



News release – Tuesday 12th May 2020

**HOLDING STATEMENT ON REOPENING OF BOWLING GREENS
ISSUED BY BOWLS ENGLAND CHAIR DAVID TUCKER**

The Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, announced on Sunday night that lockdown restrictions would be eased in relation to physical activity and that some outdoor areas, including bowling greens, would be allowed to reopen from Wednesday 13th May.

This announcement, and the subsequent release of more detailed guidance yesterday, has led to a fresh influx of enquiries from Clubs, County Associations and individual members regarding what this will mean for our sport.

Bowls England, and many other national sporting bodies, are still digesting the various documents and awaiting direction from the Government on a range of issues that is expected to include, but not be limited to, the use of toilets, changing rooms and other facilities. As soon as this information is available, we will provide this to you at the earliest opportunity.

Whilst our aim is to expedite the safe resumption of our sport, I am sure you will understand that this is a complex situation and requires due consideration. We are currently developing some bowls specific guidance, which will assist with many of the practical issues that will need to be considered by Clubs and players. Additionally, a number of Clubs have already shared with us some of their own ideas for restarting locally, and we shall seek to incorporate these within the guidance document. This will be shared in the coming days. We will also be analysing the response to our recent Club Survey in order to determine the priorities for our members over the coming months.

In the meantime, we would recommend you digest the guidance from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) detailed below. Many Clubs may feel that they have taken all the necessary steps in order to facilitate their Club reopening, whereas others may wish to wait. Similarly, whilst many players are clearly keen to get back on the green, others may choose not to do so immediately. It will be for individuals and Clubs to determine when they are ready to enjoy our sport once more, and we hope that guidance we will be issuing will support you do to this safely.

DCMS – Key Messages:

1. We are increasing people's access to local, outdoor physical activity for the purpose of wellbeing
2. People will only be able to use these facilities:
 - a. By themselves OR
 - b. With people from their own household OR
 - c. with one other person from outside their household (as long as they stay two metres apart)
3. You can only exercise in groups of no more than two, unless you are exclusively with members of your household. This means that you cannot have five people from one household plus one person from outside the household playing sport together. You can have two people, from two different households, as long as they are staying two metres apart.
4. It is for individual Clubs and organisations to develop their own guidance on reopening, to best fit their own situation, in line with the Government's advice.

DCMS – Q and A:

What has been announced?

The Government has announced that people can go outside more than once a day for exercise as long as they are following social distancing guidelines, alone, with members of their household, or with one person from outside of their household. You must still only exercise in groups of no more than two people, unless you are exercising with your household. Any facilities associated with outdoor sports and physical activities are permitted to reopen from Wednesday 13th May 2020 if those responsible for them feel ready to do so and if they can do so safely, and in line with this and related public health guidance. Outdoor gyms, playgrounds, or outdoor swimming pools will remain closed.

What can I do?

All outdoor sports and physical activities are permitted, without time limit, with the exception of swimming in an open-air swimming pool. All must be done alone with members of your household or, providing you are following social distancing guidelines, with one person from outside your household.

What sort of facilities are reopening?

Any facilities associated with outdoor sports and physical activities are permitted to reopen, including outdoor bowling greens.

When will these open?

Facilities will be allowed to open from Wednesday 13th May. Each venue, including council-owned sports facilities, must make their own decision about when their facilities are ready. The Government will be publishing high level guidance for sports and venues to help them think about preparations shortly. [Bowls England will be issuing a bowls specific guidance document].

Can I share equipment?

Yes, but you should enforce strong hygiene measures. This might be cleaning it rigorously in line with wider guidance on hygiene, for example by using antibacterial spray and washing hands thoroughly before and after use.

Matt Wordingham

Publications / Media Officer