

Bowls Hampshire

Advice to Clubs on the Impact of Covid-19

Introduction

All Clubs should by now be aware of the guidance issued on 18th March by Bowls England. This note amplifies that guidance.

Bowling at Clubs prior to 1st July

Bowls England has not stated that Bowls should not take place in the early part of the season. However, a large proportion of members are over age 70 and may well be self-isolating. Social Distancing will be in place and many Clubs will have problems in maintaining their greens in this period. Bowls Hampshire, therefore, **recommends** that Clubs should not allow bowling before 1st July.

County Activities prior to 1st July

There will be no County activities in the period up to the 1st July. All inter county matches in that period are being cancelled and, as has already been announced by Bowls England, there will be no National/County Championships nor Competitions being played. In addition, the County Presidents' Day scheduled for 1st July will be postponed to a later date.

Activities Post 1st July

A review by 1st June will decide whether activities can resume after 1st July. Given that there will be no National Championships in August and depending upon the position the County may look to introduce some events to encourage members to return to the green.

Maintenance of Greens

With greens being out of use and many people self-isolating, maintenance of greens will be particularly difficult for those Clubs which rely on volunteers (often over age 70) to maintain their greens. Bowls England intends to provide advice to Clubs on the minimum maintenance that is required to maintain greens, so they are playable when we resume. This advice will be sent to Clubs as soon as it is received.

Finance

This crisis will have a significant impact upon the financial position of Bowls England, Bowls Hampshire and Clubs. It has therefore been decided that Clubs will:

- Be refunded, not only the £5 part of the 2020 Affiliation of £7.50 that went to Bowls England but also the £2.50 that went to Bowls Hampshire.
- Have returned to them the 2020 Competition Fees of £2.50 per head that went to Bowls England and the £1.50 that went to Bowls Hampshire to assist with running its Competitions. Bowls England did suggest that Counties might wish to hold these competition monies and roll them over to 2021. Bowls Hampshire considered this to be impracticable, given that from one year to another, members change Clubs, teams, move away, cease playing etc. Clubs may, themselves, wish to consider offering the roll over option to their members..

The County Treasurer will arrange for the monies to be distributed to Clubs as soon as possible after Bowls England refunds the County but, to assist him with what is likely to be a complicated task, would Clubs please confirm to him their BACS details by email to carljtaylor18@gmail.com or by phone to 07841776789.

Finally, on Finances the above decisions will mean a net reduction in 2020 income for the County, after several years of losses. It may, therefore, be necessary to review the 5-year Plan and Affiliation Fees may from 2021 onwards need to be increased so that Bowls Hampshire remains solvent.

Presidential Officers

The restriction on activities will mean that Mandy Orchard and Neil Fletcher will have little or no opportunity to carry out their Presidential Duties. This will be disappointing for them, so we are looking to see if it is possible to prolong their period of office to include 2021 with Cynthia Hamilton and Neil Roderick taking over in 2022.

Centenary Celebrations

There is planned a Centenary Dinner in October and two centenary matches. A decision on whether these should continue will be made nearer the time.

Future Developments

These are uncertain and worrying times for the County, Clubs and members. The County Officers will do their best to keep Clubs updated with future developments. Fortunately, in this day and age, widespread use of technology means we can quickly disseminate information to Clubs, but we are conscious that within Clubs there will be members who are not connected to the net and may feel particularly isolated. Please do your best to keep in touch with such members.