

Bowls Northamptonshire (BN) – Constitution - Review 2025 version

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1. TITLE:

- a) The association shall be called Bowls Northamptonshire and is hereinafter referred to as BN and is a member and guarantor of Bowls England Ltd (Company No. 06297656) hereinafter referred to as BE.
- b) BN is a non profit organisation that acts as the controlling body for Bowls Clubs within the County of Northamptonshire under the auspices of BE.

2. OBJECTS:

- a) To promote foster and safeguard within the County the playing of outdoor level green bowls according to World Bowls Laws of the Sport of Bowls Crystal Mark (current) Edition.
- b) To adopt and enforce above Laws of the Sport of Bowls
- c) To hold annual Championships in competitions and events as decided by BE.
- d) To hold inter-county and other matches.
- e) To interpret when called upon by affiliated Clubs or members thereof questions relating to above Laws of the Sport of Bowls and to arbitrate in differences arising between affiliated parties.
- f) To foster, safeguard and maintain the various Competitions, Leagues and such other activities as may be organized by BN, membership shall be open to any Club affiliated to BN.
- g) To oversee the BN Benevolent Fund.
- h) To oversee the improvement in the standard of greens throughout the County through the Greens Inspectorate.
- i) To encourage Clubs to participate in coaching schemes at all levels and to encourage participation in the sport by arranging coaching and matches.
- j) To encourage participation of all disabled bowlers.
- k) To encourage and promote the Game of Bowls free from the use of performance enhancing drugs.

3. MEMBERSHIP and RESIGNATION:

- 3.1 Membership of BN shall be open to all bowls Clubs within the County. All Clubs should comply with BE current Equity Policy.
- 3.2 All affiliated Clubs shall have available to them a level green of at least 31 metres in the direction of play and a maximum length of 40 metres in addition to banks and ditches as defined in the Laws of the Sport. Exception will be for any Clubs who were previously affiliated to the N.B.A. & N.W.C.B.A with a green shorter or longer than the above measurements.
- 3.3 Application by a Club for affiliation shall be made to the Administrator, and shall be accompanied by a list of member's names and gender, before it is

submitted to the next BN Council meeting for approval. BE has stipulated that a Club applying for affiliation shall have at least 16 fully paid-up outdoor bowling members. A Club already affiliated may have less than that number.

- 3.4 Honorary Life membership shall be granted to outgoing Presidents.
 - 3.5 Honorary Life Membership may be recommended by the Executive Committee to members of BN in recognition of outstanding service to BN to be approved at the next AGM
 - 3.6 BN and all bowls Clubs within the County shall appoint a Safeguarding Officer who shall adopt policies as specified by BE and shall be notified to BN along with 3.7 below.
 - 3.7 All affiliated Clubs are required by May 31st in each calendar year or as requested by the Administrator, to provide current and accurate information on their affiliated members.
 - 3.8 **RESIGNATION**: Any Club may resign from BN by giving notice in writing to the Administrator. Such Club shall forfeit all rights and claims against BN.
- 4. COMPLIANCE – moved here**
- 4.1 BN will adopt and follow all policies and guidelines approved by BE and UK Anti-Doping.
 - 4.2 BN will follow all procedures. set out in BE Regulation 9, 9A and 9B, (as and when amended) and will abide with all sanctions, recommendations and/or decisions from the Case Management Panel or National Disciplinary Panel.
 - 4.3 BN will safeguard all those who participate in bowls in our County, ensuring they can do so in a safe, positive and enjoyable environment. The County acknowledges both its legal and moral duty of care to safeguard the welfare of all young people and all adults particularly those at risk involved in bowls within the County.
 - 4.4 BN affirm the safeguarding statement of BE and its disciplinary Regulations as set out subject to BN's Executive Committee being reasonably satisfied that BE have acted fairly, equitably, and fully in accordance with their policies and procedures and fulfilled their responsibilities in a timely manner.
 - 4.5 BN shall comply with and conform to the information as issued in the BE useful information booklet regarding the following:
 - a) Insurance & Indemnification
 - b) Health & Safety
- 5. ADMINISTRATION – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**
- 5.1 The Executive Committee shall consist of the following officers: Chairperson, Administrator, Women's Management Secretary, Men's Management Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, both Presidents, Competition Secretaries.
 - 5.2 The Executive Committee shall be elected by club delegates at the AGM and may stand for re-election in following years.
 - 5.3 The Executive Committee may co-opt a member for a specific reason/project if required and for that duration. The Chairperson will decide if the co-opted member is to have an equal vote on any matters discussed.
 - 5.4 The Executive Committee shall meet as often as required with a minimum of four occasions in each year. Notice and agenda of all meetings shall be sent to the above officers at least seven days before the date of the meeting stating date time and venue and also included on the County website. A quorum shall be FOUR (4) officers - two from each management committee section and no business shall be transacted at a meeting unless a quorum is present. All members of the Executive Committee shall be entitled to ONE vote with the Chairperson having a second and casting vote.
 - 5.5 Responsibilities of the Exec. Committee are as follows but are not limited to:

- a) Management of Constitution and General / Competition Rules & Regs, with presentation of changes to Council for discussion, and AGM for any required deliberative vote.
- b) Grievances and Discipline in accordance with BE policy, where a formal complaint is made, and all other disciplinary matters.
(see Constitution Section 12 APPENDIX - DISCIPLINE)
- c) Liaison with BE.
- d) Responsibility for all financial matters and implications to include but not limited to:
 - i/ County affiliation fees for ratification at the AGM
 - ii/ Competition Entry Fees
 - iii/ Competition prize monies
 - iv/ Honorariums for Officers
 - v/ Acceptance/Continuance of sponsorship offers.
 - vi/ Stock Management and Purchase Policy
- e) To consider recommendations received from management committees for Competition Rules and Regulations changes for discussion at Council, and any required vote at an AGM.
- f) Responsibility for AGM, Special General Meetings, Council Meetings.
- g) At the first Executive Committee meeting following the AGM, Appoint the officers as identified as necessary by the Executive and where a vacancy and a requirement has been determined from the following list: Greens Inspectorate Secretary, Benevolent Chair/Secretary, Website Manager, Portal Manager, Safeguarding Officer, Development Officer, two BE delegates.
- h) Fill any position that becomes vacant between AGMs

6. ADMINISTRATION – MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

- 6.1 Women's Management Committee (WMC) shall consist of the following officers: Women's President (Chair), Vice President, Immediate Past President, Secretary, Match/Fixture Secretary, Competition Secretary, two (2) Area Delegates, Team Managers for senior Squad/Junior squad, Women's BE delegate, and other officers as requested.
- 6.2 Men's Management Committee (MMC) shall consist of the following officers: Men's President (Chair), Vice President, Immediate Past President, Secretary, Match Secretary, Fixture Secretary, Competition Secretary, two (2) Area Delegates, Greens Inspectorate Secretary, Team Managers for senior Squad/Junior squad, Men's BE delegate, and other officers as requested.
- 6.3 Management Committees will meet as and when required. The quorum is five. (5). Meeting dates and venues to be placed on the BN website. Dates chosen will precede the next Exec committee.
- 6.4 Members of the WMC and MMC shall be entitled to ONE vote with the committee Chairperson having a second and casting vote.
- 6.5 The officers of the WMC and MMC shall be elected at the AGM and may stand for re-election for the following year.
- 6.6 The WMC and MMC may co-opt a member for a specific reason/project if required and for that duration. Any such decisions to be notified to the Executive through the Administrator. The committee Chair will decide if the co-opted member shall have an equal vote on any matters discussed.
- 6.7 The duties of each management committee are:
 - a) The day to day running of the section
 - b) Appoint Delegates to MCBA, NYBDS, and appoint senior and junior team managers for their respective team responsibilities.

Team Managers period of service to be for 3 years with an interview process for those interested in the position thereafter.

- c) The MMC shall recommend the nomination of a Vice President of the Midland Counties Bowling Association as and when required.
- d) Review Competitions under their control, and any relevant Rules and Regulations for changes, and make recommendations for consideration by the Executive Committee prior to Council.
- e) A sub-committee of three officers to consider any complaint/challenge received via the competition secretary from a player and advise action to take.
- f) Propose and instigate any penalties required for matters arising from any breach of competition Rules after due consideration.
- g) Review their management policies and make recommendations to the Executive Committee for consideration prior to Council.

7. COUNCIL MEETINGS and Membership

7.1 Council membership shall consist of two Delegates from each affiliated Club. Clubs with 125+ members are allowed three Delegates.

The Chairperson will be the Exec Chairperson or another BN County officer. At all meetings of the Council twelve (12) delegates shall form a quorum. In the event of a Delegate from a Club being unable to attend the meeting a substitute may be sent if advised to the Administrator before meeting start.

7.2 Bowlers affiliated to the County may attend Council meetings, and take part in any discussions on any points on the meeting's agenda, but cannot vote on any issue arising, and cannot make any proposals or amendments to proposals, unless they are club delegates.

7.3 Council meetings shall be held in November, prior to the AGM, or at such time as required and if deemed necessary by the Executive Committee.

7.4 Duties and responsibilities of Club Delegates at Council are:

- a) Receive reports from BN officers.
- b) Nominations for all elected officers shall be made by Clubs, and shall be received by the Administrator no later than 14 days prior to the Council meeting before the AGM.
- c) Discuss any proposals on the agenda that relate to County Constitution, County Competition Rules and Regulations, management policy changes, and any other proposal received in line with Point 7.5 below
- d) Club Delegates may propose an amendment to any proposal on the agenda, and following the Council meeting and with the support of another affiliated Club will give at least two weeks notice to the Administrator of their intent to seek a vote on their amendment at the AGM.
- e) Club Delegates will ensure that their respective Club Committees are aware of any proposals or issues or amendments that require a deliberative vote and be mandated by them on how they should vote at the following AGM or SGM.
- f) To recommend persons to the Executive for posts appointed by them.

7.5 Proposals for discussion at Council may be submitted by the following:

- a) By a Club Secretary seconded by another affiliated Club within County.
- b) By the Executive committee.
- c) By a management section with Exec recommendation.

The Chairperson may state a pre-determined time period for discussion on each proposal.

An amendment to a proposal can be raised prior to the meeting with

the required 14 days notice to the Administrator or from the floor during discussion of the proposal. Any amendment raised requires a proposer and a seconder, and shall be recorded for voting purposes at the AGM, SGM.

8. **GENERAL MEETINGS (Annual/Special)**

8.1 Bowlers who are affiliated to the County can attend and take part in any discussion within SGM and AGM. but cannot vote on any deliberative issue or make a proposal or amendments to motions unless they are a Club Delegate.

Voting on any issue at the Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting convened for a particular issue is restricted to Club Delegates and the Chairperson who shall have a second and casting vote. A coloured voting slip may be used to identify delegates who are allowed to vote.

8.2 The following serves to identify what types of proposals can be voted on at general meetings:

AGM - Proposals of Change to Constitution &/or Competition Rules and Regs

SGM – a) Proposals of urgent change that cannot wait for the AGM)

b) Proposal of Dissolution (of BN) – urgent.

c) Proposal of Confidence (in an officer) – urgent

An officer may be asked to step down and a replacement sought. If the officer does not step down voluntarily then a proposal of Confidence can be tabled.

-To remove an officer who is incapable of the work allotted.

-To remove an officer who is considered to be acting against the views of the majority of other officers in that section

-To remove an officer who is considered to be a liability to the work of the County

8.3 **A Special General Meeting (SGM)** may be called by:

a) The Executive Committee if it determines that sufficient cause has been shown. Proposals allowed include:

Proposal of urgent Change, Proposal of Confidence in a BN Officer

b) A Club Secretary of an affiliated Club of the County may request an SGM to discuss a proposal. Any such request must be supported in writing by two other affiliated Clubs of the County, and will clearly state the nature of the matter and issue to be addressed and be signed for and on behalf of the appealing Club and the two supporting Clubs by the Club Secretary or Chairperson of each Club.

Proposals allowed include:

Proposal of urgent Change, Proposal of Dissolution

c) A BN officer may request an SGM to discuss a proposal. Any such request must be supported in writing by two other BN officers, and will clearly state the nature of the matter and issue to be addressed and be signed for and on behalf of the appealing BN officer and the two supporting BN officers.

Proposals allowed include:

Proposal of urgent Change, Proposal of Confidence in a BN Officer

8.4 The Administrator being in receipt of a correctly submitted request will immediately convene a **Special General Meeting (SGM)** to be held not less than one month thereafter to discuss and vote on the issue/proposal. No other business will be transacted at this SGM other than that proposed. The issue/proposal will be discussed and Club Delegates and Chairman of the day will vote. A Proposal of urgent Change and a proposal of Confidence requires a simple majority to be approved. A Proposal of Dissolution requires a two-thirds majority vote.

- 8.5 In the event that a proposal for the dissolution of BN is proposed then the Executive Committee shall immediately call for a written Poll of **all affiliated Clubs within the County, prior to a vote being taken**. All Clubs in the County will be required to vote to confirm or deny the vote for dissolution. A Club may ask for their proxy vote to be used by the Executive Committee at their discretion.
If dissolution is confirmed by the County vote then the Executive shall immediately, or at such date as shall have been specified in the proposal, proceed to realise the assets of BN and discharge all debts and liabilities of BN. After such process the remaining assets shall not be paid or distributed amongst the members of BN, but shall be given or transferred to some other voluntary organisation having similar objects, as agreed by majority vote of the Executive committee.
- 8.6 **The Annual General Meeting (AGM)** shall be held on a date determined by the Executive Committee/Administrator and shall be no more than 18 months after the last AGM. No other business shall be transacted at an AGM other than items on the agenda for that meeting. However the Chairman having closed the AGM meeting may ask the members present for any issues that needs to be considered by the first committee meeting following AGM.
- 8.7 14 days notice of the AGM shall be given and delegates from twelve (12) Clubs shall form a quorum.
- 8.8 Affiliated Clubs shall be entitled to be represented by two Club Delegates at the AGM and these will have voting rights of one vote each for all deliberative votes. The Chair of the day has a second and casting vote in addition to a deliberative vote on all matters discussed. Clubs with 125+ members are allowed three voting Delegates.
- 8.9 The business of the AGM shall be to:
- a) Confirm minutes of the previous AGM and any SGMs convened since the last AGM.
 - b) Receive the examined accounts for the year from the Treasurer.
 - c) Receive the examined accounts for the year from the Benevolent Fund
 - d) Receive the annual report from the Administrator
 - e) Elect an accounts examiner
 - f) Elect the officers and Committee members of BN as laid down by this Constitution, any vote taken is by simple majority.
 - g) Elect the officers for management sections and for all representatives to other organizations by a casting of votes by simple majority.
 - h) Nominations for officer positions can be accepted from the floor if the prior Council meeting has made no such nomination. Any such nomination needs a two-thirds majority vote.
 - i) Transact such other business received in writing by the Administrator 28 days prior to the meeting and included on the agenda
 - j) Vote on any Proposals of Change included on the agenda

9 **AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION AND RULES & REGS**

- 9.1 Minor alterations, e.g. corrections of spelling, syntax, tense, punctuation, gender assignment, will not require approval by Club Delegates but will be agreed by the Executive, and may be mentioned by the Chairperson.
- 9.2 Changes to any part of this Constitution and/or General/Competition Rules & Regulations shall only be made as a result of proposals of change submitted for an AGM or a SGM convened for that purpose.

10 **AFFILIATION FEES & OTHER COSTS**

- 10.1 Affiliated Clubs within the County shall pay an annual affiliation fee to BN for each Club member that plays outdoor bowls according to Laws of Sport of

- Bowls, and such fee to be paid to the BN Treasurer
Annual fee-to be-- decided by the Exec committee and approved at the AGM.
- 10.2 Affiliated Clubs within the County shall pay an annual affiliation fee to BN for each Club member as defined above (10.1), and such fee to be paid to the BN Treasurer for transfer of funds to BE. This annual fee to be decided by BE.
 - 10.3 A Levy per affiliated Club member will be paid to the Benevolent Fund out of BN affiliation fees. The amount of this levy to be determined by the Executive Committee and approved by Club Delegates at the AGM.
 - 10.4 Any Club failing to pay affiliation fees by the date specified or found to have paid an inaccurate lower fee shall forfeit all rights and privileges of membership until the whole of the arrears have been discharged.
 - 10.5 Any bowler that has entered County/Inter-County/National competitions and has failed to pay subscription fees to join a Club before the first round of Competition will, after 24 hrs notice given, be immediately disqualified from all competitions entered.
 - 10.6 BN Competition Fees for Paper Form Entries must be received by the Treasurer at the same time as entry forms are submitted by the delegated Club official and by the date specified. Payment for Portal entries is via the Stripe Payment system at the time of entry.

11 BENEVOLENT FUND

- 11.1 The Benevolent Fund has been set up to show benevolence to any County affiliated member, and also Past Officers of the County. whether for financial or medical problems.
- 11.2 The fund shall be called Bowls Northamptonshire (BN) Benevolent Fund.
- 11.3 The fund to be administered by 5 Trustees, which shall include a Chairman/Secretary.
- 11.4 Two Trustees shall be appointed by the Women's Management Committee and Two Trustees shall be appointed by the Men's Management committee.
- 11.5 A Levy, to be determined by the Executive Committee, shall be made with the Club's Annual affiliation to BN
- 11.6 Application for grants/gifts shall be submitted through the Club Secretary of which the subject is a member, or by Administrator/Management Secretaries
- 11.7 Applications for Grants shall be made on a form provided by the Fund Secretary or printed from the website.
- 11.8 Grants shall be made at the absolute discretion of the Trustees and they will be treated in the strictest confidence.
- 11.9 Annual accounts shall be prepared and subjected to an independent examination and shall be submitted to the BN AGM each year.
- 11.10 All cheques shall be signed by the Chairman/Secretary and one other Trustee.
- 11.11 The BN Executive Committee shall have the power to invest any surplus funds which may accrue.

12 APPENDIX - Discipline

The exec committee is the responsible body for grievances and discipline within the County when there is no formal complaint issued against a member or Club. The Club committee officials are responsible for discipline within their own club.

- 12.1 If a formal complaint of Misconduct is made against an affiliated bowler of the County then BE Disciplinary procedures, as amended on occasion by BE of Rule 9 (Club), 9A (County) will apply.
If no formal complaint of misconduct is made against another member then BN Exec Committee will decide, on the witness statements available, what judgements to make against the member in question, if the case is proven.
- 12.2 Witness statements made by Exec committee members present at the time of the incident will be given more weight in the decision making process than other

witness statements, providing that they broadly align with other statements made. A written statement from the accused will be requested by the Exec Committee and must be submitted for consideration within two weeks of the request. If this statement gives a valid evidenced reason or mitigation that is considered reasonable and accepted by the Exec then the incident will be closed, and no further action taken.

- 12.3 If no such account is submitted by the accused and the misconduct charge is proven, then the Exec committee will initiate disciplinary measures: General / Competition Rules and Regulations Compliance 4d / Offensive language refers:
- i/ Written warning on first occurrence, with a copy to the accused Club, and others as deemed necessary by the Executive.
 - ii/ County suspension for a period determined by the Executive as being proportionate and reasonable from playing bowls at any BN affiliated bowls club, County fixtures, and County competitions, and if deemed necessary to visiting or being on any affiliated bowls premises within Northamptonshire.

BN Constitution - Adopted Feb. 6th 2012.

Amended 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025