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## A Message from the NGB and Member Strategy Day

*Joint statement from BowlsWales and the Welsh bowling NGBs and Members*

12 May 2026 | Sport Wales National Centre, Sophia Gardens, Cardiff

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On 12 May 2026, representatives of BowlsWales and all six Welsh bowling National Governing Bodies came together at Sport Wales for a full-day strategy workshop. The session was facilitated by GGi (Good Governance Institute) and chaired by Richard Jones, Chair of BowlsWales.

It was an important day, one that reflected the genuine progress that has been made in how we work together, and that gave us the opportunity to shape a shared direction for bowling in Wales through to 2030.

### **Why a strategy for bowling in Wales?**

Bowling in Wales has a long and proud history, across four codes: lawn, indoor, short mat and crown green. Thousands of people play, volunteer, coach and compete every week, in communities the length and breadth of Wales.

But the sport faces real challenges. Participation is under pressure. Volunteer capacity is stretched. And for too long, bowling in Wales has lacked a shared, long-term picture of where it is heading — one that brings BowlsWales, the NGBs, the clubs and the membership together behind a common purpose.

A strategy matters because it gives us that shared direction. It allows us to make choices deliberately rather than reactively, to align our efforts across codes and organisations, and to make a credible case to funders, to partners, and to our own membership, for why bowling in Wales deserves investment and support.

The strategy day on 12 May 2026 was the beginning of building that picture together.

### **What we discussed**

Our conversations centred on a strategic framework built around a single shared purpose: growing participation in bowling across Wales. We explored three strategic outcomes we want to achieve together:

- Growing — more people playing bowls across Wales, with a pathway for those who want to reach the highest level



- Inclusive — welcoming everyone to start, stay and succeed in the sport
- Engaged — connected clubs, volunteers and communities who feel part of something

We also agreed that three enablers must underpin everything we do: strong data and insight, financial sustainability, and good governance. BowlsWales exists to enable the NGBs — and through them, the clubs and players — to thrive. That is the relationship we are building.

## Where we are

We were honest about the past. Trust between BowlsWales and the NGBs broke down over a number of years — a combination of leadership challenges, the disruption of the pandemic, and too little meaningful dialogue. That is acknowledged, and it is behind us.

The conversation in the room on 12 May reflected a relationship that has moved significantly. There is now a shared commitment to working collaboratively, communicating openly, and making decisions that serve the sport — not just individual codes or organisations.

## What we agreed

Leaving the session, we are collectively committed to the following actions:

- Updating the BowlsWales strategic framework to reflect aspiration and success as a core outcome, and the growth of trust between BowlsWales and the NGBs as a foundation enabler
- Developing the next layer of detail beneath the strategic framework — identifying actions, priorities and measurable progress
- Publishing clear, plain-language guidance on the roles and responsibilities of BowlsWales and each NGB — so that members, clubs and partners understand how we work and why
- Improving day-to-day communication between organisations, including establishing a shared channel for regular dialogue
- Convening a follow-up session in July 2026, bringing together this group and the BowlsWales board to agree the next stage of the strategy together

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**We are united in wanting bowling in Wales to grow, to be inclusive, and to be a sport that people are proud to be part of. The work starts now.**

### **Signatories**

The following attended and endorse this statement on behalf of their organisations:

Richard Jones | Chair, BowlsWales

Joanna Owen | General Manager, BowlsWales

Andrew Hopkins | Director, BowlsWales

John Phillips | WIB / WBUA

Trevor Clarke and Paul Daniels | WCGBA

Lyn Perkins | WBCA

Steve Benjamin and Kath Evans | WLB

Richard Palmer | WSMBA

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