BOWLS ENGLAND

County News

Issue 1: November 2008

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County News

Keeping you informed throughout the year

WELCOME to the first issue of 'County News', your at-a-glance guide to key decisions being made by Bowls England's six committees (comprising Council Members democratically elected) and the work that they are doing.

This newsletter is being introduced to ensure that you, as a County Secretary and/or Council Member, are kept fully informed of decisions made by them within their roles and responsibilities as approved by you.

It will be issued three times a year with the latest information from Bowls England, as part of our commitment to improve communication with our Members.

On each page we have highlighted for you the decisions that have been made by each Committee, and whether they are 'Resolved', which means they are confirmed, or 'Recommended'. The latter means the decision will go forward to the Board for approval or referral to the Council at an EGM or AGM.

This newsletter is aimed at County Secretaries and Council Members, but please share this information with other colleagues as appropriate.

If you have any queries or suggestions for future issues, please contact our Development Officer, Alistair Hollis, on 07765 050408 or e-mail: alistair.hollis@bowlsengland.com

Tony Allcock MBE
Chief Executive
Bowls England

COMPETITIONS

Committee Responsibilities:
National Championships & Competitions
Tournaments & Licences
Umpire Services
Laws of the Sport

Summary of decisions from meeting held in September

National Competitions 2009: ***Resolved*** that Bowls England staff could sort out geographical areas for the draws using the new computer system. Counties, clubs and individuals asked to note the closing date for entries as 1st February 2009. It was further ***resolved*** that entries for the Mixed Fours and Mixed Pairs could come from different Clubs providing the players were affiliated to the same county.

Subsidy for National Championships: ***Recommended*** that subsidy would continue to be paid from the nominated County centre in 2009.

National Championship 'double-ups': ***Resolved*** that Counties should change their constitution, if necessary, to allow County Secretaries to alter their "A", "B" or "C" representatives should a "double-up" occur to prevent potential clashes.

Regional finals of National Competitions: ***Recommended*** that arrangements for booking venues by Bowls England should continue, with all regional finals venues booked in advance and alternative venues considered every two years. In 2009 the Regional Finals of the Men's and Women's Champion of Champions will be played on Sunday 5th July - venues TBC.

Arrangements for National Competitions: A request had been received requesting that Counties revert to running the Women's Over 55s and Top Club competitions. ***Recommended*** Bowls England should continue to organise these competitions for at least a further year after which a review would be made.

Middleton Cup Quarter Finals 2009/10: Venues for 2009/10 will be as follows;

South A v South B at Bromley BC, Kent
West A v East A at Swindon BC, Wiltshire
North B v West B at Norgren BC, Warwickshire
North A v East B at New Lount BC, Leicestershire

Mixed Pairs Finals: The 2009 Mixed Pairs will be held at Goodwood, Leicester. Consideration will be given to the 2010 Mixed Pairs finals being held at Worthing if the Competition Committee can arrange sufficient time in the programme.

Wheelchairs and Bowling Aids: It was stated that two wheelchairs had been approved for use, the Bagshaw Buggie and the Clippie. It was noted that some wheelchairs were adapted for personal use and there was no clear distinction on the measurement of chairs. The Laws of the Sport made reference to these wheelchairs and it was ***recommended*** reference be made to these approved types of wheelchair in the Bowls England Rules and Regulations.

Budgets: Committee ***recommended*** that competition fees increase each year by at least the rate of inflation. In order to achieve a satisfactory income the increase would probably have to be more than the rate of inflation to cover the anticipated costs in 2010.

Rules and Regulations: Updated papers were circulated and it was agreed that different sets of rules were required :

(1) National Championship Rules
(2) National Competition Rules
(3) Men's National Championship - Final stages
(4) Women's National Championship - Finals stages

Recommended that wherever appropriate the 160 mile rule should be included.

Parental Consent: ***Resolved*** that each County Secretary receives parental consent forms to complete for any finalists under 18 years old.

Two Fours Title: ***Resolved*** that from 2009, the Men's County Top Two Fours will be referred to as the 'Balcomb Trophy'.

Ground Sheets: ***Resolved*** Ground Sheets that can be fixed with pins are permitted for use in all national competitions, as per the Crystal Mark edition of the Laws of the Sport. 'Moveable/portable' Ground Sheets not be acceptable for use in national competitions as these contravene the Laws.

Proposals to the EGM from Committee:
1. Over 60 Club Competition from 2010

2. Change format of the Walker Cup from 2010 to be along the same lines as the Balcomb Trophy, with Prelim and First Round by mutual agreement and regional finals at the weekend to enable working women to take part. Finals would continue to be held at Leamington during the National Championships

Date of Next Meeting:
Wednesday 28th January 2009 at Royal Leamington Spa.

DEVELOPMENT

Committee Responsibilities:
Facilities Strategy,
Club and Member, Development,
Youth Development,
Bowls Coaching,
Public Relations, Press & Media

Summary of decisions from meeting held on 1st October 2008

Holidays: ***Resolved*** that proposed Bowls England holiday at TLH would not go ahead this year. Reported that the 2009 week at Potters has already attracted 470 confirmed bookings.

County News: Reported that the Board had endorsed the decision for Development Officer to produce a quarterly publication "County News".

Sport England Strategy 2009-2013: Reported that Bowls England is working with the other Bowls NGBs on a joint bid for funding to support initiatives to increase participation. Timescales for the bid are extremely tight, and a decision on whether the bid has been successful should be known in December. The process has helped Bowls England to develop its relationship with the other bowls governing bodies.

Media Relations: Reported that increased local and regional media coverage had been obtained during the Men's and Women's National Championships. Coverage of results had also been secured in the national press, including the Daily Telegraph. A dedicated media relations system is being developed ahead of 2009 season.

Website development: Work is ongoing.

Schools Workshop: ***Resolved*** that Development Officer would attend meeting as Bowls England representative. ***Resolved*** that Development Officer express concern of Committee regarding use of 'English Schools' in title of the project in Rugby.

Resolved that Chief Executive write to EIBA suggesting that the EBYDS be invited.

Information to Clubs on Funding and Environmental issues: ***Resolved*** that these issues should be communicated through the roadshows, the website and newsletters.

Clubmark: ***Resolved*** that Bowls England would investigate the option of supporting Clubmark accreditation for clubs through County Sports Partnerships.

English Bowls Coaching Scheme: ***Resolved*** that contributions to the EBCS will be reviewed as appropriate.

New Director of Coaching will be announced in October. ***Resolved*** that Chief Executive would write and invite the appointee to the Conference in April. Concern was expressed regarding the reluctance of coaches around the country to upgrade from Level 2 to Level 3.

Proposed that Bowls England and other governing bodies should clarify what they want from the EBCS and that Committee members consider this and submit their suggestions. ***Resolved*** that Chair would request documents submitted by EBCS to Sports Coach UK and that these would be circulated to Committee when received.

English Bowls Youth Development Scheme: ***Resolved*** that provision for the EBYDS remain as agreed. ***Resolved*** that Bill Hatto would be Development Committee representative.

Under 18 visits to Worthing: ***Resolved*** that Norfolk and Huntingdonshire be confirmed for 2009, and that if Buckinghamshire and Berkshire formally applied they would be accepted for 2010.

Club of the Year: Reported that 24 entries had been received and the quality had been excellent. Winner was Ware BC (Hertfordshire) and runner-up Putney Town (Surrey).

Resolved that County Associations would also be invited to nominate clubs in 2009 and that this should be mentioned at the Conference. ***Resolved*** that more formalised judging criteria would be procuced for 2009.

County Roadshows: Resolved that this should be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Co-opted members: ***Resolved*** that Richard Boorman from Kent be invited to join the Committee. Chief Executive to invite.

Date of next meeting:
Tuesday 27th January 2009 at Royal Leamington Spa.

FINANCE

Committee Responsibilities:
Financial Performance
Annual Budgets
Affiliation Fees
Loans (Clubs)

Summary of decisions from meetings held in April and October 2008

Development Loans: Following a review of the overall Funds position (projected to February 2009), rather than put additional Reserves on deposit at a bank to make money, we should ring-fence additional Reserves to fund loans to more Clubs. ***Recommended*** to increase the Development Loans reserve from the current level of £300,000 to £400,000.

Greens Loans: National Administrator Arnold Goad presented a paper to increase the maximum amount for a single loan under the scheme from £3,000 to £4,000 and to change to the administration charges. ***Recommended*** to increase the maximum loan to £4,000.

EBA and EWBA Final Accounts: ***Recommended*** that the Board sign-off the final EBA and EWBA accounts covering the last few months of 2007 (roughly equivalent to the first quarter of the 2008 Accounts).

Depreciation: The final accounts of the EWBA had shown depreciation values based on different principles to that of the EBA. ***Resolved*** that the Final Accounts of the EWBA will show depreciation as stated by the EWBA Accountants, but the new Accountants for Bowls England will adjust the opening balance of the first Bowls England Accounts and provide an explanatory note.

Book-keeping at HQ: ***Resolved*** to change the accounting system to Sage – to reduce costs and provide greater flexibility for HQ staff.

EWBA 1000 Club: Made a loss in 2008, but suggestions have been made that it should be re-vamped by Member Services as it was a good source of income for the EWBA. ***Recommended*** that the Member Services Committee review the running of this draw for 2009.

Commonwealth Games funds: ***Resolved*** that a Credit Card with a suitable limit be issued to the Commonwealth Games Co-ordinator

Movement of Funds: Bowls England currently has approximately 30 per cent of our funds in the Anglo Irish Bank earning a very good rate of interest and 70 per cent in the HSBC Reserve Account earning a lesser rate. The majority of the funds were moved to HSBC to protect the position (prior to the recent Bank crisis). The funds-placement strategy may have to be re-thought in the light of the current economic climate and the protection that the Irish Government is affording depositors. However, it was considered imprudent to spread the funds over too many institutions, as this may increase and not decrease the risks.

IT equipment: ***Recommended*** that a review of the usage and provision of all current IT facilities takes place, to ensure that Disaster Recovery Planning requirements are covered in accordance with the draft Business Continuity Plan included in the Sport England Audit Report.

Printers at HQ: Print volumes have increased since the commencement of the Unification process. The existing HQ machines are no longer fit for purpose and force us to outsource work when they break down with time deadlines to meet. ***Recommended*** that the current machines be replaced and any new contract should be for no more than three years. ***Resolved*** that negotiations take place with the current suppliers re the Contract and with the Finance House re the minimising of the outstanding lease payments. ***Resolved*** that the proposition is put to the EGM in November for approval and that if this is agreed, that negotiations start immediately afterwards.

2008 Forecast and 2009 Budget: Despite the increase in costs over the last year, these are currently on track to achieve the objective of 'a small working excess of income over expenditure'

2010 Budgets: Proposals have been submitted by the Committees. If the planned streamlining is achieved, then - following the initial two year freeze on fees - current indications are that Affiliation fees will need to be increased for 2010 by 50p per Member to keep pace with the cost requirements.

Date of next meeting:
Wednesday 7th January 2009 at Worthing.

INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Committee Responsibilities:
International Team Selection,
Performance Monitoring,
British Isles Bowls Council, World Bowls Board,
European Bowls Union, Commonwealth Games, Test Matches

Summary of decisions from meeting held on 26th September 2008

Narrow running bowls: ***Resolved*** that the Chief Executive write to World Bowls expressing concern on behalf of "grass root bowlers" of England.

Blazers and Fleeces: Senior Women's International Team had worn fleeces for ceremonies and during play. ***Resolved*** that a specially designed medallion be awarded to the Senior Women's International players. ***Resolved*** that British Isles players wear the generic shirt, which they would buy, and the winners' fleeces presented at the Annual Dinner.

Player Performance: ***Resolved*** that reports on individual players should only be made to the corresponding Selection Committee.

Accommodation at International events: ***Resolved*** that the official party for the International Series consists of the President, Chief Executive, Team Manager, Selectors, Players and Reserves and that Bowls England would in future only book accommodation for the official party.

Junior and Senior Team Manager: ***Recommended*** that Junior Team Manager job description be reworded to include 'Junior Team Manager makes any changes in the Junior International Team, during the Series, after consultation with the Selection Committee.' ***Recommended*** that job description for the Senior Team Manager includes 'attend the Junior International Series and be budgeted for as an observer'. ***Resolved*** that recommendations be forwarded to Policy and Management Committee for inclusion in Regulations.

Senior Women's International Gala Night: In 2010 England will stage a 'welcome function' on the Monday night to include the British Isles players.

International players not supporting their County Association: ***Resolved*** to be left to International Selectors discretion.

Waterproofs worn by International Players: ***Resolved*** that no action be taken at this stage.

Appointment of Commonwealth Games Co-ordinator: John Bell has been appointed. ***Resolved*** that the Commonwealth Games Co-ordinator draw up a Code of Conduct for Players, selectors and officials attending International events under the banner of Bowls England.

Temporary Senior Team Manager: ***Resolved*** to advertise for a Temporary Senior Team Manager until the conclusion of the Commonwealth Games.

International Trials 2009: Following dates and venues agreed:
Men's Senior and Junior trials at Norgren BC (Warwickshire) on Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th May.
Women's Senior and Junior trials at New Lount BC (Leicestershire) on Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th May.
Senior Squad Day - ***Recommended*** that Women v Men on Sunday May 31st at Norgren BC (Warwickshire).

International Trials 2010: ***Resolved*** that until forward plan in place no action be taken.

World Championships 2012: Will be held in Australia from 24th November to 9th December. Traditional format of play for all disciplines. The event has budget implications.

Home International Series 2010: ***Resolved*** that Chief Executive meet with Warwick District Council to express the Committee's concern on the progress of work taking place on the green improvement. ***Resolved*** Chief Executive be given power to take any relevant action and that Beach House Park, Worthing, be considered as an alternative venue.

Committee Budget: ***Resolved*** that there is a need to review all events for which invitations are received, to review the future of the International Series, to review investment for the future of the "elite squad" system and that it was a remit of players representing their Country for a 'return' for the money being invested in them.

Date of Next Meeting:
Wednesday 25th March 2009 at Royal Leamington Spa.

MEMBER SERVICES

Committee Responsibilities:
Commercial and Marketing;
Handbook; Event Programmes; Magazines
Greens Maintenance, Insurance
Merchandise

Summary of decisions from meeting held on 25th September 2008

Annual Conference: This will be held on the 1st April 2009 at Leamington in the Town Hall. The agenda is being prepared and if Counties/Clubs feel they would like something included please contact the Chair of the Member Services Committee. It is hoped that those attending next year will contribute more and thus make it a two-way event.

Yearbook: It was ***resolved*** that only 6,000 would be printed on the initial run for 2009. It was ***recommended*** to the Board that the price of the Yearbook be increased to £4 for 2010. The Regulations will not be included in the Yearbook next year but will be produced in a booklet similar to this year.

Merchandise: Sales of Bowls England merchandise was over £13,000 at the National Championships. The tent at Leamington lost money due to its design and it was ***resolved*** to replace the tent at Leamington with a tent similar to the one at Worthing and have increased security. It was ***resolved*** that Bowls England would continue to sell merchandise at the Championships and through the website rather than appoint an agent. To this end the loft has been cleared at Worthing Headquarters with racking erected to store the stock. It is hoped to provide access by means of stairs.

Civil Liability Insurance: The Policy & Management Committee recommended a Compulsory Membership scheme linked to Insurance to the Board which was resolved. Work is in hand to produce a paper and recommendations for this scheme and it is hoped that these will be presented at the AGM in February with a further discussion at the Annual Conference. The 'Frequently Asked Questions' paper has been updated and placed on the Bowls England Website.

Bowls England Website: The new website is nearing completion and it is hoped to have it operational early in the new year.

Events Programme: Details for 2009 were nearly complete.

Greens Maintenance: The National Administrator and his Regional Co-ordinators have been kept busy this year with 79 visits to greens being made. Please make everyone aware that help is available if Clubs have problems with their greens.

1000 Club: Due to lack of support this year it was ***resolved*** to discontinue this Club.

Budget: The agreed budget was ***recommended*** to the Finance Committee for approval.

Mail-outs: Responsibility for Mail-outs has been taken over by this Committee. There are normally two mail-outs per Year - April and September - and part of the deal with our sponsors is that we will provide a mail-out service for them and this helps towards the postage. Next year clubs will only receive one package per club as a new Bowls England Database is being set-up.

Useful Information to Clubs: This will be updated on the website if and when new information comes to light.

Date of Next Meeting:
Thursday 29th January 2009 at Royal Leamington Spa.

POLICY & MANAGEMENT

Committee Responsibilities:
Logo/Colours, Office Management, Celebration Matches, Annual General Meeting, Annual Dinners, Anti-Doping Policies, Child Protection, Equal Opportunities, Gender Issues, Life Membership, Health & Safety

Summary of decisions from meeting held on 23rd September 2008

Bowls England Regulations: The draft regulations on Customer Complaints, Discipline, Transgender and Transsexual and Reduction in the Risk of Fraud Policies were agreed and will be submitted for approval to the EGM in November. The Committee will be undertaking a review of all Regulations after the EGM.

Presidential Match Programme: The Committee reviewed the Presidential Match Programme Policy and was of the opinion that it provides sufficient flexibility to include additional matches in the Programme. At their next meeting they will review the Protocol established for matches.

Affiliation Fees Policy (a) Honorary & Life Members & Club Membership (b) Associated Members: The Committee looked at the issue of payment of fees so far as these categories of members are concerned since in some cases they have not been asked for fees and as such are not included in the annual returns. It has been ***recommended*** to the Board that the current position so far as the payment of fees by Honorary and Life Members be maintained until the outcome of a Bowls England Membership Scheme is determined and that the date for the payment of fees and subscriptions by all categories of membership be set at 1st February each year.

The Committee will look at formulating a policy on playing games against non-affiliated Clubs.

Anti-Doping Policy: The Committee gave consideration to a paper prepared on the subject which was received and adopted for an inclusion as an Appendix to Regulation No.8 with a view to submission to the AGM in February, 2009.

Model Constitutions: An interim report was received and noted and further consideration will be given at the next meeting.

Codes of Conduct: Codes of Conduct are already in place for the Directors, Staff and Players and the Committee examined the roll out of further codes for other categories of membership including Council members, Honorary Members, The Presidential Team, Committees and Selectors.

Resolved that the International Performance Committee be asked to submit a draft Code of Conduct for Selectors and Players to be considered in conjunction with proposals for other categories of membership.

Bowls England Presentation Banners: A new design of the Bowls England Presentation Banner was considered and approved for introduction in 2009.

Smoking on the Green: ***Resolved*** that the proposal of the Competitions Committee for the introduction of penalties to be imposed for smoking on the green be supported.

Women's Dinner 2008: Arrangements were finalised for the women's dinner on 21st November 2008 and the EGM at Leamington Spa the next day. The Committee feels that if the women's dinner continues at the Walkers Stadium then it would be more convenient if the EGM was held in Leicester, preferably at the Walkers Stadium or if this is not available a venue nearby.

Resolved that at the next meeting consideration be given to proposed venues for future Bowls England Dinners.

Election of Council Members to Committees: The Committee gave consideration to the processes for the election of Council Members to Committees in line with the recommendations of the Sport England Audit Report and ***resolved*** that the Secretary prepare a draft regulation for consideration at the next meeting.

Date of Next Meeting:
Tuesday 16th December 2008 at Royal Leamington Spa.