



PLAY BOWLS

BDA - CLUB DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

LAST CHANCE TO TAKE PART IN THE CLUB DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



**Is your club losing members?
Are you finding new member recruitment challenging?
If yes, then...**

**Join the programme that helps bowls clubs recruit an average of
20 new members per season!**

Since 2017 we have worked with over 100 clubs and used our expertise to inspire committees and volunteers to promote, transform and modernise their clubs and help them kick-start successful recruitment campaigns that bring new members.

- If you still don't believe we make a difference, you can check out what clubs from around the country are saying about us on page 4.
- If you wish to apply, get in touch with us as soon as possible! We have a limited capacity and we will be accepting applications only until:
 - ⇒ For outdoor clubs – end of March 2020.
 - ⇒ For indoor clubs – end of August 2020.

What is the Club Development Programme?

Every club that is part of the programme is eligible for funding worth of up to **£500** towards their engagement in the initiative. The Club Development Programme offers Bowls England and EIBA-affiliated clubs across the country unique support to develop and better sustain their current membership numbers and recruit new members into the sport. Each club involved is allocated one of our Club Development Officers who will be working with the club committee throughout their engagement in the programme to:

- Generate enthusiasm amongst club members and motivate them to volunteer and support the committee in its initiatives.
- Promote and raise awareness about the club in its locality.
- Target potential new members and introduce new bowlers to the sport.
- Train the club volunteers to organise and facilitate fun open days that will leave a lasting positive influence on those completely new to the sport.
- Re-structure the club and its activities to allow for the smooth integration of all new members.
- Provide additional bespoke support depending on the club's needs, including towards funding applications, issuing club surveys, improving the club's accessibility, ensuring continuity in the work of the committee and more.

Does the Club Development Programme make a difference?

As an indicator, so far, the clubs that have completed the programme have managed to successfully **recruit on average 20 new members per year** – which is significantly more than these clubs achieved in previous years. The less tangible benefits of being involved in the programme are as significant. Many clubs report how the programme has re-energised the entire membership which, among other things, led to improved communications, an increase in camaraderie and more success at competitions (find out more in the ‘What are the clubs saying?’ section).

The success of a club’s recruitment drive depends on a lot of factors – some within, some beyond the club’s control. That is why taking part in the Club Development Programme does not just by itself guarantee success. However, what we have seen so far is that the more proactively the club committee engages with and works on their development plan, the more the club gets out of the programme. To get a better understanding of the impact of the programme, you can see case studies showcasing the individual success stories of a number of Club Development Programme clubs:

<http://playbowls.org/clubs/club-development-programme>



“We needed a fresh approach for our efforts to recruit new members. Our past efforts have resulted in no new members. The BDA Development Officer was very knowledgeable and positive thinking. Despite the many comments from our members of ‘we have tried that before’ the officer prompted us to rethink our ideas and offered a different view of how we might approach a problem,”
Mike Bell, Club Secretary, Studley Entaco Bowls

Does the programme involve a lot of extra work for the committee?

One of the reasons the programme is bespoke is so that clubs can work on a development plan that is realistic and achievable. That is why development plans can look very different. Moreover, the club committee has a chance to discuss the proposed development plan and offer amendments, before it is agreed by both parties. The club committee will also have a chance to reconsider their involvement with the Club Development Programme if they cannot agree on the original development plan or any suggested amendments.

The Criteria and How to Apply

To be eligible to apply, clubs need to meet the following criteria:

- ✓ Must be affiliated to either Bowls England or the English Indoor Bowling Association.
- ✓ Seen a net membership decline of 3% or more over the past 2 years.
- ✓ Be willing to be proactive and take on tasks set out in a development plan.
- ✓ Have a demonstrable capacity for membership growth.



We encourage and welcome every club that meets the above criteria to apply to become part of the programme. The size and level of the club does not matter. We have worked successfully with a diverse range of clubs: indoor and outdoor, small and large, elite and social/recreational.

To apply, clubs need to fill in a simple online application form, which is also accessible as a word document on our website. To apply, register your interest or to ask for more information, email clubdevelopment@playbowls.org.

Please note, this is the **LAST CHANCE** for clubs to apply to the programme before the end of the Sport England 2017-2021 funding cycle for the BDA.

Outdoor clubs must apply by the 31st March 2020 and Indoor clubs must apply by the 31st August 2020.

As we are expecting a high number of applications, we encourage clubs to apply as soon as possible to ensure a timely start.

The Process

The duration of the engagement with each club will last approximately 6-8 months, or one bowling season. The nature of that engagement is unique for each club but in its core it involves the following:



Stage 1 – outlining the Club Development Programme to the club committee; learning as much as possible about the club and its challenges; diagnosing the main challenges, the club is facing and how to go about overcoming them; identifying opportunities the club can tap into.

Stage 2 – a draft development plan is presented by the BDA officer and discussed with the committee. The development plan will include all the actions the club committee needs to undertake (with the support of the BDA officer) to succeed in its recruitment drive. Once the development plan is agreed, the club will receive its first cheque of £250.

Stage 3 – this meeting is specifically dedicated to the preparation for the club open day, including how to advertise the open day, the organisation of the day and how to follow up after the event. All of this is done to maximise the number of people visiting the open day, which will boost the club's chances of converting visitors into new members.

A free Club Helper Workshop is delivered by the BDA officer during stage 3 to all club volunteers supporting the open day. The workshop helps the volunteers learn how to welcome, integrate and create positive and lasting impression on new visitors in order to transition as many open day visitors to club members. The workshop emphasises on the different approach needed when interacting with non-bowlers compared to current or ex-bowlers.

Stage 4 – the club development plan is signed off, ideas for the further development of the club are discussed and a second cheque of £250 is received.

“We are delighted that our clubs will benefit from this initiative. I am sure those clubs who do sign up to the programme will benefit from the specialist advice and support that will be available. We would encourage any clubs who are invited in future to take up this opportunity.”

Tony Allcock OBE, Bowls England, Chief Executive

“The English Indoor Bowling Association Ltd is pleased that there is funding and support available to our clubs who are wanting to maintain and ultimately increase their membership. The opportunity to utilise the services and experience of dedicated development staff is a huge boost for the growth of the sport.”

Peter Thompson, EIBA Ltd, Chief Executive

What are the clubs saying?

“From the outset the Committee were impressed with the BDA officer’s in-depth knowledge of the functioning of bowls clubs and his ability to engender enthusiasm. The Committee feels sure that with the help of BDA and the Development Programme the club will secure its long-term future”

David Walker, Club Chairman & Membership Development Officer, Oundle Bowling Club

They recruited 18 new members in the summer of 2018, when they were part of the programme

“We thank the BDA for all their support over the past year. Working with you has been wonderful and very educational for our club. We made a big leap in our development as a club this year and a lot of it is due to the BDA’s positive influence”

Richard Bridges, Club Chairman, Oasis Indoor Bowls Club

Recruited 43 new members in 2018 after working with the BDA

“I think it’s fair to say that we have a ‘team spirit’ in the club now that we didn’t have before your Development Project.”

Danny Brown, General Manager, Lincoln & District Indoor Bowls Club.

In the autumn of 2019 had 110 visitors to their open day

“As a result of our involvement with the Club Development Programme, 2019 has become the most successful year for our club, across all of its sections. We had a net increase of 11 more members, and communication within the club is now much improved.”

Nigel Gould, Club Chairman Evesham Bowling Club

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

Barry Wicks, Club Chairman Calne Bowling Club

Recruited 17 new members in the 2019

“The Club Development Programme had a slow start in Oxfordshire, like most things in life people don’t like change, but with the help and support of a Club Development Officer and some positive attitude from the committees of the clubs involved the effort has been well worth it. What I have noticed is that not only have the clubs all gained new members but the total ethos of the club has changed and every member has gradually taken some part of ownership of their club’s Development Plan, which can only augur well for the future.”

John Henwood, Secretary, Oxfordshire Bowls League and Coach Bowls County Coaching Co-ordinator

“The Chestnuts are very pleased with the support from the BDA. The BDA have given structure and process to our drive to find new members (including pamphlet design, action planning and general stewardship)”

Martyn Cooper, Banbury Chestnuts Bowls Club

One of the oldest clubs in the country that was down to 23 members at the beginning of 2018. In the summer of 2019, with the help of the BDA recruited 9 new members and stabilised their future.