



Norfolk Bowls Association

Summary Report of Norfolk Bowls Association Clubs Meeting held on Sunday 11th October 2026

Attended by:-

- County Officers
- Club Representatives
- Representatives from the NBA Ladies section
- Jon Cockcroft – Bowls England Chief Executive

Purpose of meeting

1. For the Men's County Management Team to give an update on various matters and for Clubs to raise any issues & questions they have. Nothing was decided at the meeting and any views & comments from Clubs have been taken forward for consideration by the Management Committee.
2. Jon Cockcroft to give an update on Bowls England matters and in particular the proposed amalgamation of Bowls England (BE) and the English Indoor Bowling Association (EIBA)

County Matters

1. Men's Annual General Meeting

This will be held on Sunday 6th December at County Arts BC starting at 9.30am and the Agenda and other paperwork will be issued in due course

a) Nominations/Officers

Nominations for officers closed on 15th September with most positions having nominations and details will be given in the Agenda, when issued.

So far as some positions are concerned

- Hon Treasurer – David Naunton is not seeking re-election and Chris Reynalds (Downham Market BC) has been nominated
- Hon. Competition Secretary – John George is not seeking re-election and Simon Lilley (Downham Market BC) has been nominated
- Press Officer – Paul Brandon (Shouldham BC) has been nominated

b) Motions

Motions must be submitted by 18th October. To date 2 have been received which are that the both the Bales Cup & Lord Fermoy Cup be changed to 'open' allowing any number of men of lady players to compete, in line with the current County League Rules. The change will be for AGM delegates to agree.

2. County League Annual General Meeting

The League is subject to a separate AGM. This will also be held on Sunday 6th December at County Arts BC immediately following the Men's AGM and the Agenda and other paperwork will be issued in due course.

Motions must be submitted by 8th November. To date 1 motion has been received stating that any teams qualifying for the WP Baker Cup will not be allowed to compete if having won the WP Baker Cup they do not accept the invitation to join the Premier League. The impact of this is to be considered by the Hon. League Secretary and League Chairman and a revised motion may be submitted to the AGM.

3. Financial update

The 30th September 2026 Year End accounts are currently being reviewed and 'audited' and will be presented to the AGM in December with the County being in a sound financial position.

Sponsorship income along with the agreed competition fees increases has meant that the annual maintenance and hosting charges for our website have been met.

4. 2027 County Championships

Once again, entries will be made through the website Competitions portal.

a) Individual Championships and inter-club Championships (Bales/Fermoy/Jermy)

Entries will open on or before 31st October 2026 and close on 28th February 2027

Entry fees for individual championships, as previously announced, have increased to £7.80 per player (made up of the NBA fee of £2.30 and the BE fee of £5.50). The entry to the Junior Singles & Junior pairs remains free

Entry fees for inter-club events are unchanged

b) County League

Entries will open on or before 31st October 2026 and close on 30th November 2026.

The earlier closing date is to allow us to generate fixtures and resolve some of the issues that arose last year (e.g. teams having a run of home or away fixtures), to meet any special requests from Clubs, to consider and may be review the league zones and to get the final fixtures to Clubs at an earlier date to assist then in compiling there Club diaries. An update will be given at the County League AGM.

So far as the WP Baker Cup & Hansells Cup play offs are concerned we will be looking in 2027 to play these over the same weekend as soon as possible after the League programme has been completed.

c) County Mixed Pairs

A new County Mixed Pairs championship is under consideration for 2027 and more details will be provided in due course. This will not be open for entry when the other Competitions open on the portal but will be added for entry at a later date.

d) County Event diary

The diary of events and competition round dates is currently being compiled with some changes being planned including:

- 2 bowl singles – rather than play the early rounds on fixed dates, to play-all rounds up to the final on a single day. Details are being worked up and will be advised in due course. The reason for the change is to free up dates in the calendar to give individuals and clubs more flexibility when offering dates for 'play by' date matches.

- Senior Fours – with only the winners qualifying for the National Finals to play the final earlier to allow more time for them to make arrangements for the National Finals. It's likely that group matches will continue on a play by date basis but the quarter final will be played on a fixed date and then both the semi-final & final to be played on the same day.
- Junior Singles Junior Pairs – depending on entries received to play these on a fixed weekend date
- Once all entries have closed, we will also look at the round dates for inter-club championships to see if changes can be made

Bowls England & other inter-county events

Fixtures for the 2027 Middleton Cup have still to be announced by Bowls England

Entries for the 2027 Over 60 Mixed Inter County, Balcomb Trophy & White Rose Trophy have been submitted.

We will once again compete in the Eastern Counties League and fixtures are now in the process of being arranged.

County Friendly matches

The 2027 programme of matches is currently being arranged with the possibility of additional fixtures.

Investigations are being undertaken as to whether the nomination process for such matches may be streamlined by allowing nomination direct through the website.

5. Affiliation Fees

These continue to be based on playing members and are due annually on 1st May. The Bowls England Fee increased to £7.35 per playing member in 2026 and will be subject to an inflationary increase in 2027 which will be confirmed shortly which should be by end of October.

The Norfolk Bowls Association Fee will remain unchanged for 2027 being £2.00 per playing member.

The relevant Affiliation Fee Payment Form will be issued to Clubs in early 2027 with payment due on 1st May 2027.

The functionality that our website provides may allow the affiliation process to be carried out on-line thereby reducing administration by Clubs and this is something that will be considered.

6. Website/Competition portal

Much work went into its development and generally, it has been well received. Teething problems did arise and this was expected but many have been resolved though there are others which will be worked on over the close season.

Whilst positive feedback is great to receive it is negative feedback which is more worthwhile as it allows us to make changes and review our processes.

Some changes and enhancements have already been made including to the Clubs Page, County Officer page and the Roll of Honours and others will be on going which includes Middleton Cup & Johns Trophy player & match records.

7. Men's County Tour

The 2027 County Tour is being arranged and if any member is interested in joining 2027 President, Harry Geary on his tour then please contact the County Tour Manager John Mason for details

8. Miscellaneous other matters

a) Bowls England 2026 National Finals

Although a great success feedback received has raised various issues and areas for improvement. These will be considered by BE and then make recommendations to the BE Board and then be communicated publicly

b) Bowls England 2027 National Competitions

Entries will open on the BE Competitions Portal on 1st December

c) World Bowls 2027

The 2027 World Bowls Championships will be held in Leamington Spa in July 2027 with details on the BE website, including ticket purchase details

d) Misconduct/BE Regulation 9 (R9)

A reminder that all Clubs by affiliating must comply with BE Regulation 9 so far as misconduct matters are concerned and this should be covered by the Club Constitution.

R9 has been in place for almost a year and BE are now undertaking a review and seeking feedback from Clubs and if you have matters to raise then please provide this feedback.

Under R9 Clubs are required to appoint a Club Assessor and assuming Clubs have done so then details should be provide to our County Disciplinary Officer (Derek Ryder)

e) Trans Gender policy

The update BE policy has been issued and Clubs are urged to review and act upon as necessary

f) BE Affiliation benefits

Clubs are urged to review the detailed guide that BE has provided which details the numerous benefits than come with affiliation. This may be downloaded from the BE website from <For Clubs> <Affiliation Benefits

John Ottaway

Hon. Men's Secretary

12th October 2026