

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ACTION PLAN (DIAP)

BOWLS DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

DIAP 2025-26

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Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) Public-Facing Summary 2025–2026

Introduction

The Bowls Development Alliance (BDA) is committed to ensuring that bowls is an inclusive, welcoming and accessible sport for everyone. This Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) outlines our priority areas of focus for advancing equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across the organisation and the wider bowls community.

This public-facing DIAP is published in line with Requirement 2.2c of *A Code for Sports Governance*. It is underpinned by a detailed internal DIAP, which includes specific actions, responsibilities, timescales and measures. That internal plan is reviewed regularly by the BDA Board and shared with Sport England.

Statement from the Chair

Bowls has a strong history of bringing people together and creating a sense of community. It is a highly accessible sport that offers a level playing field for participants of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. However, we recognise that we must do more to ensure everyone in our society feels represented.

We are dedicated to making bowls a sport where everyone feels welcome, respected, and valued, no matter who they are or where they come from. The future of our sport depends on being truly inclusive. With this plan to guide us, and clear accountability in place, I believe we can build a more diverse and fair future for bowls.

As Chair, I am proud to support this Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, which was created with input from our partnership organisations and is backed across the sport. Our commitment is to make this plan more than just words. We know that with diversity comes success, and this plan is a call to action to take the necessary steps towards a more inclusive sport.

Ian McDougall

Chair – Bowls Development Alliance

Statement from the Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team of the Bowls Development Alliance stands united in its commitment to the goals and principles set out in this Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. We recognise that inclusion is not the work of one department or organisation; it is the responsibility of every leader, every day.

We will embed equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) into all aspects of our governance, operations and engagement. We will hold ourselves accountable through transparent reporting and data-led decision-making. Through this plan, we will challenge outdated norms, remove barriers, and build a culture that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve.

We are committed to leading by example and ensuring that bowls is accessible, welcoming and representative at every level.

Our Vision

A bowls community where everyone is welcomed, valued and empowered to participate regardless of their background, identity or circumstance.

Our Mission

To transform bowls by embedding ED&I principals into our governance, operations and community engagement. We will achieve this through innovative recruitment, comprehensive data collection, inclusive policy development and robust stakeholder partnerships, ensuring that our sport reflects the diversity of modern society.

Our Priority Areas (2025–26)

1. Inclusive Governance and Leadership

Our commitment

To provide visible, accountable leadership that embeds equality, diversity and inclusion into governance, strategy and decision-making.

The BDA Board and Senior Leadership Team are collectively responsible for championing and embedding equality, diversity and inclusion across the organisation.

Our focus includes:

- Board-level ownership and oversight of EDI
- Compliance with *A Code for Sports Governance*
- Ensuring inclusion considerations inform Board discussions and decisions
- Aligning leadership, recruitment and succession planning with our EDI ambitions



2. Data, insight and evidence-based action

Our commitment

To improve our understanding of who participates in bowls, who is underrepresented, and where barriers exist.

Our focus includes:

- Strengthening the quality and consistency of demographic data collection
- Using national and local insight to identify participation gaps
- Improving understanding of lived experience across the bowls network
- Using evidence to inform priorities, programmes and investment



3. Inclusive Community and Accessible Culture

Our commitment

To foster an inclusive organisational culture where staff, volunteers and partners feel supported to champion equality and inclusion.

Our focus includes:

- Embedding EDI into organisational values, policies and ways of working
- Providing guidance, learning and signposting to support inclusive practice
- Ensuring EDI expectations are reflected in induction and development processes
- Promoting respectful, inclusive behaviours across the bowls system



4. Stakeholder Partnerships and External Engagement

Our commitment

To work collaboratively with counties, clubs, partners and communities to advance inclusion across the sport.

Our focus includes:

- Supporting counties and clubs to engage underrepresented communities
- Sharing good practice, learning and case studies across the network
- Strengthening relationships with community organisations and delivery partners
- Listening to feedback from participants, volunteers and partners to inform learning and continuous improvement



5. Inclusive Participation Programmes

Our commitment

To ensure bowls opportunities are accessible, relevant and enjoyable for a wide range of people and communities.

Our focus includes:

- Supporting inclusive programmes and initiatives, such as Bowl for Health
- Reducing barriers to participation at club and programme level
- Using insight from tools such as the Club Health Checker to inform action
- Promoting inclusive club environments through communications and guidance



Monitoring, Review, Accountability & Reporting

- Progress against the internal DIAP is reviewed quarterly by the BDA Board
- The DIAP is formally reviewed at least annually, in line with Code requirements
- Headline progress and commitments will be reported publicly through the Annual Report and website
- Learning and insight will be used to refine priorities over time

Statement of Compliance

This Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan is published in line with Requirements 2.1–2.3 of *A Code for Sports Governance*. It demonstrates the Bowls Development Alliance's strong and public commitment to promoting, embedding and advancing equality, diversity and inclusion across the organisation and the wider bowls community.

Contact

For questions relating to this DIAP, please contact:

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