

## BOWLS ENGLAND

COVID-19: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – LAWN BOWLS Issued: 2nd June 2020

**Black:** - Bowls England statement

**RED:** The views and comments of Bexhill Bowling Club Committee:

**GREEN:** Statement from Rother District Council Conditions of play written by Rebecca Owen RDC Parks Development Officer

- **When can we reopen? 11.00am Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

Outdoor bowls clubs are now allowed to open. Each club, including council-owned sports facilities, will make their own decision about when their facilities are ready to open and can be operated safely. You should only reopen or restart activities as soon as you feel able to do so safely. Until you feel it is safe and responsible to reopen you should remain closed.

- **What games can we play? See note below from Ideverde**

All activity should be consistent with the government guidance regarding health, social distancing and hygiene. That means that participants and others can maintain a safe two metre distance, that good hygiene practices are in place, that equipment is disinfected regularly, and that it is clear that anyone who is symptomatic or suspects they have been exposed to the virus does not take part and remains at home.

- **What about competitions within our club? Bowls England state that the primary purpose of bowling activity at this time is for physical and mental well-being. All club arranged - Club Days - internal competitions - external matches are therefore "on hold"**

Any measures clubs can put in place to enable an activity to return needs to be capable of being adapted to follow government guidelines on social distancing e.g. strengthening or relaxing measures at short notice. Organisations are encouraged to think creatively about how best to make their sport or activity possible within the guidelines. The limit on gatherings means that it is unlikely to be possible to organise amateur events or competitions at this time. **The primary purpose of bowling activity at this time is for physical and mental well-being.**

- **Can 'clinically vulnerable' people (such as people aged 70 and over) participate in lawn bowls? Clarification of this still awaited by Bowls England**  
**Please read carefully**

The Government guidance for 'clinically vulnerable' groups remains the same. If you are in this group you are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if you do go out, take particular care to minimise contact with others outside your household. Bowls England has requested clarification on the participation of those classed as 'clinically vulnerable' within the sport. To date, we have received no further reply. Until any response is received, we can only advise that those within the 'clinically vulnerable' category must make a personal judgement on their participation in accordance with Government guidance. If you are living in a household with a possible COVID-19 infection or if you are classified as 'clinically extremely vulnerable' on health grounds, the guidance is that you should remain at and exercise at home

- **Can we use the club toilets? See note below regarding lavatories**

Yes – toilets and throughways may be kept open, but guidance on hygiene and social distancing should be followed.

- **Can we use the changing rooms? See note below regarding lavatories**

**No** – all indoor facilities, apart from toilets and throughways, should be kept closed.

- **Can we share equipment? Not permitted by Ideverde**

Where possible we recommend that you limit sharing of equipment, for example you should use your own bowls. If you are sharing equipment (mats/jacks) you should wash your hands thoroughly before and after use. It is a decision for clubs/facility managers whether or not they loan/hire out bowls. If you do, we would expect you to follow sensible precautions and clean in between users, as well as following the safely working guidance.

- **How can we book a rink without visiting the club?**

Clubs are encouraged to utilise an off-site booking system for rink allocation:

**By arrangement with Ray Hodd Ideverde see below**

- **We have two greens – does that mean we can increase the number of players allowed on site at the same time? To be controlled by Ideverde**

The maximum capacity is for each club to determine according to the number of greens/rinks available – for example clubs with additional greens may wish to consider increasing capacity accordingly so long as they consider it is safe to do so.

- **How do we ensure that mats and jacks are clean? Ideverde will not provide mats or Jacks There may be some relaxation on type of mat and jack.**

**Here's what Rebecca Owen RDC wrote:**

- **With regards mats and jacks, I have no objection to some improvisation this season provided that it doesn't result in damage to the greens. Could I suggest that you liaise with Ray and if he is happy with your proposal to use carpet mat and a tennis ball/golf ball then that's fine.**

The Government guidance currently states that cleaning protocols should be put in place to limit coronavirus transmission in public places. It is advised that touch points (e.g. handrails and gates) should be particular areas of focus for increased cleaning. Frequent cleaning of equipment between uses and any work areas used, using your usual cleaning products, is advised. Bowls England has requested the input of greens maintenance advisors regarding any specific treatments with regard to equipment and will advise further when additional information is available.

- **Can we play a pairs game comprising two 'couples' from two separate households so long as social distancing is observed? To be controlled by Ideverde see notice below**  
Yes - You can play lawn bowls where facilities have reopened, but you can only take part in these activities by yourself, or with members of your household or with no more than 5 other people outside of your household, as long as you are able to maintain social distancing.
- **Can 'non-members' participate in activities at our club? Every club is different and will have its own rules on participation by non-members. Clubs are reminded to ensure that any activity by non-members is in accordance with the requirements of their insurers.**
- **Are we as a club responsible for provision of hand sanitiser to all players? This will not be provided by Ideverde you will have to provide your own**

The Government guidance for facilities states as follows: To help everyone maintain good hygiene, consideration should be given to:

- Using signs and posters to build awareness of good handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing frequency, avoid touching your face and to cough or sneeze into your arm
- Providing regular reminders and signage to maintain hygiene standards
- Providing hand sanitiser in multiple locations in addition to washrooms
- Setting clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and social distancing is achieved as much as possible
- Enhancing cleaning for busy areas
- Providing more waste facilities and more frequent rubbish collection
- Replacing hand dryers with paper towels in handwashing facilities
- Minimising use of portable toilets
- Sufficient provision of automated hand sanitising dispensers in public places

**Can we allocate someone to 'manage' sessions/attendance in addition to those who are playing? This will be Ideverde representative Ray Hodd - phone number below**

Yes – clubs may consider the use of 'staff' if they consider this will enable them to reopen safely as part of their risk assessment.

- **Can we now hold a Committee Meeting so long as 'social distancing' is adhered to?**

**No** – the Government guidance states that a gathering of more than two people from different households is not permitted.

- **Are spectators permitted to observe? Outside of BBC control**

Clubs may wish to consider permitting spectators as part of their plan for reopening. This may assist non-bowlers with mental wellbeing and isolation, which is clearly an important issue at this difficult time. Clubs must satisfy themselves that something can be done safely and in line with government guidelines (just as they have discretion in deciding whether they are ready to open safely).

**We remind you that the Government advises that clubs should only reopen or restart activities as soon as they feel able to do so safely.**

**We are aware that there is a huge difference of opinion between our members on restarting – please be respectful of each other.**

**Rother District Council Conditions of play written by Rebecca Owen RDC  
Parks Development Officer**

**I can now confirm that the bowls greens at the Polegrove and Sidley will re-open from tomorrow. With the support of the clubs at Rye and Egerton Park we hope these greens can also re-open in the weeks to come.**

**As you'll all be aware from recent correspondence, the formats of play will be restricted and additional conditions of play are being imposed as outline below. Notices setting out these conditions will be displayed on site. The situation will be reviewed later in the month in light of any new guidance issued by government and/or Bowls England and taking into account how operations have worked on the ground. Please do let me know of any concerns, problems or ideas you have over the coming weeks so that these can be taken into consideration.**

- **Open hours:**
  - **Polegrove: 11am to 4pm, Tuesday to Saturday inclusive.**
  - **Sidley: 10am to noon and 2pm to 4pm daily.**
- **Bookings:**
  - **Polegrove: in person during open hours or by phone on 07483 095 835.**
  - **Sidley: By phone on 07450 056 170.**
- **Tickets:**
  - **Polegrove: Tickets to be purchase on site during open hours.**
  - **Sidley: Call 07450 056 170 for arrangements. Alternatively, tickets may be purchased at the Polegrove.**
- **Social distancing to be maintained at all times.**
- **Government guidance to be followed at all times.**
- **Only alternate rinks will be available. A list of the available rinks for play each week will be displayed.**
- **One rink per green will be made available for up to 6 players. All others will have a maximum of two people.**

- **Maximum of two people may wait to play per available rink.**
- **All equipment to be provided by participants. RDC/idVerde will not be supplying any equipment.**
- **No entry to pavilion or stores. There will be no access to the pavilion toilets or hand washing facilities. Note that the public disabled toilet by the grandstand is open at the Polegrove.**
- **Coaching: One to one only. Social distancing must be maintained.**

**Thank you for your patience over the past few weeks and I hope you now have some fair weather to enjoy playing.**

**Kind regards**

**Rebecca Owen**

**We understand that the rink fee will be £3.00 per hour or £18.00 for a monthly non refundable ticket**

**Having read the above and given due consideration to the fact that Bexhill Bowling Club has no jurisdiction over the use of the Greens, we must stress that you must make your own decisions about the adequacy of conditions of play, as set by Rother District Council**

**RDC are responsible for all of the above and it should be remembered that we share this facility with members of Polegrove Bowls Club and the general public.**

**It is the view of your committee that we will be unable to provide any club bowls activities until there is a further relaxation of covid 19 regulations.**

**Should you decide to recommence bowling at the Polegrove, this will be a private arrangement between yourselves and Rother District Council through their appointed agent Ideverde.**

**It is increasingly our view that all internal competitions will have to be cancelled this year, but that there may yet be an opportunity for some forms of competition later in the Year.**

**We will keep you updated on this.**

**Committee**

**Bexhill Bowling Club**

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