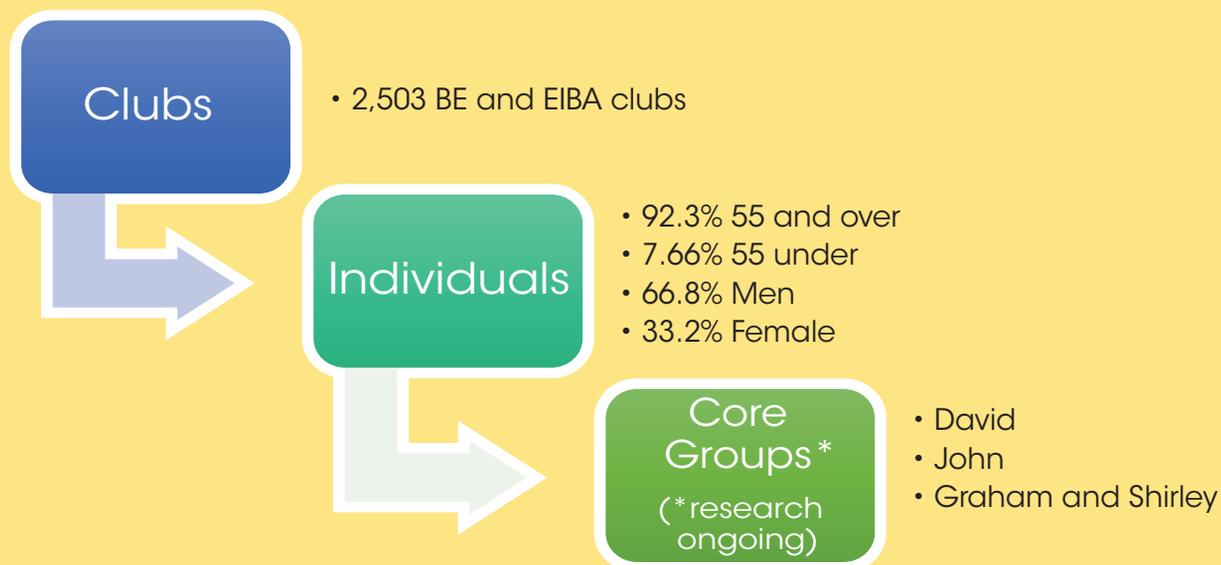
What gets in the way (barrier)?

- Health problems associated with old age
- Transport/logistics
- Facility access
- Length of games leads to tiredness and drop off
- Responsibilities as grandparents

Who are they?

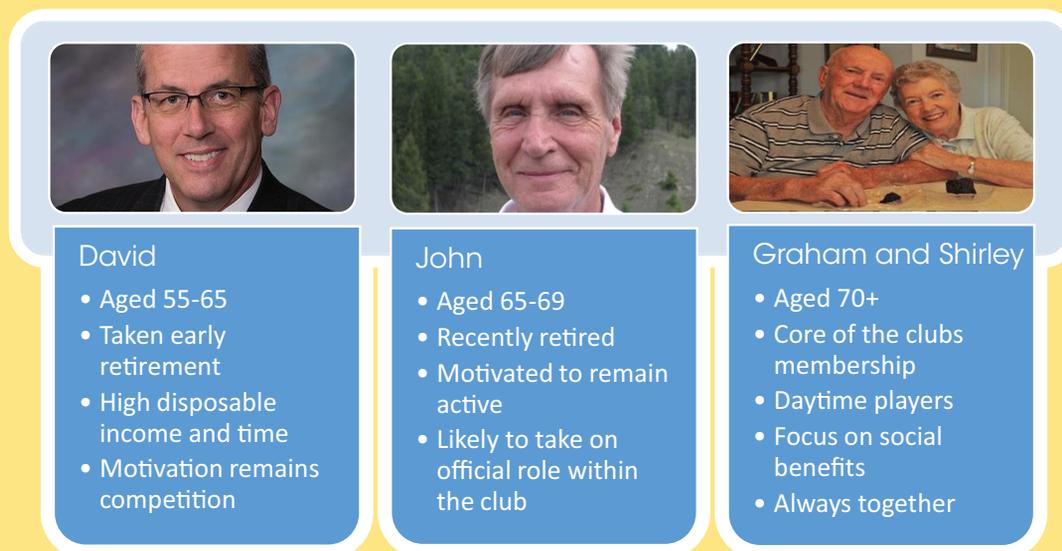
- Mainly white, retired males 55+
- Couples often play at the same club
- Individuals who have lost their long term partner
- Low representation from ethnic minority groups

Bowls Core Market:



When identifying the core market for bowls, the BDA took a three staged approach which initially established the number of flat green affiliated clubs, then identified the dominant demographics of the members within these clubs before finally profiling three main core groups within the overall core market which are shown below:

Core Market Groups



David represents a core market group who have recently retired and entered the sport. He is likely to still retain an element of competitiveness and to have played other sports recently. Unlike the other core market groups, engagement with David at this stage is limited to recruiting him into the sport through the Play Bowls Package, after this his focus will be on developing his skills and competing which will maintain his habit.

For John, his competitive motivators are likely to have faded and instead, his contribution to the sport is through influencing his club by way of taking up an official position. As a result, engagement with this group is through the Club Development Programme, working with John and his club mates to improve their club and facilities and to develop a stronger resilience and loyalty to the sport.

Lastly, Graham and Shirley are the most loyal of the three core market groups having been in the sport for a number of years. Like John, their focus is on enjoying their bowling and taking advantage of the social networks that are created. They are likely to have relinquished any official roles within the club but will volunteer for one off, major events and as such will be engaged through the Club Development Programme. Graham and Shirley will remain in the sport until failing health makes it impossible to continue.

Insight

Additional to the data referenced in earlier sections, recent insight has shown that in order to influence and sustain the core market groups, there needs to be a focus on engaging with a larger number of clubs. To date, the BDA has worked alongside clubs, coaches and volunteers to deliver net growth in club memberships within those that have actively engaged and received funding from the BDA. However, as the engaged clubs figure has stabilized at 12.8%, the impact of the membership growth hasn't been sufficient to prevent the participation across the sport as a whole declining. The BDA are able to reach 104,145 people and directly influence 36,661, of whom 20% are disabled. Therefore, the issue for the Play Bowls strategy moving forwards is not as much how to increase memberships, as the BDA are already delivering on this, it is to increase the amount of clubs the BDA can have a similarly positive influence on which will lead to a more resilient sport.

2017-2021 BDA predicted influence and impact						
Number of Clubs	% Clubs	Members retained by BDA	Members recruited by BDA	Net Growth /Decline	BDA Reach	BDA Influence
500	20%	2,400	11,760	+2.81%	104,145	36,614

Therefore, the BDA have set out that they will work with 20% of Bowls England and EIBA clubs by 2020:



With an increase in club engagement, the BDA are confident that they will strengthen resilience in the clubs by supporting these people with their habit and thus sustain participation.

Strategic Context

Vision

“Working with flat green clubs to help them and the bowlers within them develop more resilient habits to ensure a stronger sport, the benefits of which can be enjoyed for a life time”

Core Values of the Organisation:

- To focus on the needs of the bowler
- To ensure everyone regardless of age, gender ethnicity or disability has access to a quality experience
- To provide a safe environment in which to play

Objectives

- To strengthen resilience in the bowls core market
- To continue to introduce new people into the sport so as to develop a habit of regular physical activity
- To ensure all projects are fully inclusive
- To contribute to the physical and mental wellbeing of participants
- To develop accurate data collection and insight methods alongside key partners
- To upskill the volunteer workforce to ensure participants receive the best possible experience
- To ensure clubs have support in the maintenance and development of their facilities and so strengthen resilience

2017-2021:

Play Bowls supports Sport England’s vision to produce a more productive, sustainable, resilient and responsible sport sector. This plan puts bowls customers at the heart of its delivery with the aim to make bowls clubs more welcoming and inclusive, particularly for those who are older and those who are currently under-represented in the sport but also help to reinforce a physical activity habit well into later life.

This strategy has aimed to align itself to the priorities laid down by Sport England in the new strategy “Towards an Active Nation” looking to develop more resilient habits, encourage those older people who are presently inactive to become active and develop a more diverse volunteer workforce.

The strategy will also provide opportunities for both physical and mental well-being and to encourage more bowls clubs to be the heart of the local community through the provision of more diverse services.

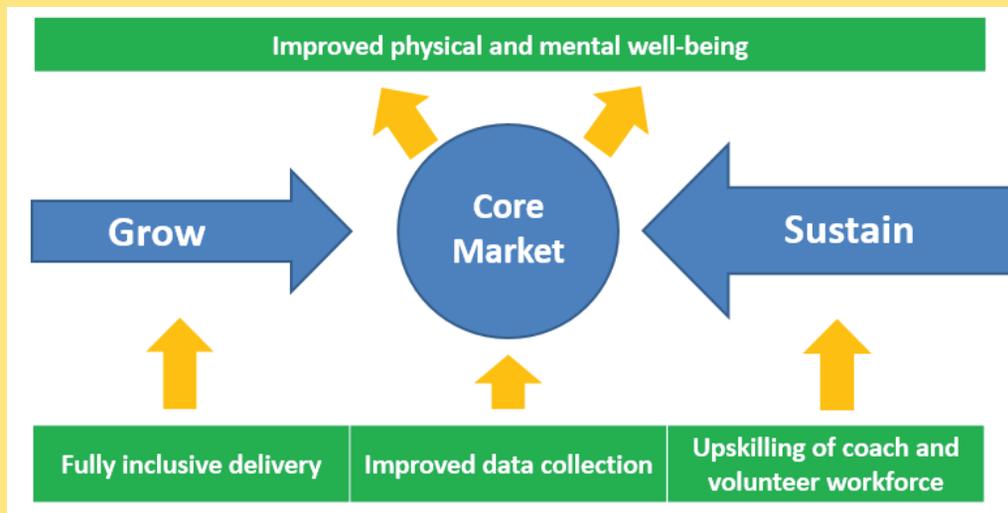
The next four years will see the following actions:

- Intensive support to 200 identified clubs to help strengthen resilience in the core market through the new Club Development Programme.
- Support clubs to encourage those who are presently inactive to engage with bowls through the Play Bowls Package.
- Upskilling of volunteers so as to impact directly on sustaining membership and to continue to grow participation particularly providing more opportunities for those with a disability.
- Assist bowls clubs to become an integral part of the local community
- Ensure clubs have the support and guidance they need to keep their facilities at a standard that will maintain the habit of physical activity of their members.

Bowls has an important role to play to ensure that the nation keeps active well into later life. Evidence from the Chief Medical Report "Start Active - Stay Active (August 2011) shows that physical activity need not be strenuous to achieve health benefits and older adults, both male and female, can benefit from regular physical activity. It is also shown that those adults with a disability can obtain significant health benefits with a moderate amount of daily activity. Physical activity has also been shown to reduce the symptoms of anxiety and depression and fosters improvements in mood and wellbeing (Public Health England-Healthy Lives, Healthy People").

The BDA has access to two main markets, the "core market" which consists of current bowlers, coaches and volunteers who operate within flat green, affiliated clubs and the "wider market" which consists of health and community organisations, leisure providers and age related agencies.

The image below represents the focus for the core market delivery for 2017-2021:



Whilst there needs to be continuation of the efforts made to date in increasing participation, the majority of the focus will lie on making clubs more sustainable and resilient and as part of that, participation must become more sustainable.

The "core market" will be reached and influenced through the interventions developed as part of the "Sustaining the Core Market" investment strand and the "wider market" will be reached and influenced through the "Inactive to Active" investment strand, which focuses on delivery of the Just Bowl intervention.



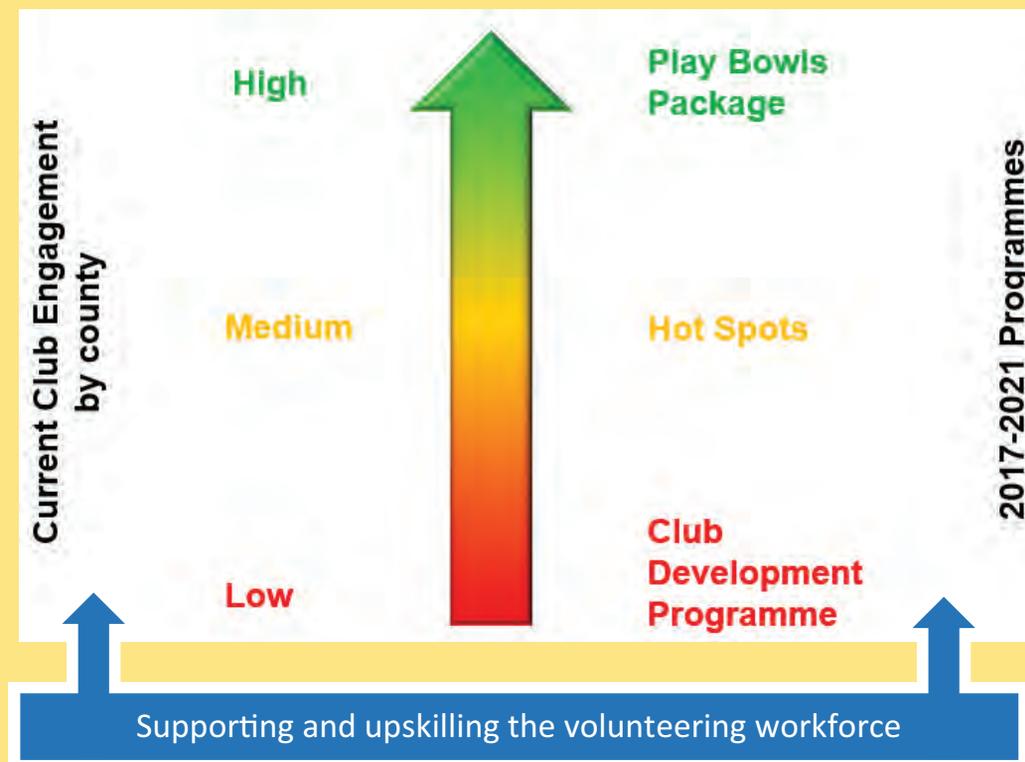
Plan Design

Strengthening resilience in the Core Market

The 2017-2021 delivery plan has been designed to strengthen resilience within the identified core market of those aged 55 years and over. The demographic is that of David, John, Graham and Shirley who were referenced earlier in this document.

The following are the four programmes which the BDA will deliver to meet the outcome above:

1. Club Development
2. Increase the number of bowls clubs that are supported by the BDA and grow the number of bowlers
3. Develop, improve and support Coaching and Volunteering in clubs
4. Improve the sustainability of bowls clubs



The diagram above demonstrates how the interventions will work together to deliver impact nationally, across both flat green codes. For those clubs who have had a track record of low to no engagement with the BDA to date, these will be targeted with the most intensive of the BDA's interventions, the Club Development Programme. Conversely, areas with a high track record of engagement will be targeted with the Play Bowls Package which is a lighter touch form of engagement. In between, the task will be to identify geographical Hot Spots where the BDA can transition areas from medium engagement into high engagement through greater promotion and communication.

Programme 1 – Club Development Programme

Delivery Aim: For every club to put their bowler’s needs at the centre of their club development plans which will help to strengthen their core market and ensure that participants remain in the sport for the duration of their life’s thus creating a long term habit of physical activity

The Club Development Programme is designed to work with clubs either in need of intensive support or who have sufficient capacity to service a high number of participants, in both cases improving the resilience of the core market at a local level. The anticipated reach, influence and return on investment for this intervention is predicted to be as follows:

Anticipated Reach	Anticipated Influence
30,292	7,252
ROI = £62.08	

This programme will be targeted at clubs in geographical areas of low to no previous 2013-17 engagement, clubs with identified capacity for growth and, therefore, greater resilience, will be offered the chance to engage in a support and guidance process. This will provide the club with an overall “health check” as well as specific support in the key areas of sustainability, recruitment, workforce development and providing additional services for the community. By addressing these areas the club will be able to encourage more people to keep a habit and then sustain it well into later life.

Each club will initially be identified in partnership with the relevant National Governing Body of bowls and then be supported by a Club Development Officer for a period of up to six months (this is flexible and dependent on the needs of the club).

Each of the 200 clubs identified over the four year period of the strategy will receive a tailored support programme based on:

Core Support:

- Audit of the clubs current position in order to identify areas for improvement or development.
- Support in writing a club development plan to strengthen resilience
- Support in delivering an effective recruitment package.
- Assistance with marketing and promotion, including website development.
- Support to identify disability and community groups in the locality and to develop, in partnership, new activity at the club.
- Identify other services the club could provide for the local community.
- Identify facility issues or concerns that could be impacting on sustainability.

Optional access to:

- Grant funding advice and support via the CSP network [if appropriate]
- Green maintenance [Bowls England]

There will be signposting to generic club development programmes and resources such as Sport England’s Club Matters tool to ensure that each club can continue to look to strengthen and improve its offers.

Outcomes	
For Clubs	For Individuals
Audit of the club	Clear identification of those areas that require development due to the impact they could have on supporting club members to retain their physical activity habit.
Club Development Plan	To communicate to all club members the actions the club are taking to help improve the club and so impact on their enjoyment of the game
New or extended disability provision	Raise awareness of the range of disabilities that members may have and take steps to improve engagement with those with a disability and improve their playing experience. New Disability organisations and groups identified providing new opportunities to play the sport
Upskilled volunteer workforce	Develop the confidence of volunteers when working in areas such as disability participation, official club roles or when engaging with community partners
Improved marketing and promotion capabilities	Will bring new members into the club who will develop their physical activity habit and so strengthen the core market
Identification of facility issues	A more resilient facility which will meet the individual needs of its members and so strengthen resilience
Facility development plan	

As mentioned previously in this strategy, it is essential that supporting the clubs to grow is included within the offer due to the demographic of the core market. Clubs who can consistently grow will become more resilient, and as such, the individuals within them will develop more resilient participation habits. To make this possible, this delivery strand will require significant partnership working, as demonstrated by the graphic below:



It should be noted that the BDA are aware that some of the partners listed are yet to have their future roles fully confirmed or outlined. However, at this stage, it remains our intention to work alongside all of the partners listed but there will be a need to assess whether there is still synergy between the BDA and any future partner ahead of delivery commencing in 2017.

Club Engagement Track Record 2013 - 2017

Since April 2013, the BDA has engaged with 12.8% of Bowls England and EIBA affiliated clubs (324 unique club engagements) and the table below demonstrates the net membership impact of this activity as a comparison between the effect the BDA's engagement has had and the predicted outcome had those clubs decided not to engage with the BDA. In short, without the BDA's interventions, the clubs worked with are predicted to have seen a membership decline of 6,180 people across the same time period, but due to their engagement with the BDA and events delivered, there has actually been a cumulative increase of 443 across the engaged clubs:

Membership Figures	Annual Total
	EIBA & BE
+/- without BDA events	-6,180
+/- after BDA events	443
BDA net impact +/-	6,551

The BDA's net impact on membership figures, when shown as a percentage below, demonstrates the impact the BDA has been able to make on clubs with whom they've had a direct engagement, as opposed to clubs who have not engaged:

Impact of engaging with the BDA on cumulative club membership				
Year	EIBA		Bowls England	
	Engaged	Unengaged	Engaged	Unengaged
Year 1	- 2.19%	- 2.09%	1.5%	- 3%
Year 2	1.09%	- 2.61%	1.48%	- 2.45%
Year 3	- 0.8%	- 6.83%	4.25%	- 2.78%

The comparison between engaged and unengaged clubs shows that there is clear benefit in working with the BDA through increased membership, reduction of sector standard declines and the subsequent strengthening of the clubs resilience and the members within them. As such, and as already stated, the challenge for the Play Bowls strategy is to ensure a minimum of 20% of clubs are fully engaged with the BDA's activities over the next four year period.

Programme 2 - Play Bowls Package

Delivery Aim: to increase the number of bowls clubs that are supported by the BDA and support the growth of bowlers.

The Play Bowls Package is designed to work with clubs in need of support to increase their membership which is a critical element in order to maintain club resilience. It is likely that these clubs will be operating to a good standard, but require extra assistance to scale up their ability to attract new members. The anticipated reach, influence and return on investment for this intervention is predicted to be as follows:

Anticipated Reach	Anticipated Influence
16,800	9,600
ROI = £31.73	

While the focus of the Play Bowls strategy is on sustaining current participation levels, in order to do this it is important that growth continues to occur in order to compensate for the unavoidable drop off each year due to declining ill health and death.

The "Play Bowls" package represents an evolution of the BDA's successful Silver Package scheme, which between 2013 and August 2016 was issued 615 times to 326 clubs, resulting in 6,869 new people taking up the sport of bowls on a regular basis.

The "Play Bowls" package has been designed to help clubs to organize events that have been proven to attract new members into the sport of bowls.

The Package

- Available to all affiliated clubs to deliver:
 - 1 Play Bowls Day
 - 1 Play Bowls 4 Fun (4 weekly sessions)
 - Funding available = £250

The "Play Bowls" package will be available to all clubs to access across the country. They will be able to apply directly to the office where the package will be administered.

There will also be some specific targeting of clubs and counties in those areas where the take up of the previous silver package scheme was very low. The BDA Club Development Officers remit will be to engage with an agreed number of counties and clubs within them as well as key partners to increase the level of Play Bowls packages delivered within that area. Through this, more clubs will be engaged which will result in an increased amount of clubs recruiting new members which in turn will stabilize participation patterns within the engaged clubs and the wider region. Ultimately, through this process overall sustainability will be improved for the sport as more clubs will be reporting net membership gains each year.

Outcomes

For Clubs	For Individuals
300 Play Bowls Packages will lead to a flow of new members into the clubs, offsetting the inevitable drop off each year from members due to ill health or death.	Increased/stabilised membership levels will protect the future of the club and create a stronger and more vibrant environment.

Packages Track Record 2013 - 2017

Key to the success of the BDA's 2013-2017 activity has been the National Package Scheme which, for the first two years of delivery, was available to any affiliated clubs outside of Hot Spots and has since April 2015 has been made available to any affiliated club regardless of Hot Spot status.

Clubs have to meet an agreed application criteria to receive package funding.



Package Type	Total Number of Applications	Participation Increases	
		55+	Disability (16+)
Silver	654	5,995	289

Programme 3 - Developing and Improving Coaching and Volunteering Support.

Delivery Aim: It is vital that the sport of bowls continues to support and develop its volunteer workforce in order to support the core market. This programme of delivery will be aligned to the Sport England Coaching and Volunteering strategies when they emerge over the coming months.

Anticipated Reach	Anticipated Influence
56,953	19,662
ROI = £12.32	

In terms of anticipated influence, this figure has been calculated based on the estimated number of coaches and volunteers going through "Coach Bowls" qualifications and modules over the next four years, in addition to other training modules such as "Safeguarding – Time to listen in Bowls" an approximation has then been made on how many people each of these trained individuals will add influence.

Volunteering in bowls remains an accepted norm of the sport but for those volunteers involved in coaching bowls, it is far from being an accepted part of the culture. The reality is that the sport of bowls is still in its infancy in developing its qualifications, support structures and workforce in order to ensure that coaching underpins the development and sustainability of clubs.



There is a need for more volunteers within the club structure in order to ease the load of a few who are tasked with the day to day running of the club. More volunteers who have support with training available to them, will greatly improve the whole atmosphere within a club and encourage others to come forward and get involved which in turn impacts on an individual's well-being as well as making the club an environment where people want to spend their leisure time.

The volunteer roles are numerous, from being a coach, being on the club committee and holding a specific responsibility, to cutting the grass or making the tea. These roles all contribute towards ensuring the club is run well and that everyone has a part to play. So what can be done to achieve this? The answer lies in access to training. "Coach Bowls" has developed two new modules which are available to volunteers who are not coaches. These modules will help to improve the knowledge and expertise of volunteers and more importantly improve their confidence which in turn will lead to providing a more quality experience for its club members and so sustain membership for longer.

• **Play Bowls Activator** – is a module designed to encourage volunteers in clubs to improve the ‘meeting and greeting’ of new members. It covers recruitment ideas, retention ideas and helps clubs look at their welcoming environment. It gives the volunteers ideas of games they can play out on the green to give new participants to the club a taster of the sport before they decide whether to join as well as ideas and skills to ensure current membership rates are sustained.

• **Working with Disabled People in Bowls** – is a module which can be used by club volunteers including bowls coaches to improve their knowledge and confidence when working with disabled people. A course can be run within one club and all its members invited to attend. Having gained this knowledge it is hoped that clubs will look to extend their activities and provide more opportunities for those with a disability to take up the game and become integral members of the club.

Bowls also offers a qualification suite for those wishing to progress down more traditional coaching avenues. This will help strengthen the resilience of the core market and support people to keep playing longer by offering coaching advice that might include suggesting the use of adaptive aids like using a bowling arm to assist their delivery.

This programme will underpin the work carried out within the 200 identified clubs that will be engaged with through the targeted Club Development Programme.

Outcomes
• Support and recognition across a variety of volunteer roles to ensure clubs can engage and retain volunteers.
• Upskilling of volunteers and coaches through uptake in the modules to ensure that both current members are involved in the development of the club and new members encouraged to join.
• A minimum of one Level 1 qualified coach within a 20 mile radius of every flat green bowls club, with the aspirational aim of increasing to 1 per club

Targets

Qualifications	Modules
100 Level 1 courses 1,200 Level 1 coaches	100 Play Bowls Activators 1,200 trained volunteers
20 Level 2 courses 240 Level 2 coaches	80 Working with disabled people in bowls 960 trained volunteers
4 Level 3 courses 44 Level 3 coaches	80 Safeguarding – Time to Listen 800 trained welfare officers
	25 Use of technology in bowls coaching 250 upskilled coaches

This work would be underpinned by the development of a Volunteering Strategy for the sport of bowls

Coach Bowls Track Record 2013 – 2017

The tutors and assessors delivering all “Coach Bowls” products have gone through an extended period of training and ongoing standardization .All independent tutors are now qualified in delivering independent learning (either through teaching/lecturing qualifications or through attendance at a Level 3 “Award in Delivering Learning”)

It should not be under-estimated the challenge the BDA faced to bring about this change in attitude towards coaching. With the average age of a coach being in the region of 75 years old the challenge has been immense and there is still some way to go to totally embed the five year Coaching Strategy that was launched in January 2016.

Coach Bowls 2013 - 2017 Outcomes	
Number of “Coach Bowls” members	1600
Number of Qualified coaches	779
Number of Qualified Independent tutors	26
Number of upskilled volunteers	670



Programme 4 - Improve the Sustainability of Bowls Clubs

Delivery Aim: With the present economic climate those bowls facilities that are owned by local authorities [the majority] are coming under increasing risk of being closed or the day to day upkeep being transferred to the clubs themselves to manage. Facilities are key to ensuring that participants have the opportunity to maintain their physical activity habit long into later life.

For older people facilities must be accessible and provide the quality environment where bowlers want to spend their leisure time whether it be as a competitive bowler or as a social bowler.

Increasing closure of facilities is of great concern to the sport of bowls and steps need to be taken to ensure that the sport has a clear idea of present provision and where facilities are at risk so that dialogue with identified local authorities can begin to avert the risk of closures.

A great number of clubs are known to be in need of repairs and updating of their facilities which is crucial when a club is desperate to strengthen resilience in their core market. With these clubs identified, guidance can be issued on how they can meet the new requirements and they can be supported with funding applications as appropriate.

Outcomes
Support the delivery of the recently developed Facility Action Plan
Promote the "Clubs at Risk" document and develop a clear process to provide support
Support clubs with funding applications where need is identified
Promote guidance tools available to clubs and advice on their use

The appointment of a consultant to work across a two year period with the BDA, BE and the EIBA will help to provide the additional capacity needed to sustain and build on the recent development work.

Facilities Track Record 2013 - 2017

BE and EIBA Ltd have been working alongside Sport England to build on the facility development work but lack of resources have proved a real challenge and it is for this reason that this area of work has been included in the Play Bowls Strategy.

The aim is following two years of intensive work supported by a consultant both NGB's will be in a position to build on the outcomes achieved and drive this work forward over the following two years. The Club Development Programme led by the BDA will involve identifying facility concerns and this will be communicated by the BDA Club Development Officers to the consultant and the two NGBs so there is a direct link to what is happening on the ground.

Other Development Areas

Safeguarding

Back in 2009 the five NGB's of bowls were working with a stand-alone organisation to work towards the Intermediate Safeguarding Standards. They were unsuccessful with their application at which point Sport England stepped in and suggested that the BDA take the lead in ensuring the sport not only achieved the Intermediate Standards but also within two years the Advanced Standards.

Three of the NGB's continued with the external group which left the BDA, BE and the EIBA with the task of achieving the Intermediate Standards. This was achieved in 2014. However over the past twelve months the three other NGB's have now re-engaged with the BDA and pledged to work together to achieve the Advanced Standards. There are now all five bowls NGB's signed up to the standards and working together to ensure that the sport of bowls is as safe as it can be.

The Advanced Standards folder was submitted in June 2016 and received a conditional pass. Additional evidence was collected and along with an action plan detailing when any outstanding work would be completed was presented on the 14th October 2016 for final sign off. The group were awarded the Advanced Safeguarding Standards on Nov 1st 2016. The group will continue to be led by the BDA and the aim over the next four years is to complete the action plan and ensure safeguarding is embedded within every bowls club in the country.

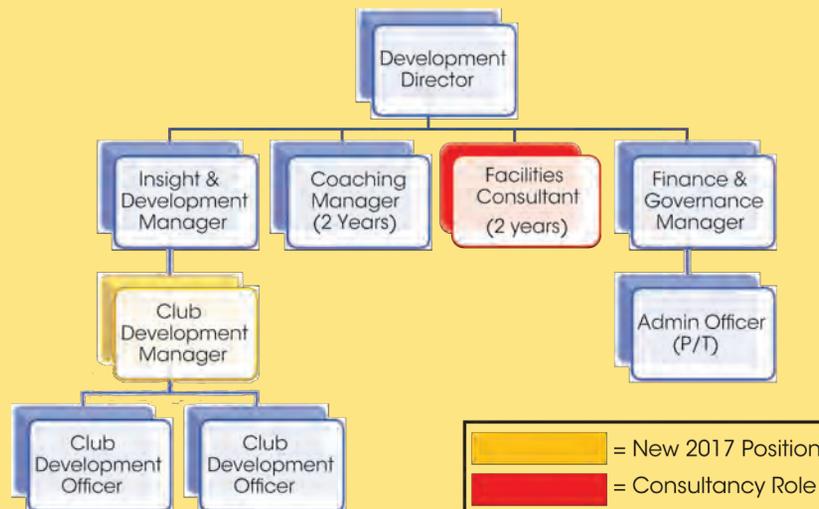
As part of this process the BDA has developed a "Safeguarding in Bowls-Time to Listen" - 4 hour module that is aimed specifically at Bowls Club Welfare Officers. The course aims to explain the role and responsibilities of Welfare Officers, the processes that should be followed if any concerns are raised and where they can find support. This course will be extensively rolled out over the next four years.

Club volunteers and coaches are also encouraged to attend the Sports Coach UK courses which are run on a regular basis by local County Sport Partnerships.

People

2017-2021 Staff Structure

To deliver the "Play Bowls" strategy, the BDA will aim to develop the following staff structure:



The team comprises six full time members of staff and one part time. Two members of staff are office based in Melton Mowbray and the Coaching Manager is hosted PT at the BE offices with the rest of the team all based from home.

The Development Director will lead the strategic development of the BDA. This position will also directly line manage three senior managers (one for a two year period only) The role also involves development of the brand and marketing and ensuring disability is inclusive in all aspects of the work of the BDA. The Development Director also reports to the BDA Board of seven Directors.

The Insight and Development Manager will be responsible for the delivery of all programmes which includes the line management of the Club Development Officer. They will also lead on insight and data collection and support the work of the Development Director.

The Finance & Governance Manager will lead on these two areas ensuring that all requirements as laid down by Sport England are met. This role will act as a supporting role to other team members including the Coaching Manager, Insight and Development Manager and the Development Director. This role is also responsible for the running of the office and line management of the PT Admin Officer.

The Coaching Manager leads on all aspects of "Coach Bowls" including the development and delivery of the nationally recognized qualifications and modules and the development of the coaching and volunteering workforce. This role will be supported by the Finance and Governance Manager and the PT Admin Officer.

The Club Development Manager will lead the roll out of the Club Development Programme and be responsible for the line management of the two Club Development Officers.

The PT Admin Officer will be responsible for the Play Bowls Package and until April 2019 the administration of the "Coach Bowls" membership scheme. This role also administers the "Coach Bowls" modules.

This small team has worked very effectively over the past six years. There is only one new member to be added alongside the Facilities Consultant which is for a two year period only. The team will lose the Coaching Manager position after year two when the coaching strand becomes the responsibility of the two NGB's to administer. This ensures the long term sustainability of coaching.

Finance Section

The BDA are always looking to continually improve the services they provide to customers ensuring they are as cost efficient and cost effective as possible and thus serving the core market.

With the demographic of the bowls core market (older people) the BDA still has to maintain a flexible approach in how customers can access services. Over the past four years the BDA has actively encouraged more on-line use and currently has the "Coach Bowls" membership applications and renewals as well as the packages applications available through an on-line process. It remains important however that there is still a paper process available for those not comfortable using computers and a helpful staff member at the end of the phone. It is envisaged over time that on-line processes will increase as the customers become more adept at IT.

Identifying new sources of external funding over the next four years is crucial for the future sustainability of the project. The BDA Board are committed to identifying commercial partners as the four year cycle commences and it is hoped to attract an individual to the Board who has knowledge and expertise in this area. The BDA being an umbrella organisation for the sport of bowls and not a National Governing Body in its own right makes the task more difficult and it will require both NGBs to engage with the BDA to work together to identify new income sources.

With such a small back office (1.5 members of staff) the back office costs are already extremely efficient. Compared to the 2013/17 strategy savings have been identified, which will reduce costs by 27%.

These savings will come from reducing the size of the office by 50% and by sharing key services such as HR with one of the National Governing Bodies. There are also plans to bring printing back in-house and look to further utilize on-line technology.

With regards to the funding of new programmes Sport England investment is crucial. The challenge to engage with more than 500 clubs over the next four years and have a real impact needs adequate staff resources to deliver effectively. The BDA has one of the smallest delivery teams across the 46 sports yet are committed to delivering all outcomes.

The budget which has been produced will provide a challenge but one which the BDA believe, can still have a major impact on keeping the nation active well into later life.

The BDA are looking at an investment from Sport England of **£1,628,512** to deliver against "Strengthening resilience in the core market by supporting people to keep playing the sport of bowls." Further investment totalling £80,000 will come in the form of partnership funding from Bowls England and the English Indoor Bowling Association making the total investment **£1,708,512**.

Income Summary Forecast

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Sport England	£438,786	£433,673	£374,761	£377,762	£1,628,512
NGB Partners	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£80,000
Total	£458,786	£453,673	£394,761	£397,762	£1,708,512

Summary

This document aims to clearly outline how the Bowls Development Alliance will use the investment from both Sport England and its partners, Bowls England and English Indoor Bowling Association to reach 104,145 and influence 36,614 participants of its core market.

The BDA has a good track record of delivery over the past two funding cycles and a further four year funding package will see the embedding of this work as well as a new focus on sustaining participation within the club structure and so strengthen resilience.

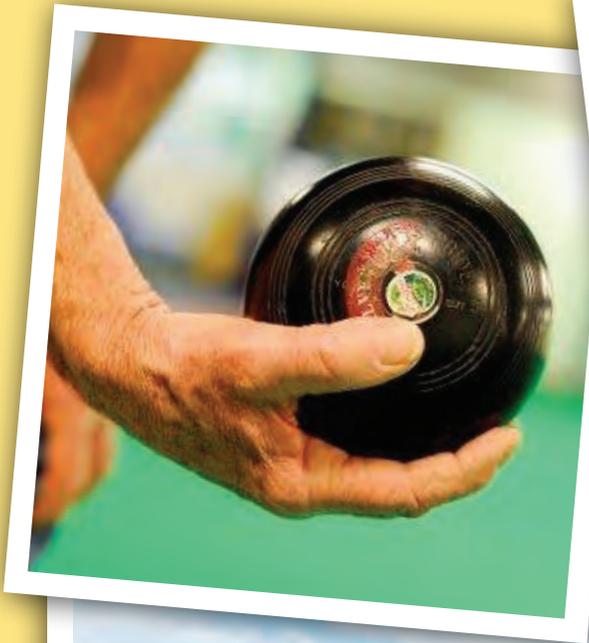
One of the most difficult challenges faced by the BDA has been trying to bring about a change in the culture of a sport in which the majority of its participants do not want to see change. These challenges have been faced head on by a small team dedicated to bringing about the required change by influencing those at the heart of bowls – those volunteers within clubs who have welcomed and embraced the Play Bowls interventions and have seen their clubs grow as a result.

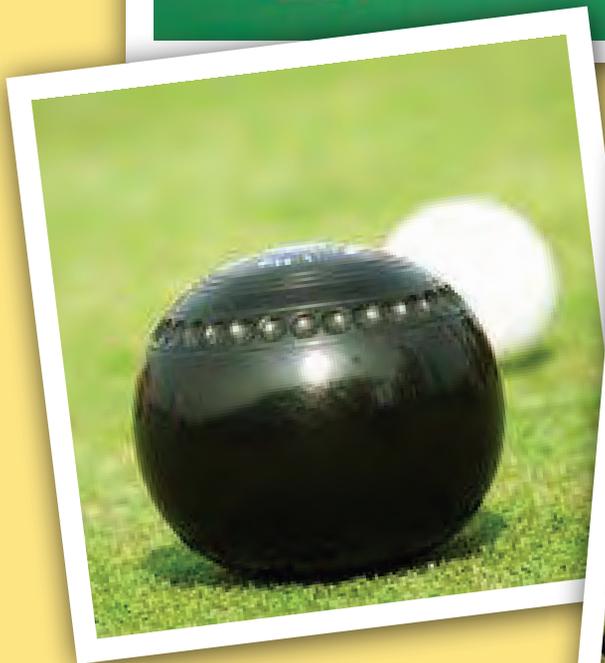
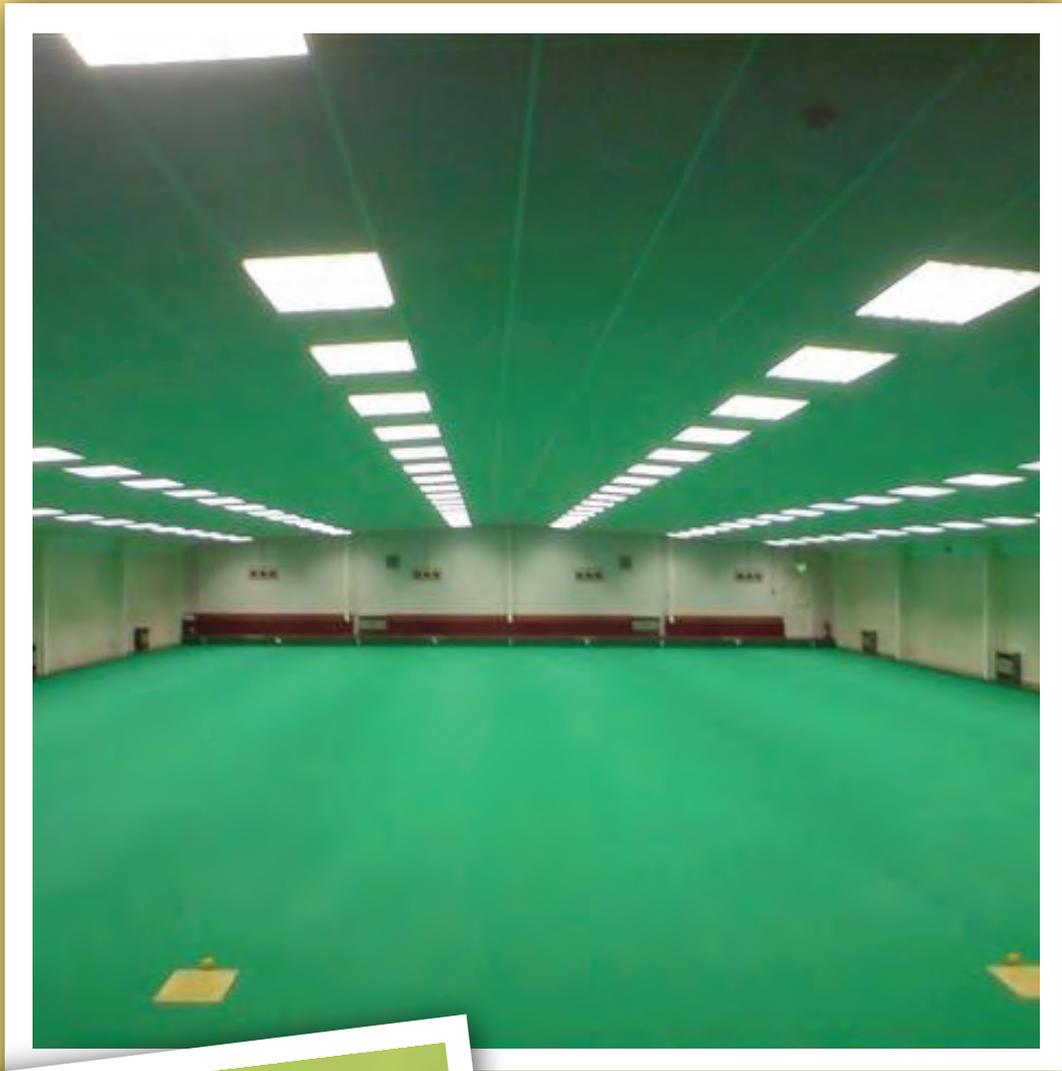
The work over the coming four years will look to influence more of those volunteers who hold key roles at County level and this will assist the team having both greater reach and influence at local clubs throughout the country.

Partnership working will also be key and the BDA will continue to work with some established relationships as well as developing new ones.

The BDA will seek to work with the wider market through a submission for funding through the Inactive to Active Strand which will support the highly successful and nationally recognized Just Bowl initiative. This project will be featured in part two of this document.

The BDA is on a journey and the funding for a further four years will really allow the team to embed the work of the previous four years but more importantly focus on sustaining participation and thus strengthen resilience in the core market by supporting participant to keep playing the sport of bowls.







Bowls Development Alliance

Pera Business Park , Nottingham Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE13 0PB

Telephone: 01664 777001

Email: office@playbowls.org **www:** www.playbowls.org

