



***Isle of Man Crown Green Bowling Association 5 Year Development Plan – DRAFT COPY***

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<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
FOREWORD	2
CHAPTER 1            Overview	3 - 4
CHAPTER 2            Isle of Man Crown Green Bowls Charter Standard	5 - 8
CHAPTER 3            Bowls A Sport For All Ages - Branding	9 - 10
CHAPTER 4            Review of Current Infrastructure - Recommendations for Improvement	11 - 12
CHAPTER 5            Action Points	13- 14

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**FOREWORD**

Writing this plan has proved extremely difficult as I have had to start with scratch with no frame work to base it on.

Knowing what to put in and what to leave out has been the most difficult part of putting this together, and I have in fact halved the size of the plan by removing my review of the current structure together with suggestions for the future.

Whilst I am happy to share my views on the current game and improvements that I think would benefit the sport, I do not think that I can say my views are necessarily representative of participants as a whole.

Instead I have suggested what I consider the best way forward of collecting a representative view of where we are with the game currently and a much more objective set of views when it comes to implementing suggested improvements.

This plan is purely the framework that can continually be referred to, updated and changed where required and we need to still put the meat on the bones.

Therefore this is purely at the discussion stage and will need to be passed out to the clubs and a final plan agreed prior to the 2012 season.

It is my intention to make this plan readily available to clubs and players alike prior to the end of October for a 3 month consultation period where I will be readily available to speak to clubs and any required changes can be made to the plan.

I would then look to have a final draft copy of the plan with clubs by mid-February and request that we hold an EGM prior to commencement of the 2012 bowls season where the final alterations to the proposed plan can be agreed, and the plan implemented as the framework for our sport.

## CHAPTER 1 - Overview

### *Vision for Isle of Man Crown Green Bowls*

It is intended that by the year 2017, the number of people playing bowls in the Isle of Man will have significantly increased. A greater cross section of the community, in particular juniors, will be represented in the sport.

There will be a closer working relationship between schools and clubs. More schools will feed junior members into clubs across the Island.

Other avenues into the game will be identified such as the formation of corporate partnerships between clubs and local companies.

Development of a joint partnership with Manx Sport and Recreation (MSR) to develop the sport at junior level.

There will be a more stable structure for the sport, ensuring that coaches and volunteers are knowledgeable, qualified and required club policies are in place.

Development of the "Bowls – A sport for all ages" brand and ethos.

Clubs will adhere to a charter standard that will have been developed and introduced and focus on 5 key strategies:

1. Growth and Retention
2. Raising Standards
3. Better Players
4. Running the Game
5. Volunteer Development

### *Background*

The Isle of Man Sports Council, which puts the majority of investment into all codes of bowls on the Island at "bowls council" level has requested a 5 year plan. The development of this plan will be a key requirement if funding is to continue.

Funds will no longer just be allocated to sports, they will need to be financially justified and seen to be "furthering" the sport in question.

The numbers of people playing the sport are on a steady decline. The influx of junior members has continued to dwindle, with junior opens having to be cancelled on several occasions recently. This decline is certainly evident at a senior level, with numbers in senior single sex opens on a decline without an obvious explanation. Mixed doubles competitions, however, continue to be well supported.

Alignment with other sports in terms of a charter standard with qualified coaches, child protection officers, first aiders, disability trained representatives and other responsible persons will better position clubs to cope with new members from all aspects of our community.

### *Aims for the Development Plan*

The main aims of the Bowls Development Plan are:

- To increase participation in the sport of crown green bowls in the Isle of Man
- To provide opportunities for people of all walks of life, in particular young people, to participate at both recreational and competitive levels using the “bowls a sport for all ages” ethos
- To encourage clubs to form links with both primary and secondary schools
- Formation of a partnership with MSR
- Corporate partnerships
- The introduction of a junior league
- An increase to the amount of teams playing at a competitive level
- To increase the number of coaches and appropriately qualified persons
- Introduction of the IOMCCGBA Club Charter

### *Review of Existing Infrastructure/Suggestions for Improvement*

In order to look at improvements and future initiatives we have to look at what we currently have in place and what works well or doesn't work anymore.

This review cannot be the opinion of only the development officer or executive committee and has to be a representative view of the clubs and all of their members who participate in the sport.

All levels of the game need to be looked at from the junior game right through to the senior Island representative team.

Therefore this review and any recommendations for improvements needs to be made at the appropriate forums and a section of this plan has been set aside to identify how best to do this.

## CHAPTER 2 - Isle of Man Grown Green Bowls Charter Standard

### *Background*

The IOMCCGBA Charter Club Standard is being developed to provide recognition that clubs are well run, sustainable, with child protection and safety paramount. It also recognises the club's commitment to coaching, player and coach development and the maintenance of the running of the game. This stand alone charter has been developed using sport England's Clubmark standard (which is approved by BCGBA). It has been tailor made to suit the Isle of Man.

The charter standard club programme has 3 levels:

Charter Standard Club  
Charter Standard Development Club  
Charter Standard Community Club

The Charter Standard criteria are linked to the sports development strategy goals of:

- Growth and Retention
- Raising Standards
- Better Players
- Running the Game
- Volunteer Development

It is envisaged that by 2015 at least 50% of all clubs will have attained at least Charter Club Standard. It is hoped this figure will reach 75% by the end of 2016.

### ***Charter Standard Club***

#### *Growth and Retention*

1. Affiliated to the IOMCCGBA – All clubs must be an affiliate member of the county crown green bowling association
2. At least one team in the league – The club must have at least one team playing in a competitive, association affiliated, league

#### *Raising Standards*

1. Code of Conduct – Clubs should recognise and use the IOMCCGBA code of conduct, which covers players, officials, parents and spectators

2. CWO Trained – Clubs must have a Child Welfare Officer who has attended a child welfare officer training course
3. CRB for all relevant volunteers – All volunteers with a responsibility for juniors (i.e. coaches) must be CRB checked by the association
4. First Aid – The club has an appointed first aider who is qualified and responsible for the first aid equipment, ensuring that it is replenished and in good order

#### *Better Players*

1. Level 1 Coach – Each club to have at least one level 1 coach

#### *Running the Game*

1. Club Rules – The club should have a set of rules/constitution
2. Annual Club Accounts – These should be presented to your AGM
3. PL Insurance – All clubs must be covered by public liability insurance

#### *Volunteer Development*

1. Volunteer Co-ordinator – This person is the support mechanism for other volunteers and should lead recruitment of other volunteers

#### **Charter Standard Development Club**

Clubs must meet the Charter Standard Club criteria plus the following:

#### *Growth and Retention*

1. Differing Age Teams – Clubs must have a team in at least 2 differing age leagues (i.e. an open age league and an over 60's league) and have at least 1 junior member
2. School – Club link established – There should be a link to at least one school. This could be informal, from where junior member are recruited – to a more formal link, where you actively develop the game with the school by delivering coaching etc
3. "Bowls – A sport for all ages" – Internally promote the ethos behind this branding to the clubs members, by holding at least 1 brief a year

*Raising Standards*

1. Development Plan - The club has a development plan in place which covers the 5 key criteria of the charter standard:
  - Growth and Retention
  - Raising Standards
  - Better Players
  - Running the Game
  - Volunteer Development

*Better Players*

1. Level 2 Coach – At least one level 2 qualified coach

*Volunteer Development*

1. Basic Job Descriptions – Each volunteer role i.e. coach should have a basic role profile

**Charter Standard Community Club**

Clubs must meet the Charter Standard Development Club criteria plus the following:

*Growth and Retention*

1. A Team in all Leagues – Club must have a team represented in all leagues (men's and women's open age leagues and over 60's leagues) and have at least 5 junior members (at least one male and one female).
2. "Bowls – A sport for all ages" – Externally promote this ethos into the wider community by holding at least 1 family open day a year

*Raising Standards*

1. Improving behaviour – The club holds at least one workshop per year on addressing behaviour and improving standards (ethos/philosophy)
2. Advanced Development Plan – A plan that encompasses more elements than the basic development plan and is tailored for the needs of the local community and is set over a period of 3-5 years

*Better Players*

1. Schools Liaison Officer – An appointed representative to act as liaison with local schools

## Club Charter Standard Matrix

	<b>Growth &amp; Retention</b>	<b>Raising Standards</b>	<b>Better Players</b>	<b>Running the Game</b>	<b>Volunteer Development</b>
<b>Club</b>	Affiliated  At least one team in a league	Code of Conduct  Trained CWO  Volunteer CRB Checks  First Aid Provisions	1 Level 1 Qualified Coach	Club Rules  Accounts  PL Insurance	Volunteer Coordinator
<b>Development Club</b>	At least 2 teams of different age ranges - 1 Junior  School-Club Link  "Bowls - A sport for all ages" Internal	Development Plan	Level 2 Qualified Coach		Job Descriptions
<b>Community Club</b>	Entered in all leagues - 5 juniors (at least 1 male & female)  Family Open Day	Improving Behaviour Workshop  Advanced 3-5 year Development Plan	School Liaison Officer		

### **CHAPTER 3 – “Bowls, a sport for all ages” Branding**

#### *Background*

To the outside world crown green bowls is perceived as an “old man’s game” played only by pipe smoking old men in flat caps. This is not the case; bowls is a unique sport in that it truly can be a sport shared by entire families from grandchildren to great grandparents.

Bowls is not restricted to a core group of individuals it is a sport that can be enjoyed by anyone regardless of age, sex, physical fitness and is inexpensive compared to other sports.

#### *Re-Branding*

The re-branding of the game will not happen overnight and will require the buy in of the clubs in order. This rebranding should be subtle and sustained in order to ensure longevity.

An annual association run “family fun day” will be held, where there will be qualified individuals on hand to provide insight, coaching and games for existing and prospective new bowlers alike. These fun days will filter down into local communities as the charter standard is rolled out.

#### *Youth Initiatives*

By the formation of a partnership with MSR and strong school links being established via Development and Community Charter Standard clubs there should be a significant influx of young people into the game.

It is hoped that Crown Green Bowls will be a sport featured at the Manx Youth Games, this will also ensure school children have exposure to the game at an early age.

The IOMCCGBA will work closely with MSR and the schools and will produce a list of suitable clubs for children wishing to participate to join. Only clubs who have obtained charter standard will be deemed suitable for recommendation and the level of charter held will also be listed.

#### *Parents*

Hopefully children who come into the game will be able to educate their parents to the fun that can be had and the skill level that is involved and eradicate any negative preconceptions that they might have. Their child’s new found interest may encourage them to participate in the sport themselves and adult memberships should also rise.

### *Players from Other Sports*

Unlike crown green bowls a lot of other sports have a limited shelf life and players retire from them at an age that would be considered relatively young in terms of the average bowler. Football, hockey and rugby players all normally finish playing their sports at a competitive level in their mid 30's – early 40's and we need to find them a route into the sport.

Whilst it might not seem like bowls would be a popular choice for players from this type of background it couldn't be further from the truth. It would allow them to play sport at a competitive level for many years to come, and plug a gap for the need for competition in many sportsmen.

### *Retirees*

As times change people are retiring at an earlier age than in the past and we need to find them a clear path into the sport. At present players would be unable to find competition in an afternoon until they have reached 60 years of age and we need to look at finding them ways to participate.

This doesn't necessarily mean that we actively need to change the current structure of the over 60's league but this age group of potential new players needs to be seriously considered when making recommendations for future changes to the game.

### *Break Down Existing Barriers for a Clear Vision*

It seems very strange to me that this development plan which is trying to breathe new life into our sport and reach new players does not include the ladies association. It is not just a sport for all ages, but a sport for all. For this to work we have to show a united front and share a clear vision for the game.

Moving forward we must engage in joint initiatives with the Ladies association for them to be totally effective and have longevity.

Ideally this plan will be jointly accepted and followed by the ladies association, however at the very least their involvement and the review/suggestion stage is crucial for initiatives to succeed.

There has also historically been the impression of a gap between the over 60's committee and the executive committee and whilst this appears to be lessening, both groups will need to work together in order to ensure required strategic changes are successful.

## CHAPTER 4 – Review of Current Infrastructure/Recommendations for Improvement

### *Formulation*

This is probably the most important section of the development plan and it is for this reason that we have to ensure it is conducted in the correct manner.

It has to be representative of a cross section of bowlers from all walks of life and levels of the game and for this I propose the below action points are implemented and carried out during the 2012 bowls season:

- A development sub-committee (think tank) is setup up to carry out a comprehensive review of the current structure of the sport, as well as look at suggestions for improvement
- All clubs/players are issued with a questionnaire to try and find the consensus of opinions on the existing infrastructure as well as the opinions on potential changes
- The information from both the think tank and questionnaires would be formalised into a proposed paper that if accepted would become Chapter 4 of this plan and replace this section
- The paper would be issued to all clubs for consultation prior to the end of the 2012 summer bowls season with it presented for approval at that years Association AGM
- Any agreed changes that need to be implemented would be transferred into action points for the 2013 season

### *Proposed Think Tank*

A cross sectional group needs to be put together and agreed by the executive. We have already tried to do this on a volunteer basis but so far have been unsuccessful. The executive committee will be asked to put forward suggestions for people who have the following attributes/skill sets

- Experienced bowler who enters open competitions regularly and competes in all types of competitions
- A player who does not go in many open competitions and mainly plays league bowls
- A junior bowler
- An over 60's representative
- A player new to the game – has been playing less than 2 years
- Representative of island national team
- A female bowler
- A player with 'other sport' experience

I feel a group structured with these individuals would provide an objective outlook of the current game as well putting forward suggestions that would not be biased towards one key group of individuals, and that their view could be considered to come from a good cross-section of the bowling community.

A full day meeting will be held where the committee can draft a paper reviewing the game and suggesting changes that they feel would benefit the game. This would be issued to players prior to the commencement of the 2012 bowling season.

#### *Participant Questionnaire*

We need to ensure that all of the views are representative of the sport as a whole and the best way to capture this information is to ask the people that play the game whether they are aged 9 or 90.

Once a think tank is in place and reviewed the current infrastructure and made suggested improvements a questionnaire will be designed with three main aims:

1. To collate the views of players on the existing set up in place
2. To find out how they feel about possible changes
3. To give them the chance to suggest possible changes that will be brought up at the appropriate forum

The results from these questionnaires will be presented to the think tank at a second meeting where they will be discussed and the drafted paper will be changed accordingly.

A final draft paper will be drawn up and issued to all clubs for consultation by the end of August 2012, with the mind for any changes to be made and a plan agreed at the 2012 association AGM.

As stated above this would then allow for any action points to be added to the development plan and brought forward into the 2013 season.

## CHAPTER 5 – Action Points

<i>Ref No.</i>	<i>Action Point</i>	<i>Allocated to</i>	<i>Target Date</i>	<i>Completed</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1	Distribute first draft of development plan to clubs/over 60's and ladies association for 3 month consultation period	BDO	End Oct 2011		
2	Elect suitable representatives to be part of 'Think Tank'	EXEC	End Jan 2012		
3	Collate feedback and suggestions from interested parties	BDO/Clubs	End Jan 2012		
4	Distribute final draft of 5 year development plan to interested parties	BDO	15 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2012		
5	EGM to agree implementation of development plan	SEC/BDO	End Mar 2012		
6	Initial meeting of 'Think Tank' to review current structure and creation of development questionnaire	BDO/TT	End Apr 2012		
7	Distribution of Questionnaire to all clubs for voluntary completion by all of their members	BDO	End May 2012		
8	Meeting with MSR with a look to include Crown Green Bowls in the 'Manx Youth Games' 2013	BDO	End May 2012		
9	Collation of Questionnaires	BDO/Clubs	End Jun 2012		
10	Second meeting of 'Think Tank' to prepare final draft review of infrastructure and suggestions for improvement	BDO/TT	End July 2012		
11	Final Draft of Review/Suggestions distributed to clubs/interested parties for opinion	SEC/BDO	End Aug 2012		

12	Collation of feedback from clubs	BDO	End Oct 2012		
13	Review presented to AGM for integration into development plan	BDO	2012 AGM		
14	Approval, date and venue agreed for 2013 'Sport For All Ages Open Day'	ALL	2012 AGM		
15	Action Points Allocated for 2013	BDO	End Dec 2012		