



Equality Policy

September 2011

1. Introduction

- 1.1** Bowls England has a desire and a duty to provide services fairly, without discrimination, and is fully committed to the principles of equality of access and opportunity. It is widely recognised that sport has an important role to play in society. In this respect Bowls England has developed this Equality Policy to illustrate its commitment to the principles of equality of opportunity.
- 1.2** As attitudes in sport and society are changing, it is appropriate that Bowls England continually monitors its own policy and implementation programme, thereby encouraging equity in the sport of Flat Green Outdoor Bowls.
- 1.3** This document sets out a number of proactive steps that will be taken to ensure the principles of sports equality are adhered to throughout Bowls England. This Policy is aimed first and foremost at the Board and Employees of Bowls England and its Members (Affiliated Clubs, Affiliated County Associations and Individual Affiliated Members).

2. Policy Objectives

- 2.1** Bowls England is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicants, employees, workers, office holders, volunteers, participants or Members (together the "Stakeholders") are unlawfully discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (together the "Protected Characteristics").
- 2.2** In addition Bowls England recognises that we live in a diverse society and will endeavour to ensure that all Stakeholders are given the same opportunities regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds.
- 2.3** Bowls England will encourage partner organisations, including member clubs, affiliated associations, suppliers, sponsors and customers, to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice of equality as set out in this Equality Policy.

3. Purpose of the Policy

- 3.1** Bowls England recognises that individuals (and/or certain groups in our society who share one or more Protected Characteristics) may not have been able to participate equally and fully in the sport of bowls and its related activities in the past.
- 3.2** In some instances this may have been as a result of unlawful discrimination. This Policy has been produced to try to prevent and address any unlawful discrimination or other unfair treatment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect, against Stakeholders that may preclude them from participating fully in the sport of bowls.

4. Legal Requirements

- 4.1** Bowls England is required by law not to unlawfully discriminate against its Stakeholders and recognises its legal obligations under, and will abide by the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and any equivalent legislation (as amended) in any UK jurisdiction and any later amendments to such legislation or subsequent equality related legislation that may be relevant to Bowls England.
- 4.2** Bowls England will seek advice each time this Policy is reviewed to ensure it continues to reflect the current legal framework and good practice.

5. Discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation

Bowls England recognises the following as being unacceptable

5.1 Unlawful Discrimination

Unlawful discrimination can take the form of any of the following examples, but is not necessarily restricted to only those examples:

5.1.1 Direct Discrimination: *Treating someone less favourably than you would treat others in the same circumstances on the grounds of the protected characteristics.*

5.1.2 Indirect Discrimination: *This occurs when, for example, a job requirement or condition is applied equally to all, which has disproportionate and detrimental effects upon one sex or racial group because fewer of that group can comply with it and the requirement cannot be justified in relation to the job.*

- 5.2 Harassment:** Harassment can be described as inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments or physical contact that is objectionable or causes offence to the recipient. It may be, for example, of a sexual or racial nature or it may be directed towards people because of their age, their sexuality, a disability, or some other characteristic. Such behaviour is unacceptable and cannot be excused on the grounds that the harasser did not intend it.
- 5.3 Bullying:** Bullying is the misuse of power, the act of criticising persistently or to humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence.
- 5.4 Victimisation:** Subjecting someone to a detriment because he or she has in good faith taken action under the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) by bringing proceedings, giving evidence or information in relation to proceedings, making an allegation that a person has contravened the Equality Act 2010 (or equivalent legislation) or doing any other thing for the purpose of or in connection with the Equality Act 2010 (or any equivalent legislation).
- 5.5** Bowls England regards discrimination, harassment bullying or victimisation, as described above, as serious misconduct. All complaints will be taken seriously and appropriate measures including disciplinary action may be brought against any Stakeholder who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses, bullies or victimises any other person.

6. Reasonable Adjustments

- 6.1** When any decision is made about an individual, the only personal characteristics that may be taken into account are those that are consistent with any relevant legislation and are relevant to the substance of the decision being made.

- 6.2 BOWLS England recognises that it has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled persons.
- 6.3 BOWLS England will consider all requests for adjustments and where possible will accommodate reasonable requests and will work with disabled Stakeholders to implement any adjustments that will enable them to participate more fully in the sport of bowls.

7. Transgender Athletes

- 7.1 BOWLS England considers that Lawn Bowls is a gender affected sport under the Equality Act 2010 and refers any transgender participants to its policy relating to participation by transgender persons.

8. Responsibility

The following responsibilities will apply:

- 8.1 The Board of BOWLS England is responsible for ensuring that this Equality Policy is implemented, followed, and reviewed when appropriate. The BOWLS England Board is also responsible for ensuring that this Equality Policy is enforced and any breaches are dealt with appropriately.
- 8.2 A member of the Board will be appointed as the "Equality Champion" and will ensure that equality is included as an agenda item at Board meetings when appropriate and that the Board takes equality issues into consideration when making decisions.
- 8.3 The Chief Executive has the overall responsibility for the implementation of this Equality Policy.
- 8.4 A member of staff will be designated as the Equality Officer by the Chief Executive, and will have the overall day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of this Equality Policy and for achieving any equality related actions resulting from it. The Equality Officer's work programme will be amended to reflect this. If required, an internal and/or external equality group will be created to provide additional support.
- 8.5 All Stakeholders have the responsibility to respect, follow and promote the spirit and intentions of this Equality Policy. Individual work programmes for BOWLS England staff will be amended to include equality related tasks where appropriate.

9. Implementation

This Equality Policy will be implemented immediately following Board approval. Implementation requires the following actions:

- 9.1 BOWLS England will regularly review its employment practices to ensure continuing compliance with relevant legislation, and where possible good practice. All job packs sent out by BOWLS England will contain a policy statement similar to the following:

"BOWLS England is committed to providing equal opportunities for all [and is committed to following best practice in the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults]. For further information please consult www.bowlsengland.com"

- 9.2 No applicant for any post (including job applicants, consultant advisers and suppliers) will be placed at a disadvantage by requirements or conditions which are not necessary to the performance of the job or which constitute unlawful discrimination.

- 9.3** Consultants and advisers (and where appropriate suppliers) to Bowls England will be required to abide by this Equality Policy and it will be referred to in any service level agreements or contracts issued by Bowls England.
- 9.4** This policy document and supporting guidelines will be available to all stakeholders.
- 9.5** All stakeholders have the responsibility to respect, act in accordance with and thereby support and promote the spirit and intentions of this policy.

10. Communication

This Equality Policy will be communicated in the following ways:

- 10.1** The Policy will be included in any employee handbook (or equivalent paper or electronic document). Reference will be made to this Equality Policy in any code of conduct. This Equality Policy is for guidance only and will not form part of any contract of employment with any employees of Bowls England.
- 10.2** The Policy will be highlighted in all staff and volunteer inductions.
- 10.3** A copy of this Equality Policy will be publicly available on the Bowls England website at www.bowlsengland.com. Copies in other formats will be available from Bowls England on request.
- 10.4** This policy will apply for a period of three years during which time Bowls England will monitor and evaluate its success regularly.
- 10.5** Each time this Policy is reviewed, Bowls England Stakeholders will be consulted. Following consultation, a notice of the changes being made will be publicly available.
- 10.6** Bowls England will promote continuing professional development for all employees and volunteers to support equal opportunities within the organisation and, where appropriate, provide specialist facilities, equipment or training.

11. Complaints and Disciplinary

- 11.1** To safeguard an individual's rights under the policy, any stakeholder who believes that he/she has suffered inequitable treatment within the scope of this policy may raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure.
- 11.2** Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against any stakeholder who violates Bowls England's Equality Policy.
- 11.3** Where the violation of the Equality Policy by way of bullying, harassment, victimisation or unlawful discrimination amounts to a criminal offence, the appropriate authority will be informed.
- 11.4** Disciplinary procedures are available from Bowls England.



Equality Policy Statement

September 2011

Bowls England is responsible for ensuring that no Member, volunteer, employee or job applicant (together the 'stakeholders') receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (together the 'Protected Characteristics').

In addition, Bowls England will endeavour to ensure that all Stakeholders are given the same opportunities regardless of their socio-economic background.

Bowls England will ensure that everyone who wishes has an equal opportunity to participate in the sport of bowls at all levels and in all roles.

Purpose

It is the aim of Bowls England to ensure that all employees and Members, at present or in the future, are treated fairly and without discrimination or harassment, whether intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect.

Commitment to Action

Specific actions will be established to address inequality and promote equality.

- Bowls England will provide appropriate training to its employees, the Board, Counties and Clubs and any other key volunteers to raise awareness of both collective and individual responsibilities.
- Bowls England will publicise its Equality Policy to all stakeholders through its website and club mailings.
- Bowls England will prepare an Equality Action Plan for the purpose of future monitoring, evaluation, review and reporting to all its stakeholders.