

## COVID-19: GUIDANCE OUTDOOR LAWN BOWLS CLUBS IN WALES

**All matches and use of the club is the legal obligation of the organiser including the club, COVID officer and attendees.**

**Version 3.0. Date Issued: 20/04/21**

### INTRODUCTION

The Welsh Government announced on 12/03/21 that outdoor facilities associated with outdoor sports and physical activities, including bowls, may now reopen.

Welsh Government guidance released on 12/03/21 states: *Local outdoor sports facilities can reopen*"

*Welsh Government announcement on 08/04/21 states 'The First Minister last week set out a detailed timetable for moving Wales firmly into alert level three. But some of these measures will now be introduced sooner than planned as cases have fallen markedly. The planned opening date for organised outdoor activities of up to 30 people and outdoor wedding receptions will be moved forward to **Monday 26 April** from 3 May'*

This guidance supplements the Welsh Government guidance and directives by covering situations specific to the sport of bowls. It is a live document and will be updated as Welsh Government advice changes.

BowlsWales, WWBA & WBA are seeking to support those clubs that wish to reopen and members who would like to play, to do so safely and in accordance with the guidance as set out by the Welsh Government.

**All clubs who wish to return to the green play at their own risk using this as guidance and to follow the Welsh Government restrictions. Clubs can decide individually whether they wish to reopen having considered the Welsh Government advice and the risk assessment of their facilities.**

**This guidance is not a 'one size fits all' approach, and any guidance or recommendations made in this document will vary dependent on each club. However, the responsibility for the reopening of bowling facilities rests solely with each club and this advice and guidance seeks to guide and support clubs through this process.**

We appreciate bowling facilities vary across Wales and as such individual clubs should risk assess appropriately to ensure these procedures can be implemented. Key elements are needed to be considered and assessed to ensure the safety of the clubs and its members.

This guidance document contains the following Sections and applies only to outdoor lawn bowling clubs Wales that wish to re-open:

1. Clubs – Summary of Recommended Action
2. Players – Summary of Recommended Action
3. Frequently Asked Questions
4. Additional Information

If you have any questions, please e-mail: [enquiries@bowlsales.com](mailto:enquiries@bowlsales.com) or WWBA Secretary on [hazel222@hotmail.com](mailto:hazel222@hotmail.com) or WBA Secretary on [terry472@sky.com](mailto:terry472@sky.com) . We are here to help.

We hope you all stay both safe and healthy and that we can overcome these challenging times by supporting each other where we can. The coming weeks and months may also provide an opportunity for you to encourage members of your own household, who currently don't play, to give bowls a try – **clubs are reminded to ensure that any activity by non-members is in accordance with their insurers.**

## 1. Clubs – Recommended Actions

It is recommended that all clubs follow the advisory guidance below (the guidance may be adapted if necessary, for your club, as long as it remains consistent with Welsh Government regulations and social distancing requirements):

### Play arrangements

<b>Risk Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please find the link to an example template – <a href="#">BowlsWales, WWBA &amp; WBA Risk Assessment</a></li> <li>• In addition, other risk assessment templates can be found online.</li> </ul>
<b>Off-site booking system</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For rink allocation (E.g., Google Calendar)</li> </ul>
<b>Test, Trace &amp; Protect</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clubs are advised to follow Welsh Government Test, Trace &amp; Protect guidance. This enables the clubs to track who is using the facilities if they show symptoms following the activity. You should hold records for 21 days from the date of each separate visit that a staff member, customer or visitor made.</li> <li>• Link here - <a href="https://gov.wales/keeping-records-staff-customers-and-visitors-test-trace-protect">https://gov.wales/keeping-records-staff-customers-and-visitors-test-trace-protect</a></li> </ul>
<b>COVID-19 officer role description</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clubs should appoint a COVID officer to oversee the contact details of participants during training/competitions for Test, Trace &amp; Protect.</li> <li>• Clubs can use a budding system with local clubs to share the use of COVID officer – Must ensure that all process and procedures specific to that club is detailed and outlined</li> <li>• Clubs can find COVID-19 officer role description here <a href="https://bowlsales.com/covid-19/">https://bowlsales.com/covid-19/</a></li> </ul>

<b>COVID-19 Club Checklist</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support here - <a href="#">BowlsWales, WBA &amp; WWBA COVID Checklist</a></li> </ul>
<b>COVID-19 Club Officer training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free Training is available and you can register for the training via the BowlsWales website here <a href="https://bowls-wales.com/covid-19/">https://bowls-wales.com/covid-19/</a></li> </ul>
<b>Travel Arrangements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Club's must ensure to follow current Welsh Government regulations</li> <li>• Travelling with another household is not recommended but if it is required, social distancing must be followed and face masks must be worn.</li> <li>• <a href="https://gov.wales/travelling-safely-during-coronavirus-pandemic-guidance-public-html">https://gov.wales/travelling-safely-during-coronavirus-pandemic-guidance-public-html</a></li> </ul>
<b>Time slots</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum of 20 minutes between allocated slots to enable players to arrive/depart safely</li> </ul>
<b>Number of people</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of people allowed on each rink is governed by current Welsh Government guidance and restrictions on adhering to social distancing</li> <li>• Organised outdoor activity must not exceed 30 people at any one time on the green</li> <li>• <a href="https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/coronavirus-control-plan-alert-levels-in-wales-coming-out-of-lockdown.pdf">https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/coronavirus-control-plan-alert-levels-in-wales-coming-out-of-lockdown.pdf</a></li> </ul>
<b>Rink use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At any one time the number of rinks in use is governed by current Welsh Government guidance and restrictions on adhering to social distancing</li> <li>• It is recommended to ensure there is plenty of space between rinks in use and ensure that social distancing is followed. All games are to be kept separate to avoid gatherings</li> <li>• <a href="https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/coronavirus-control-plan-alert-levels-in-wales-coming-out-of-lockdown.pdf">https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/coronavirus-control-plan-alert-levels-in-wales-coming-out-of-lockdown.pdf</a></li> </ul>
<b>Spectators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No spectators are currently permitted</li> <li>• We are closely monitoring Welsh Government regulations on allowing spectators and will update guidelines to reflect any changes.</li> <li>• This will also need to be monitored in line with any reopening of outdoor hospitality</li> <li>• <a href="https://gov.wales/keeping-records-staff-customers-and-visitors-test-trace-protect">https://gov.wales/keeping-records-staff-customers-and-visitors-test-trace-protect</a></li> </ul>
<b>Personal belongings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be kept to a minimum or if possible, left in the car</li> </ul>
<b>Local Authority</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact your Local Authority/Landowner if applicable, to discuss opening requirements. To ensure your club is prepared for when Welsh Government restrictions are lifted, and bowls can resume.</li> </ul>

## Playing Formats

The following playing formats are in accordance with Welsh Government guidelines:

- Depending on Club's safety and risk assessment measures, the number of players playing at any one time is to follow the current Welsh Government regulations and social distancing measures and not to exceed 30 people on the green at any one time.

**Social distancing rules must be strictly adhered to; you must remain at least two metres apart from other bowlers (who are not part of your household) at all times.**

## Clubhouse and Facilities –

- **The use of clubhouse with bar and restaurant facilities cannot be used except for the use of the toilet facilities**
- **Club's must check with their local licensing rules for their outdoor bar and catering facilities**
- The use of the toilet facilities must ensure there is a 1 in 1 out policy with a one way system and follow social distancing
- Anyone entering and waiting within the clubhouse facilities must wear a face covering
- Sanitiser must be available for cleaning hands and equipment before and after playing
- **Test, Trace & Protect** –This enables the clubs to track who is using the facilities if they show symptoms following the activity. You should hold records for 21 days from the date of each separate visit that a staff member, customer or visitor made.
- Your Club must have written authority from the landlords of the green that you can gain access to the clubhouse under the strict guidelines laid out in this document and then follow all guidelines
- You can find our Clubhouse Guidelines and risk assessment here - <https://bowlswales.com/covid-19/>

**Social distancing rules must be strictly adhered to; you must remain at least two metres apart from other bowlers (who are not part of your household) at all times.**

## Equipment

To minimise the risk of infection, only essential items (as below) should be utilised during any session and where possible use your own equipment from home:

- Mat (Minimal people to use and ensure that sanitised and cleaned before and after every use)
- Bowls
- Jack (Minimal people to use and ensure that sanitised and cleaned before and after every use)
- Rink Markers

- Gloves (if preferred)
- Scorecards (these should be retained by one person only if required)
- Bowling arm/lifter (for use by one person only if required)
- Bowling aids (for players with a disability if required)
- Spray Chalk (to be cleaned from your own bowl)
- Bowls pushers (to be cleaned and sanitised after every use, touched by the minimal number of people)

All equipment should be cleaned and sanitised before and after use.

To minimise the risk of infection, any other equipment is not deemed essential equipment at this time and should not be utilised. This includes:

- Scoreboards
- Ditch markers
- 2m distance sticks
- Chalk

## 2. Players – Recommended Actions

It is recommended that all players follow the guidance below (the guidance may be adapted if necessary, to meet individual needs, as long as it remains compliant with Welsh Government advice and social distancing requirements):

### In advance

- Do not go to the club if you are experiencing any coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms;
  - or any cold or flu-like symptoms
  - a new continuous cough
  - a high temperature
  - a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste
  - Use the NHS 111 website or helpline and seek advice. For your own protection, follow the advice about self-isolation if you are, or are living with, someone in one of the vulnerable groups
- All players, officials, volunteers and spectators must undergo a self-assessment for any COVID-19 symptoms. No-one should leave home to participate in sport if they, or someone they live with, is symptomatic - or suspects they may have been exposed to the virus. They should immediately self-isolate. See Welsh Government guidelines here - <https://gov.wales/self-isolation-stay-home-guidance-households-possible-coronavirus>
- Dress appropriately before you get to the club to avoid the need to change clothes – change shoes immediately before and after your game
- Travel to the green on your own or with members of your own household only – do not offer a lift to, or accept a lift from, anyone outside your household. Do not arrive more than 10 minutes before your allocated booking time.

### **Personal care**

- Avoid using toilets at the club wherever possible and clean anything you have touched after use
- Wash or sanitise your hands and sanitise any equipment (including bowls, jacks and mats) you use before and after you play – do not assume that the person before you has sanitised the equipment thoroughly
- Sanitise gates, padlocks, keys and door handles before and after use

### **Playing the game**

- You should only play:
  - A maximum of 30 people on the green who can take part in organised outdoor sport. Depending on Clubs safety and risk assessment measures, the number of players playing at any one time is to follow the current Welsh Government regulations
  - Social Distancing measures must be followed
- Do not shake hands before, during or after a game
- Do not 'high-five' OR 'hug' other players to celebrate shots or a win
- Minimise the number of people handling the mat during the sessions. Ensure the mat is cleaned and sanitised before and after every use.
- If scoring:
  - Social distancing rules must always be strictly adhered to at all times
  - Do not touch your opponents' bowls with your hands
  - Measuring for shot/s but must abide social distancing
  - Own measuring tape must be used

Overall, it is important that all clubs put in sensible arrangements that are aligned to the regulations and social distancing rules and members follow these arrangements to protect themselves and others during this period.

### **When you leave**

- When you finish playing, change your shoes and leave the club immediately – ensuring that you have sanitised all equipment used and that the club is secure (as applicable)
- Members or participants are discouraged from congregating in the car park after their game

## **3. Frequently Asked Questions**

### **When can we reopen?**



Outdoor bowls clubs are allowed to open from Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2021. Each club, including council-owned sports facilities, will make their own decision about when their facilities are ready to open and can be operated safely. You should only reopen or restart activities as soon as you feel able to do so safely. Until you feel it is safe and responsible to reopen you should remain closed.

### **What games can we play?**

All activity should be consistent with the Welsh Government guidance regarding health, social distancing and hygiene. That means that participants and others can maintain a safe two metre distance, that good hygiene practices are in place, that equipment is disinfected regularly, and that anyone who is symptomatic or suspects they have been exposed to the virus does not take part and remains at home.

### **What about competitions within our club?**

Any measures clubs can put in place to enable an activity to return needs to be capable of being adapted to follow Welsh Government guidelines on social distancing e.g. strengthening or relaxing measures at short notice. Organisations are encouraged to think creatively about how best to make their sport or activity possible within the guidelines.

The Welsh Government regulations state that any outdoor organised activity must not exceed 30 people at any one time. There must be strict rule for adhering to social distancing measures reinforced by the guidance. – It may be possible to organise amateur events or competitions currently. There is a primary focus of bowling activity at this time is for physical and mental well-being. All Clubs must ensure that the current Welsh Government regulations and social distancing measures are followed at all times.

### **Can clinically vulnerable people (such as people aged 70 and over) participate in Lawn bowls?**

Those who are shielding can continue to leave home to exercise or meet outside with people from another household.

You should strictly follow physical distancing (2 metres away from another person) and you should practice good hygiene using a hand sanitiser and avoiding touching things touched by others.

Full details at: <https://gov.wales/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-people-defined-on-medical-grounds-as-extremely-vulnerable-from-coronavirus-covid-19-html>

### **What if I appear to show virus symptoms following playing?**

Should anyone who attended the club subsequently discover they have any virus symptoms they should immediately inform the club secretary. The designated officer for Track and Trace should be informed and ensure that the correct process of Welsh Government Test, Trace , Protect guidance is followed, link here - <https://gov.wales/test-trace-protect>

### **Can I receive coaching?**

One on one coaching is permitted if outside and remaining a minimum of 2 metres apart.

**Can we open the club bar and kitchen?**

Clubs must ensure that they check their bar licence and catering regulations. Outdoor Bars and catering, including any food or drink facilities inside a clubhouse can only be used in line with Welsh Government regulations.

**Can we use the club toilets?**

Yes – toilets and throughways may be kept open, but guidance on hygiene should be followed, with a one in one out approach.

**Can we use the changing rooms?**

No – all indoor facilities, apart from toilets and through-ways should be kept closed.

**Are spectators permitted?**

No spectators are currently permitted. However, we are closely monitoring Welsh Governed regulations and will update the guidelines to reflect any changes. This will need to be monitored in line with any reopening of outdoor hospitality.

**Can we share equipment?**

Where possible we recommend that you do not share equipment, for example you should use your own bowls. Mats and jack should be use by a minimal number of people and sanitised before and after every use.

It is a decision for clubs/facility managers whether they loan/hire out bowls. If you do, we expect you to follow sensible precautions and clean in between users, as well as the safely working guidance.

**How can we book a rink without visiting the club?**

Clubs are encouraged to utilise an off-site booking system for rink allocation – this could be offline (e.g. diary managed by allocated club members) or online (e.g. Google Calendar).

**How do we ensure that the mats and jacks are clean?**

Guidance currently states that cleaning protocols should be put in place to limit coronavirus transmission in public places. It is advised that touch points (e.g. handrails and gates) should be particular areas of focus for increased cleaning. Frequent cleaning of equipment between uses and any work areas used, using your usual cleaning products, is advised.

**Can we allocate someone to 'manage' sessions/attendance in addition to those who are playing?**

Yes – clubs should designate a club COVID officer to enable them to reopen safely as part of their risk assessment. Club COVID Officer are not required to be at the club at all time it is in use providing, they have communicated all procedures and processes to the club and members.

**Do any officials and/or COVID officers count towards the maximum number of 30 people?**

Yes anyone in the area of the organised activity is part of the number 30 which must not be exceeded as stated in the Welsh Government regulations

**Has a poster been produced that we can put up at our club?**

Yes – A COVID-19 Safety Information Poster for Clubs for Lawn Bowls has been designed. To download the poster, visit: [BowlsWales, WBA & WWBA COVID-19 Lawn Bowls Poster](#)

## 4. Additional Information

Further guidance is available as below:

### **Sport Wales**

<https://www.sport.wales/>

### **Welsh Government**

<https://gov.wales/stay-local-wales-takes-first-steps-out-of-lockdown>

<https://gov.wales/topic/980/latest>

<https://gov.wales/sport-recreation-and-leisure-guidance-phased-return-html#section-46491>

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-02/coronavirus-control-plan-alert-levels-in-wales-coming-out-of-lockdown.pdf>

### **Press release:**

<https://gov.wales/stay-local-to-keep-wales-safe>

### **Guidance:**

Guidance published at <https://gov.wales/guidance-changes-coronavirus-regulations-1-june> and <https://llyw.cymru/canllawiau-ar-newidiadau-i-reoliadaur-coronafeirws-o-1-mehefin>

### **Q&A:**

Published at <https://gov.wales/changes-coronavirus-regulations-1-june-frequently-asked-questions> and in English also at <https://llyw.cymru/newidiadau-i-reoliadaur-coronafeirws-ar-1-mehefin-cwestiynau-cyffredin> until Welsh translation arrives.

### **WSA**

<https://wsa.wales/our-services/sports-advocacy-and-policy/covid-19-support/>