



WE ARE BOWLS 2022-2027



#WeAreBowls
#BowlsWithoutBias



INTRODUCTION ●

This is a strategy that represents a new era of collaboration across the bowls network. In partnership with Bowls England, the English Indoor Bowling Association, British Crown Green Bowling Association, English Short Mat Bowling Association and Disability Bowls England, we are proud to present a new 5-year strategy for the BDA which has been the result of strong collaboration to drive the sport forward as a collective. We are committed to working in partnership to help lead a step change in culture and enhance the diversity and sustainability of our sport.

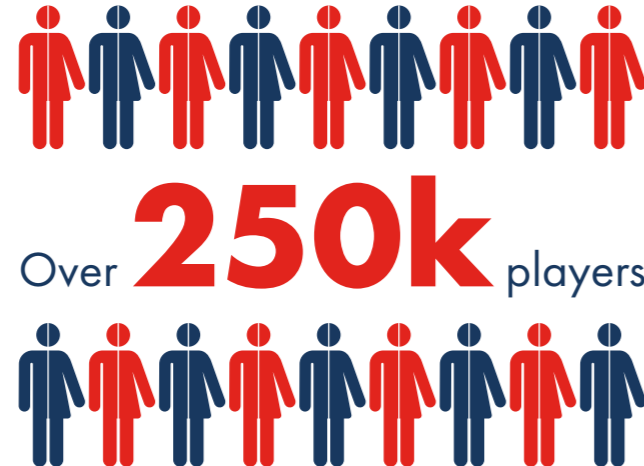
The BDA has been navigating a period of change over the past eighteen months. Since 2020, the organisation has welcomed two additional NGBs around the Board table as well as a representative for disability bowls. We have embraced a new way of working more collaboratively and have sought to connect across key areas of development to improve the experience for our existing players and increase the number of those participating in our sport. We recognise that while we are all different and have a unique place in the bowls ecosystem, we are all passionate about the same things and we all have a vital role to play. We Are Bowls.

The ambition for our new strategy is to promote unity and bring a sense of community and togetherness across our bowling codes, clubs, and volunteers. By focussing on how we can work better together we can help develop and nurture our sport through strategies that address inequalities and promote diversity and sustainability.

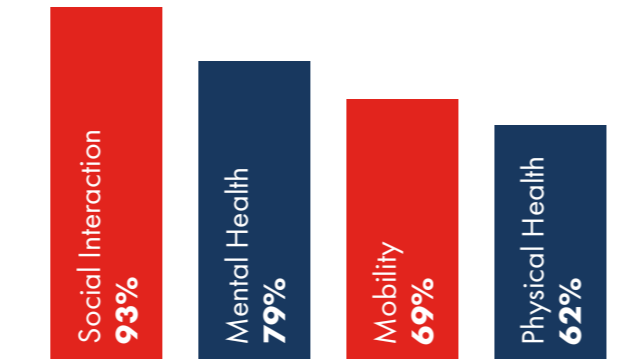
The intention of this strategy is to set out a clear vision, purpose and objectives that will directly inform the future development of the sport and what we will focus on to achieve our shared ambitions for the future. With a greater sense of purpose, our aim is to act as a central service provider for our partners and to ensure we continue to support as many clubs and volunteers as we can regardless of what code they play. We will do this by prioritising our efforts on developing progressive and pro-active clubs, engaging with new communities and those hard-to-reach groups to increase participation, and continuing to lead on good governance and safeguarding across the sport.

We are committed to the future development and sustainability of our sport and to bring it to new audiences as an activity that can be played by all. By working together, we will continue to support the growth of our sport. We are on the same journey!

WHERE ARE WE NOW? ●

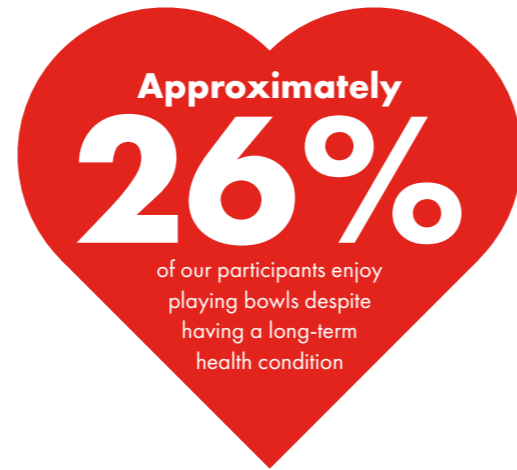
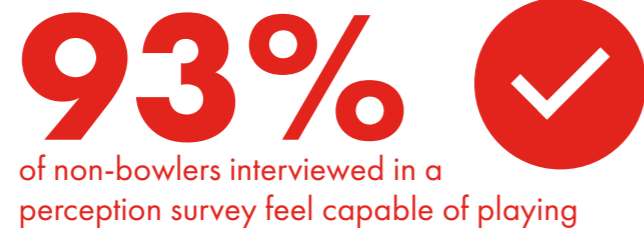


In a Perception of Bowls Survey carried out in 2020, 1,175 respondents agreed that Bowls has an extremely positive impact



Positive words people think of when talking about bowls:

“sociable, friendly, fun”



Compared to other sports, bowls is seen as being more **sociable, friendly and inclusive**

DEMOGRAPHICS ●

In general, participant feedback for those who play bowls is extremely positive. With words used like ‘sociable, friendly and inclusive’ we know our sport is accessible and enjoyable for people of all ages and backgrounds.

The Office for National Statistics research states that over 65s made up 18% of the UK population in 2016 (11.8 million) and they have estimated that by 2066 this will have increased to 26% of the UK population (20.4 million). With approximately 75% of our audience aged 65+ we know our sport already bucks the trend and is perfectly positioned to support the health and wellbeing agenda in these age categories.

Naturally people in older age can develop long term health conditions, multimorbidity and/or disabilities. In the “Health and Care of Older People in England 2019” report published by Age UK, they state that over 30% of the population aged 65-74 have at least 1 long term health condition and that rises to 40% of those aged 85+. Over 26% of our players in a recent survey declared having at least one long term health condition. The top 3 conditions declared were Hearing with 10.5%, Long Term Pain or Discomfort with 9.6% and Mobility 5.7% but despite this, they are still able to enjoy playing bowls!

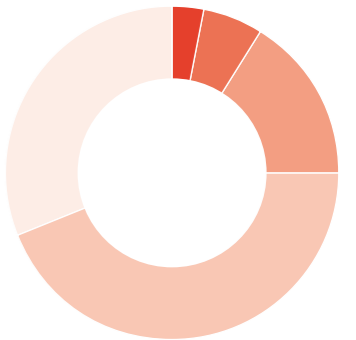
However, we also recognise that we have more work to do. We need to attract a younger and more diverse participant into the sport at all levels, with broad agreement across our partners that we should be trying to attract those in the 40+ category to support club sustainability and succession planning. With only 6% of players in the 40-54 age category, we know we have more work to do in this area. We also have a strong commitment to attract participants from a wider ethnic background with 96% of our sport representing the White British community. Understanding the barriers to participation and educating our clubs and volunteers will be key to this work in the future.

Through the research carried out by Sheffield Hallam University in the “Measuring the Affiliated Sports Club Market” report from 2017, we know that at least 46% (2,275) of all Bowls clubs (4,958) fall into the highest 5 categories of most deprived areas of the country. This insight gives us a real opportunity to help level the playing field and address inequalities in low socio-economic areas.

We have a fantastic opportunity in the next five years of this strategy and in partnership with our NGBs, Disability Bowls England and partners to continue to open the sport to a more diverse audience and keep people healthier for longer both mentally, physically, and socially.

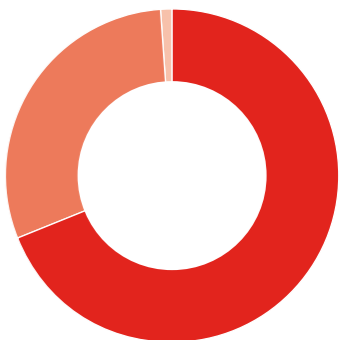
Age split

- Under 18: 0.1%
- 18-39: 3%
- 40-54: 5.9%
- 55-64: 16%
- 65-74: 44%
- 75+: 31%



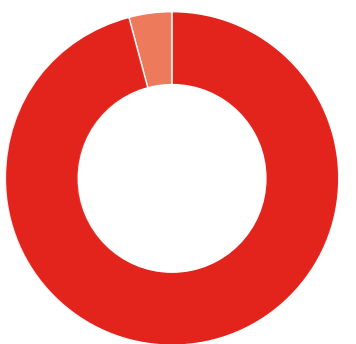
Gender split

- Male: 69%
- Female: 30%
- Other/Prefer not to say: 1%



Ethnicity split

- White British: 96%
- Other/prefer not to say: 4%



OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE.

OUR VISION:

To place bowls at the heart of every community as an accessible sport for all.

OUR PURPOSE:

To sustain, grow and develop the sport in partnership with the bowls family.

OUR P.R.I.D.E. VALUES

We are **PASSIONATE** about what we do

We see first hand the positive impact of sport on people's lives and we aim to inspire others with our passion for bowls.

We are **RESPONSIBLE** and accountable

We are responsible and accountable for the investment we receive and commit to working collaboratively across the sport to maximise our impact. We have a responsibility to support the sustainability of our sport so bowls can be enjoyed for generations to come.

We are **IMPARTIAL** and professional

Professional and courteous at all times, we are always impartial and make sure to treat all our partners and customers equally.

We are **DEDICATED** to making our sport more diverse

Regardless of ability, gender, ethnicity, age or background, we strive to achieve diversity and ensure fair representation across our organisation and the sport.

We believe in **EMPOWERING** our clubs and volunteers

We will empower clubs and their members to achieve their full potential by giving them the necessary tools and advice.

FOUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES.



1.
BUILD PARTNERSHIPS
AND COMMUNITIES



2.
EDUCATE AND
EMPOWER



3.
DIVERSIFY AND
INNOVATE



4.
SUSTAIN
AND GROW

BUILD PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITIES ●

AMBITION

To ensure our role in the bowls family preserves the important connection with our partners and key stakeholders through the continuation of shared goals and objectives, aligning to our organisation's vision of transforming bowls into an accessible sport for all.

WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO

1. Nurture our partnerships

To continue to build on the positive relationships with our partnership NGBs, Disability Bowls England and wider bowls family with strategically aligned goals and objectives while helping them to recover from Covid-19.

2. Build new communities

To use a place-based approach through our new Community Club Hub model to reach a diverse range of people across all communities.

3. Use data and insight

To take a more strategic view of the sport across the bowls codes in order to ensure there is improved alignment in what we are trying to achieve.

4. Broaden our network

To broaden and develop our national and regional partnerships and create a wider network of organisations from the sport, physical activity, health, and wellbeing sector which align with our shared vision, purpose, and strategies.

THE CHANGE WE WANT TO CREATE

- To significantly improve the perception, reach and impact of the sport through improved partnership working and a wide variety of shared services between the NGBs, Disability Bowls England and partners.
- To support, develop, and enable clubs to have more diverse environments offering a variety of sessions, programmes and projects linked to their communities and national, regional, and local partnerships.
- To drive change at the heart of our sport using our Community Club Hubs as a learning and development base creating truly inclusive environments across the club network.

EDUCATE AND EMPOWER ●

AMBITION

To Increase the impact we have on tackling inequalities through a more connected and educated volunteer workforce who fully support our efforts at a local level and who represent a younger, more diverse group of people, ensuring the sport has sustainability into the future.

WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO

1. Educate the workforce

To continue to develop our shared educational offer across the bowls codes, linking in with our volunteers on the ground to provide the tools to deliver where appropriate. To improve the overall knowledge, understanding and culture of those in our sport regardless of what code they play.

2. Champion good Governance

To lead and drive good Governance across 5,000 clubs by setting an example and sharing best practice through our Community Club Hub model.

3. Promote a safer sport

To lead on and embed good safeguarding practice in the mindset of all our clubs, volunteers and partners.

4. Empower our volunteers

To ensure those who volunteer in our sport are given the right support and have the knowledge and expertise to feel confident in making the right decisions.

THE CHANGE WE WANT TO CREATE

- Bowls to be seen externally and internally as a diverse, inclusive, safe, and forward-thinking sport which is played by a wide age range of individuals.
- To implement a number of strategies with direct actions on the ground and through virtual engagement. To drive change at the heart of our sport using our Community Club Hubs as a learning and development base, creating truly inclusive environments across the club network.
- To have 5,000+ strong and robust clubs which are inclusive, well governed and have long term sustainability models in place.

DIVERSIFY AND INNOVATE ●

AMBITION

To continue to take the lead on driving inclusion with the view to improving the culture of our sport through more inclusive and innovative practices on the ground, linking into the whole sport inclusion strategy.

WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO

1. Change perceptions

To start to change the perception of the sport from one that is played by the older generation to one that supports a wider variety of people from different backgrounds, is fully inclusive and improves both physical, social and mental wellbeing of all those who play socially and competitively.

2. Improve the culture

To use our standing and influence in our Community Club Hubs and connected club network, supported by our Club Health Checker, Education platform and strategies, to affect a cultural change in clubs which will engender the development of improved inclusivity across the club network.

3. Support our clubs

To support clubs to develop a strong understanding of the importance of equality, diversity, and inclusion to help them reflect the communities within which they exist and offer a greater breadth of opportunities to participate.

4. Raise awareness through events

To use national and international platforms to portray a different perception of bowls and use these events as a community engagement tool to see the sport in a different light and encourage inclusive participation.

THE CHANGE WE WANT TO CREATE

- To have a diverse range of people participating, volunteering, and coaching across the bowls ecosystem with no barriers to entry.
- To have a strong, versatile, and diverse volunteer workforce in place which can help drive development across the sport.
- For our volunteers to be advocates of the partnerships' core values and to be leading ambassadors for bowls across the country.

SUSTAIN AND GROW ●

AMBITION

To ensure we have tried and tested sustainability plans in place to recruit and retain volunteers and grow participation at our clubs, working closely with our wider network to broaden our reach and influence.

WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO

1. Connect with Health and Wellbeing

To show a clear connection between bowls and the health benefits for regular participants through our Bowl for Health initiative. To use evidence of its long-term success to improve understanding of how bowls has a positive impact in areas of physical, social, and mental wellbeing.

2. Encourage new volunteers

To recognise the importance of those in our sport who can act as leaders, as they are essential to the success of an inclusive environment. To ensure that clubs can retain, educate, recruit and reward volunteers, creating a robust and agile network across the country and the sport.

3. Deliver new programmes and products

To continue to build and roll out a suite of programmes and projects that target specific groups, delivered in our place-based Community Club Hub environment.

4. Continue to learn and develop

To continue to use data, insight, and our learnings to evolve what we do, ensuring we are listening to our audience and adapting where we need to.

THE CHANGE WE WANT TO CREATE

- To ensure new formats of the game, which offer a quicker more direct entry into the sport, are embedded within clubs, and are delivered in the community through satellite sessions, in turn creating more inclusive participation.
- To better understand the economic and health related impact of bowls and to use this knowledge to gain more investment into the sport and for clubs to be seen as the go-to sport for the over 50s, keeping them active for longer.
- Clubs to become assets for their communities which truly engage a multitude of people for a variety of reasons including physical and mental health, social wellbeing, fitness, and exercise, as well as hosting a broad range of partners and community groups.



REGISTERED OFFICE

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

01664 777001

office@bowlsdevelopmentalliance.org

bowlsdevelopmentalliance.com

