



Ref: DP – 1.1.24 - 25

The British Crown Green Bowling Association

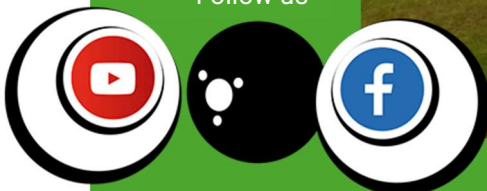
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Code of Conduct & Discipline Policy 2025



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Code of Conduct & Discipline Policy 2025

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Bye Laws of British Crown Green Bowling Association, the recognised Governing Body of Crown Green Bowls.

This document is split into four sub-groups:

- ❖ **Code of Conduct**
- ❖ **Protests, Appeals & Deposits**
- ❖ **Guidance on Punishments**
- ❖ **Guidelines for Disciplinary /Appeal Procedures**

Code of Conduct

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1. Aims & Purpose

- Crown Green Bowling is a sport suitable for the widest range of individuals – young and old, male, and female, able-bodied and disadvantaged.
- However, in order to maximise the benefits and opportunities available, then the BCGBA expect the highest standards of conduct from all those involved – players, spectators and administrators.
- This document sets out the rights and expectations of the conduct of all essentially-involved parties.
- This conduct is expected at all times and sanctions are proposed for persistent non-compliance.

2. Rights & Expectations

- All participants and spectators have the right to:
 - Enjoy safe participation in the game
 - Always be treated as individuals
 - Express their views and to be listened to
 - Seek support to help them develop their skills and values
 - Be treated with respect
 - Enjoy an environment free of discrimination
 - Participate free from the threat of abuse or insult
 - Have the sport administered in a fit and proper manner

- Obtain guidance and support free from bias or favouritism
- All participants and spectators are expected to:
 - Know the rules of game
 - Treat fellow participants with respect and courtesy
 - Refrain from abusive or threatening behaviour
 - Accept the decisions of officials without dissent
 - Act in a sportsmanlike way at all times
 - Treat the green and facilities with respect

3. Requirements

a. Players

- Players are the most important people in the sport.
- Playing for the team and helping the team to win is a fundamental part of the game. **But fair play and respect for all others is equally fundamental.**
- At all times, when practicing, training or competing in leagues, competitions and events, participants and competitors should:
 - Follow the rules and procedures of their club and league and Association
 - Adhere to BCGBA rules and byelaws
 - Act in accordance with the rules of the competition or event
 - Accept the decisions of officials of the event
 - Act in a sportsmanlike way at all times
 - Treat officials and other competitors with respect
 - Avoid swearing, shouting or any form of abusive behaviour or harassment
 - Refrain from abusive or threatening behaviour
 - Respect the rights and dignity of other participants
 - Keep to agreed timings or inform their Captain or the competitions' relevant person if they are going to be late
- No drinks allowed on the green. (playing area)
- No Swearing on or round the green
- No intimidation harassment or abusive behaviour on or round the green
- No unauthorised persons allowed on the green
- No Smoking or vapes permitted whilst playing on the green
- No Telephones or electronic devises permitted whilst playing unless required for medical monitoring.
- No use of illegal substances or drugs

b. Officials

- Officials and administrators are an important part of the game. Their efforts can greatly enhance or sometimes even diminish the enjoyment of the game.
- It is essential that the authority of their position is recognised and accepted.
- However, that authority must be used responsibly. Officials should:
 - Perform their duties in a fair and efficient manner free from bias or favouritism
 - Know the rules and act as a confident source of advice and information
 - Be open and transparent in all their decisions and be prepared to explain their reasons
 - Accept fair and constructive criticism
 - Perform their duties without consideration of self-importance
 - Share their knowledge with others

- Expect to be treated with respect and not subjected to personal comments or verbal abuse
- Members will expect officials to:
 - Be knowledgeable, fair and honest
 - Keep their promises
 - Keep to agreed programmes and timings

c. Supporters

- Supporters can make a significant contribution to an event. However, it must be accepted that players must not be unduly influenced or prevented from playing their own game.
- All spectators should:
 - Participate in a positive manner
 - Avoid swearing and abusive behaviour
 - Accept the instructions of match officials
 - Keep off the playing surface
 - Treat all participants equally
 - Act in a sportsmanlike way at all times

d. Parents

- Parents should:
 - Recognise the rights of their children to have fun.
 - Encourage long term participation.
 - Support their child's involvement in practicing and playing.
 - Be a good role model at clubs competitions and events and abide by safeguarding procedures at all times.
 - Accept that errors are an important part of learning and not condemn children for making them.

e. Use of Social Media

- Social media provides a forum for an exchange of views or constructive debate.
- It can be an enjoyable experience and can make a difference by bringing people together, supporting a mutual interest or cause.
- However, it is not the appropriate setting for creating disputes, to discredit other users or organisations, or to lodge complaints or grievances.
- It is certainly not the forum for anonymous slurs and insults.
- The BCGBA would expect all users of social media to:
 - Remember that all social media programmes are a public forum.
 - By adding any comment or information, you must be aware that this will be visible to other users and assumed to be true and relevant.
 - Remember that you are responsible for your contribution and for any possible consequences to your reputation and that of your subject.
 - If you have any doubts, it is better to refrain from making a contribution.
 - Treat other users with respect; use appropriate and correct language and act as though you are in the presence of the other person.
- Respect other users by:
 - Being courteous, honest and fair
 - Treating all people how you would like to be treated
 - Acting in ways that supports the reputation of the sport
 - Maintaining appropriate confidentiality with regards to personal matters

- Avoiding racist, homophobic, discrimination harassment or threatening comments
 - Avoiding behaviour which might reasonably be perceived as harassment, discrimination, bullying or intimidation
 - Be genuine – don't hide behind aliases or nicknames
 - Before you post a comment always ask yourself: Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it relevant?
- Comply with relevant actions from the online safety bill when it becomes law.
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/50/contents/enacted>

4. Non-Compliance

- This Code of Conduct should be seen as a guide to best practice to allow enjoyment of the sport by all those involved. In addition, safeguarding process and procedures are available on the Bowls Development Alliance Website for additional guidance.
- However, failures to comply will inevitably occur.
- In these cases, it is essential that some value judgement is provided, and disciplinary action taken.
- In repeat or extreme circumstances, sanctions are likely to be imposed.
- Also, in all cases, the right of appeal should be available.
- For incidents at club or league level, competitions and Associations should follow the BCGBA discipline Policy and Guidance for disputes.
- In all cases, accepted established procedures for the resolution of disputes should be followed. (see guidelines below)

Protests, Appeals and Deposits

- No protest or complaint shall be determined by the BCGBA unless the matter has been considered by the relevant Club, League, Association, County Association, or other relevant affiliated body.
- The only exceptions to this Bye Law are as follows:
 - Where all other avenues have been exhausted, allegations of bringing the game into disrepute may be reported directly to the BCGBA.
 - Cases of misconduct occurring at events which are the direct responsibility of, or are directly organised by, the BCGBA.
 - Breaches of Bye Law 11(c) covering Open Contests. In the three cases above, disciplinary proceedings may be instigated by the BCGBA without reference from a third party.
- In all the above, the BCGBA shall, in its absolute discretion, decide whether to deal with the matter itself or refer the matter for consideration by an appropriate affiliated body.
- All questions of eligibility, qualifications of players or interpretation of the Rules shall be referred to the Discipline Sub Committee.
- Protests and complaints which must contain full particulars of the grounds upon which they are founded must be lodged in duplicate with the Chief Executive, BCGBA, within 21 days after the hearing of the appeal to the County Association.
- No protest of whatever kind shall be considered by the Discipline Sub Committee unless the complainant shall have deposited with the Chief Executive the sum of £100.00 which may be forfeited in whole or in part to the funds of the BCGBA. In the event of a complainant losing the case the Association shall have power to order the complainant making a losing or frivolous protest or complaint to pay the expenses of the enquiry or to order the costs to be shared between the two parties.
- Parties to a protest or complaint shall be afforded an opportunity of making a written statement to the Discipline Sub Committee, shall be notified in advance the date upon which the protest or complaint is to be heard, and will be allowed the opportunity of copies of all correspondence appertaining to the protest or appeal.
- At the absolute discretion of the relevant Committee, parties to a protest or complaint may be allowed to make oral representations to the said Committee.
- An adhoc Committee consisting of three members of the Management Committee (Discipline Sub Committee) together with the President and Deputy President shall be convened to deal with questions raised under these Rules and of any disciplinary matters. The Discipline Sub Committee (can call upon) Management Committee members who shall be automatically appointed in sequence from a list of all the Associations represented on the Committee. Where the list nominates for duty the representative of an Association directly involved in the matter under consideration, then that Association shall be replaced with the next listed. The aforementioned Association shall be reinserted elsewhere in the listing. The Isle of Man shall be excused on request. When exhausted the list/rota to be redrawn at random. In the absence of either the President or Deputy President, one other member of the Management Committee Discipline/Sub Committee shall be co-opted onto

the adhoc Committee. No person involved in the complaint/alleged offence, or with connections with the complainant(s)/alleged offenders or witnesses shall sit on this body.

- Any Club, League or Association who suspends a player from taking part in competitive Crown Green Bowls, shall report this fact to its County Association, who shall consider the facts of the suspension and, if the circumstances warrant it, extend the suspension to cover the area of their jurisdiction. County Associations shall report the facts of all suspensions to the BCGBA who may also extend the area of suspension, providing it is considered the circumstances warrant it. Only the adhoc Committee as indicated in 12(g) can increase or decrease the period of suspension. The Discipline Sub Committee may demand the production of any books, documents or other evidence deemed necessary. Should any Club, League, Association or County Association refuse to furnish such evidence as may be required, or refuse to attend the enquiry, the Discipline Sub Committee shall have power to suspend such Club, League, Association or County Association.
- If a player makes a complaint and fails to get satisfaction from his Club, League, Association or County Association, he shall have the right to appeal to the British Crown Green Bowling Association in pursuance of Bye Law 12.
- Application for early reinstatement by offending Clubs or players from suspensions must be made in writing to the Secretaries of the respective County Association. Such applications (together with a report and commendation from the County Secretary, countersigned by the Chairman), must be sent to the Chief Executive of the British Crown Green Bowling Association. Each County Association shall have the power to deal with offending players and application for reinstatement, subject to appeal to the next meeting of the Discipline Sub Committee. Any Club or player under suspension for an offence other than provided for in Bye Law 11, may, on application, be reinstated at the discretion of the Discipline Sub Committee/Management Committee.
- No application for early reinstatement shall be entertained (except in special circumstances to be agreed by the Management Committee) from a player who has once been re-instated; this rule shall be retrospective in its action and shall apply to any member of a Club becoming affiliated as one of a number of Clubs admitted en-bloc from any particular area.

Guidelines on Punishment

On misconduct being proved to the satisfaction of the Discipline Sub Committee/Management Committee they shall have the power to:

- Caution
- Reprimand
- Suspend
- Fine
- Expel

Any Association, League, Club, Officer, Official, Player, Spectator or Affiliated Organisation, who shall infringe any Rule or Bye Law, or whose conduct shall, in their opinion, render him/her or them unfit for membership.

The Discipline Sub Committee/Management Committee shall decide whether a Player, Club or Affiliated Organisation shall be dealt with first by being summoned to appear before the Discipline Sub Committee/Management Committee to explain his/her or their conduct, and given opportunity to advance his/her or their defence unless in the opinion of an emergency Discipline Sub Committee/Management Committee such matters are serious enough to warrant immediate action.

In the case of misconduct meriting National Suspension or expulsion, at least two-thirds of the Discipline Sub Committee/ Management Committee then present must vote in support for suspension or expulsion.

Anyone so summoned to appear before the Discipline Sub Committee/ Management Committee shall be entitled to receive notice of at least seven days, in writing by Recorded Delivery or E-mail from the Association Secretary, giving particulars of the breaches of conduct being the subject of complaint.

Where a Player and/or spectator is found guilty of infringement of any rule or Bye Law, the BCGBA Discipline Sub Committee/ Management Committee would endorse the following interpretation of the term 'suspension'. For the period determined appropriate by the Discipline Sub Committee / Management Committee such player or spectator shall be suspended.

Such person MUST NOT:

- Play or Represent any Member Club/League/ Associations/Associate Members
- Play or Represent any Affiliated Member Club/ League/ Associations/ Associate Members
- Play or Officiate in any BCGBA Competitions, Championship or Individual Merit Competitions
- For the duration of the suspension the person, club, league or Associations MUST NOT:
 - Participate, take part, engage, join, get involved, play a part, play role, be a participant, partake, contribute, take part in any event or activity
 - Be an active member of any Club, Affiliated Club or Affiliated League or Associate Members within BCGBA
 - Be permitted to attend, organise, or manage any event where crown green bowling takes place.

The Discipline Sub Committee/Management Committee when deciding the suspension may consider elements of the suspension as listed, but not limited to the above, when deciding the suspension. Should any Individual, Member Club/League/Associations/ Associate Members fail to manage compliance of the suspensions at their venues they shall be considered guilty of misconduct.

The Discipline Sub Committee/Management Committee shall keep a record and notify all membership of the decisions where National Suspensions are imposed.'

Discipline Charge / Penalty Guidelines

- **Complete Discharge** (no case to answer not enough evidence of any misdemeanour)
- **Conditional Discharge** (anything from 3 months to 12 months-if any repeat within period of sentence, case to be looked at again and if found guilty increase in sentence moves up, usually fine, or suspension. Suggest 6-month suspension from all bowls to be minimum.
- **Fine** (depending on defendant's actions i.e. verbal abuse, racial comments, threatening behaviour)

Suggested Bands	Band A	Band B	Band C
Suggested Fines	£25.00	£50.00	£100.00

- **Verbal Abuse - Range:** Band A fine to suspension
 - **Threats of Violence - Range:** Band B fine to suspension
 - **Affray (actual blows) - Range:** Band C fine to suspension
 - **Racial Abuse:** Immediate suspension 12 months (can be brought down to a lesser sentence dependant on circumstances).
- **Penalties**
 - If found guilty of a Physical Assault even without Police intervention the penalty will be a minimum of 2 years suspension. In the event of a physical assault it may be advisable that police action is sought.
 - Racial Abuse of any nature if found guilty should be a minimum of 18 months suspension.
 - Verbal Abuse with Threats if found guilty should be a minimum of 18 months suspension.
 - Verbal Abuse if found guilty - should be a minimum of 12 months suspension
 - Social Media /Bringing the game into Disrepute if found guilty - should be a minimum of 1 year suspension.

The procedure will be as follows: If a complaint is made it will be dealt within the following format: If member makes a complaint it will be firstly to the body under which the alleged offence has occurred ,and will be in writing. For example a player makes a complaint against another player in the club.

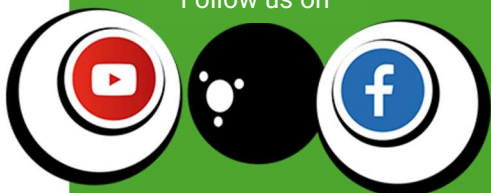
Guidelines for Disciplinary/Appeal Procedures

- This procedure may be used to deal with any type of alleged Misconduct or discipline considered to bring the game into disrepute, which occurs at any time or in any place. (Club, League, County or Competition).
- The following guidelines detail the procedure recommended by the BCGBA for dealing with disciplinary cases and any subsequent appeals. Whilst this procedure is intended for guidance only, it should be read in conjunction with the Bye Laws of the BCGBA which are mandatory.
- **This procedure may be activated by:-**
 - The receipt in writing of a formal complaint, an allegation of misconduct, or a breach of Rules or Bye Laws of a Club, League, Association, County Association, or the BCGBA.
 - An appeal made against disciplinary action taken at a lower level. In all cases the relevant documents pertaining to all previous hearing(s) shall be retained and made available in the case of an appeal.
- Without delay, the Secretary or designated Official of the recipient Club, League or Association, County Association, or the BCGBA shall convene a meeting of an Ad Hoc Committee. It is recommended that this Committee should consist of not less than 3 or more than 5 persons. In addition to the Ad Hoc Committee, a designated person shall be present whose prime duty will be to record the proceedings*. No person involved in the complaint/alleged offence, or with connections with the complainant(s)/alleged offender(s) or witnesses shall sit on this body.
* Recording for later transcript permitted if participants agree.
- Where it is not possible for the appropriate body to assemble an independent Ad Hoc Committee as recommended, because of the above prohibition, they may seek assistance from within their appropriate League or Association. In the case of a County Association this assistance can be sought from a neighbouring County.
- Both the complainant(s) and the alleged offender(s) shall be afforded the opportunity to attend the hearing personally and/or submit a written statement(s). This should be made in writing, sent by recorded delivery and allowing for receipt to be made at least 14 days prior to the case being heard. The notification to the alleged offender(s) should also include a copy of the statement outlining the allegation and stating the time, date, and place of the hearing. If an alleged offender fails to attend the hearing can be conducted in absentee!
- When an appeal is being heard, in addition to the above, a representative(s) of the disciplinary body who made the judgement at a lower level, will be afforded the opportunity to attend, and/or submit a written statement(s). Where a representative(s) attends, they shall be called to present their evidence and advised that they may be subject to cross examination and recall. Appellants, witnesses, and representative(s) will only be present at the appeal at the time their evidence is being presented and will not be allowed in the hearing either before or after presenting their evidence unless specifically called for.
- Both complainant(s) and the alleged offender(s) shall be afforded the opportunity to submit evidence and call witnesses to support their case and character. The body hearing the case also have the right to call independent witnesses should they consider this appropriate.

- In the case of an appeal, new witnesses may be called upon, or fresh evidence submitted at any point in the chain of appeal. In the event of either party wishing to introduce fresh evidence, the other party and the disciplinary body hearing the appeal shall be notified and furnished with a copy of such evidence prior to the hearing.
- Prior to any hearing, copies of all pertinent documents and signed statements should be supplied to every member of the appointed disciplinary body.
- It is suggested that the hearing should proceed as follows:
 - Members of the disciplinary body to meet in closed session in order to review the main points of the case placed before them, familiarise themselves with the witnesses who are to appear and to determine the order in which these witnesses are to be called.
 - Witnesses to be called, usually individually before the disciplinary body. They should be informed that they may be subject to cross examination and recall. Members to note down any points considered to be significant.
 - A short period to be allowed between witnesses in order to allow members to interchange notes and views.
 - After all witnesses have been heard, any written statements which have been submitted, to be read and accepted as evidence.
 - All the evidence given to be reviewed. In order to resolve anomalies it may be necessary at this point to recall witnesses for further cross examination.
 - A verdict reached, preferably by consensus. If consensus cannot be achieved, the verdict to be decided on a majority vote. The major factors which decided the final decision to be agreed and recorded. This record not to be published but to be held on file together with all the presented written evidence, pending any possible appeal.
 - All relevant antecedents and precedents should then be considered.
 - The members of the disciplinary body should then agree the exact wording of the verdict to be delivered. When a decision taken by a disciplinary body lower than the BCGBA involves a period of suspension it shall state within the verdict whether or not it intends to recommend to the next higher level of authority that the area of suspension be extended, and when such recommendation is made to a County Association whether or not it intends to recommend that it be further extended by the BCGBA.
 - When it is considered possible to announce the verdict immediately after the hearing, announcement shall be made to the complainant(s) and the alleged offender(s) separately by reading the statement agreed.
 - In any event, within seven days after the hearing, the verdict to be forwarded in writing, sent by recorded delivery, to both the complainant(s) and the alleged offender(s). Inform the appropriate party of their rights to appeal and to whom the appeal must be made.
- Both the complainant(s) and the alleged offender(s) shall have the right to appeal. Notice of the appeal to be made in writing within 21 days of the hearing, in accordance with the Bye Laws of the BCGBA.

- If the verdict involves a term of suspension, it shall commence 21 days after the hearing unless an appeal has been made. If that appeal shall subsequently fail, the term of suspension will commence 21 days after the appeal hearing, unless a further appeal is made to the next higher level of administration.
- This guideline may be disregarded in instances where the disciplinary body considers that the seriousness of the offence requires immediate suspension.
- Appeals against any decision reached by a disciplinary body must not be heard before any member of that body. Appeals can only be considered by the next level of administration up from the level at which the previous decision was made. e.g. Decision at League or Association level – appeal to County Association. Decision at County Association – appeal to BCGBA.
- A final point of guidance from the BCGBA to all members sitting on disciplinary bodies. As far as possible it is intended that you should employ what is commonly known as 'Natural Justice'. That assumes that any person(s) is innocent until guilt beyond reasonable doubt is established. Therefore, the benefit of any doubt must always be given to the alleged offender(s).

Follow us on



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