



31st March 2020

STATEMENT: CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) – FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR CLUBS

Clubs, County Associations and Bowls England are facing a period where there is the loss of regular income whilst there are overheads and bills to be paid. Sport England and the Government has put in place a number of initiatives to assist clubs and small companies during this period of uncertainty.

We wish to make you aware of the following opportunities that may apply to your club.

SPORT ENGLAND COMMUNITY EMERGENCY FUND

This aims to deliver immediate funding to those most in need and builds on the success of similar previous funds such as Sport England's Flood Relief Fund. Organisations can apply for grants between £300 and £10,000. The types of organisations eligible include local clubs forced to close at short notice but who are facing ongoing costs around maintenance and utility bills. A specific example might be a grant to support a local club to pay costs for their facility when no activity is taking place. A total of £20million is available. Sport England advises that it expects applicants to have exhausted all other government funding sources before applying to this fund. Details at:

<https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/our-funds/community-emergency-fund>

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS

Information can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses

Bowls England recommends you look at the following specific options:

SUPPORT FOR RETAIL, HOSPITALITY AND LEISURE BUSINESSES THAT PAY BUSINESS RATES

There will be a Business Rates holiday for these sectors in England for the 2020-2021 tax year. The eligibility our clubs in this sector fall in is:

- Based in England
- Business is in the leisure sector
- Business wholly used for assembly and leisure

We understand there is no action to take as this will apply to your next Council Tax bill in April 2020. The local authority may have to re-issue your bill to exclude the Business Rates charge.

COMMUNITY AMATEUR SPORTS CLUBS (CASCS)/CHARITIES

The Sport & Recreation Alliance (SRA) has advised that it understands additional rates relief will be applied after any mandatory relief received, such as that applied to CASCs and charities. Therefore, these organisations should benefit from the full 100 per cent rates relief. However, please note that the guidance confirms that it is for local authorities to administer a local scheme and determine in each individual case when to grant relief.

BOWLS DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE (BDA)

The BDA has advised that it has made a payment of £50 to those clubs who had applied for a Play Bowls Package with planned open days in March/April. This payment will contribute towards any costs already incurred in preparing for these events. The BDA will contact directly all clubs that have applied for a Play Bowls Package for activity planned for May or June. The BDA will work with Bowls England and the English Indoor Bowling Association regarding recruitment activity including open days from July onwards, subject to Government guidance.

GRANT FUNDING

Bowls England provides a dedicated facility to enable affiliated clubs to search for potential grant funding opportunities. You may conduct a personalised search at:

<https://www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/bowlsengland>

CASH GRANTS FOR RETAIL, HOSPITALITY AND LEISURE BUSINESSES

This grant provides businesses in these categories with a cash grant of up to £25,000 per property. For businesses with a rateable value of under £15,000, they may receive a grant of up to £10,000 and for businesses with a rateable value of between £15,001 and £51,000, they may receive a grant of up to £25,000. The eligibility our clubs in this sector fall in is:

- Based in England
- Business is in the leisure sector
- Business wholly used for assembly and leisure

There is no action to take as your local authority will write to you if you are eligible for this grant. If you have any enquiries on eligibility for, or provision of, the grants you should go directly to your local authority.

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES THAT PAY LITTLE OR NO BUSINESS RATES

The Government will provide additional Small Business Grant Scheme funding for local authorities to support small businesses that already pay little or no business rates because of the Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR). This will provide a one-off grant of up to £10,000 to eligible businesses to meet their ongoing business costs. The eligibility our clubs in this sector fall in is:

- Based in England
- A small business and already receive SBRR
- You are a business that occupies property

There is no action to take as your local authority will write to you if you are eligible for this grant. If you have any enquiries on eligibility for, or provision of, the grants you should go directly to your local authority.

Larger clubs may wish to consider these other areas of support:

- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme
- Deferring VAT and Income Tax payments (self-employed)
- Business Interruption Loan Scheme
- HMRC's Time to Pay Service

RENTAL PAYMENTS

Finally, if your club has to make rental payments then we would advise, if you have not done so already, that you start discussions with your landlord to see what assistance can be provided and for

how long any temporary arrangement can last. In the meantime, the Government has passed legislation that means commercial tenants can't be evicted if they miss a payment between March and May 2020. Any missed payment will need to be paid in the future. Details can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/news/extra-protection-for-businesses-with-ban-on-evictions-for-commercial-tenants-who-miss-rent-payments

MORE INFORMATION

As always, Bowls England is here to help clubs go through the process of any of the schemes. Please do not hesitate to e-mail: john@bowlsengland.com if you have any specific queries or need to find your local authority. Also, we would appreciate hearing of any clubs who have successfully received a grant in order that we can use this information to help the others within the bowling community.

USEFUL LINKS

The following websites may provide useful additional information to your club at this time:

National Governing Bodies - Bowls

Bowls England: www.bowlsengland.com/coronavirus-guidance
English Indoor Bowling Association: www.eiba.co.uk

Other Bowls Organisations

Bowls Development Alliance: www.playbowls.org
Coach Bowls: www.coachbowls.org

Sporting Bodies

Club Matters: www.sportenglandclubmatters.com/
Club Matters is Sport England's one stop shop for clubs, groups and organisations involved in the delivery of physical activity and sport. Club Matters provides free, convenient, practical resources to help organisations to develop, grow and become more sustainable and successful.

Sport England: www.sportengland.org/news/coronavirus-information-sector
Government agency responsible for promotion of physical activity.

Sport & Recreation Alliance: www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/news/politics/covid-19-business-support-measures-faqs
The Alliance is the umbrella body for sport and recreation in the UK and represents 320 members including Bowls England and the English Indoor Bowling Association.

Other Support

Business Support: www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-support
A full range of business support measures have been made available to UK businesses and employees. This page helps businesses find out how to access the support that has been made available, who is eligible, when the schemes open and how to apply.