



Thornaby Bowls Club Handbook

Version 2.0

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 We are a friendly, forward-thinking, community Club which is run by its members on a voluntary basis. Our bowling green is renowned as one of the best in the area and our premises including a large club-house, changing rooms, bar and various equipment storage rooms.

This excellent bowling resource has been built up over many years by the members, past and present who have given their time, energy, skills and money to the club and to the sport of bowls. It is the responsibility of all of us to take good care of what we've got.

This handbook does not form part of club rules, but attempts to offer guidance to all members to get the most out of your Club. It will be particularly useful for new members but there are bound to be questions not covered here. Please ask. If a committee member is not available then other members will always be happy to help.

Section 2: Access and Security

2.1 When you join the Club you will be given an introductory tour showing you most of the things

contained in this section, so these notes should just be a recap.

2.2 Access to the Club is through the front gate which is padlocked when nobody is present. Keys are available for this padlock from the Club Secretary in return for a £5 returnable deposit.

2.3 The Club buildings are alarmed. The alarm PIN-code and instructions on how to deactivate and how to set the alarm will be provided with the keys.

2.4 If you are the last person to leave the Club it is essential that you:

- a) Check that all equipment has been put away, including rink markers (unless they have been put out in preparation for a league match).
- b) Check that nobody is in any of the buildings (especially the toilets) and that all lights and appliances are switched off (except fridges).
- c) Close all roller shutters and doors.
- d) Lock all doors / padlocks.
- e) Return all keys to the Store Room (except your own personal keys).
- f) Set the alarm and lock the Store Room door with the padlock.

g) Finally, close and padlock the front gate as you leave.

2.6 If you are unable to close or lock something or to set the alarm, please call a Committee Member for assistance.

2.7 If you notice anything broken, potentially hazardous or suspicious please report it as soon as possible to a Committee Member.

Section 3: Opening, Use and Care of the Green

3.1 Our bowling surface is one of the best in the region and receives frequent compliments from visiting bowlers. A team of volunteer members give their time and effort to maintain the green and surrounds throughout the year. The Senior Greenkeeper and Committee implement such policies and restrictions as are appropriate to maximise opportunities for members to bowl while protecting the condition of the green. Members are asked to take the best possible care of their green and respect any restrictions in place.

3.2 The green is normally open for bowling from late April to early September. The exact dates will be

advised by email, on Club social media and on the Club noticeboard. It may be possible to extend the bowling season if the weather allows unless doing so will compromise the condition and maintenance of the green.

3.3 Opening hours

The green is routinely closed for maintenance on some mornings. Unless otherwise advised, members may open the green and bowl at any other time during the season, subject to rink availability and priority.

3.4 Swishing the rink / green

Worms are a sure sign of a healthy green but unfortunately they do come to the surface causing worm-casts which, if trodden in, can damage the turf. These tend to be worse at the start and end of the season if it is wet. *Swishers* are available to remove them.

3.5 Mat placement

Wear typically occurs where the mat is placed, and since many bowlers habitually place the mat at the minimum distance from the ditch, this is where excessive wear most often occurs. You are therefore

requested to vary the mat length when you play; even if it is only by a short distance, it can make a big difference to the condition of the green.

3.6 Rotation

Overuse of a particular rink or rinks can also lead to excessive wear. The Club therefore:

- a) Rotates the direction of rinks; up and down during the day, side to side in the evening.
- b) Alternates rink position; red and yellow on alternate days. Details are posted on the Club noticeboard.
- c) Temporarily closes specific rinks in the event of excessive wear, to allow the grass to recover. A sign will typically be placed on the rink.
- d) May request that roll ups take place on specific rinks.

3.7 New bowlers

3.7.1 Bouncing the bowl at delivery can unfortunately cause small indentations and make certain parts of the green uneven. The Club recognises that not all bowlers have a naturally smooth delivery and those who are new to the

sport may take some time, through practice or coaching or both, to develop one.

3.7.2 To protect the rinks regularly used for matches, new bowlers may be asked to restrict their practice/casual roll-ups to the non-match use rinks. Any such restrictions will be removed as soon as possible.

3.8 Footwear

Flat-soled *bowls shoes* must be worn on the green at all times. Heeled or treaded shoes can cause damage. Street shoes or shoes which are used for purposes other than bowling must not be used because they can carry particles of soil or dirt from elsewhere which may contain fungal spores or disease.

3.9 Priority of use

In general, rink availability is not a problem but a booking system is available for competitions or other uses. Check that a rink is not booked (even for a later time in the day) before you use it. In the event of excess demand for rinks, priority of use shall be as follows (in order of *decreasing* priority):

- a) Club league or cup matches.
- b) External competitions involving club members.

- c) External competition not involving club members.
- d) Internal competitions.
- e) Friendly or casual games.

3.10 Open events

The Club may very occasionally host open events where all rinks are in use for all or part of a day and the green will not be available for casual use. These will be notified in advance.

Section 4: Changing rooms, facilities and storage

- 4.1 Members may store their bowls/shoes etc. in a suitable bag within the alarmed Store Room *entirely at their own risk*. There is a bank of shelves on the left. Please ensure that your bag is clearly labelled with your name on it.
- 4.2 There is a large separate *unisex* changing room for all Club members to use, and a smaller one for visiting teams next to the bar. **For safety reasons and for the convenience of others please do not store bowls, shoes or clothing in the changing room** either overnight or for longer periods.
- 4.3 Please note that the Club accepts no liability for loss or theft of, or damage to, any personal belongings left

unattended within the Club grounds regardless of whether left in the alarmed Store Room or elsewhere.

4.4 There are male and female toilets and a disabled toilet all within the building containing the bar. The club does not have showering facilities.

Section 5: Code of Conduct

5.1 We are all ambassadors for the Club, whether on Club premises, at other bowls Clubs or representing the Club elsewhere. Our reputation as a friendly Club that people want to bowl at can be seriously damaged by just one incident. This Code of Conduct applies to all situations where the good name of the Club might come into question.

5.2 The Club has a zero-tolerance policy with regard to bullying, harassment, abusive, intolerant or aggressive behaviour or language, including but not limited to in relation to sex, age, disability, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or other beliefs and whether directed at an individual or otherwise.

5.3 Members should conduct themselves at all times in a reasonable, calm, respectful and polite manner regardless of any dispute, conflict or provocation or

the failure of another person to conduct themselves in such a manner.

- 5.4 Many problems on the green arise from a lack of knowledge of the rules and etiquette of bowls or of inadvertently failing to follow them. Often a polite and quiet word or reminder is enough. New bowlers in particular will need time to fully understand and follow the rules and etiquette and Members should make allowances and be patient in such cases.
- 5.5 Members should attempt to de-escalate and resolve any disputes on the green themselves in a friendly way in the first instance but where necessary should ask the skips and then the team captains for assistance.
- 5.6 If off the green issues cannot be resolved amicably they should be referred to a committee member and attempts made to reach a resolution informally. A formal complaints procedure is available if necessary.
- 5.7 Members are responsible for familiarising themselves with and observing:
- a) The Club Constitution and the Club rules and this Handbook
 - b) The Laws and etiquette of Bowls

c) The Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Adults Policy.

Section 6: Participation in Teams

6.1 League entries

The Club will endeavour to enter as many teams in as many different leagues as possible in order to provide members with the opportunity to bowl competitively against other clubs.

6.2 Team captains

A captain (and possibly vice-captain) may be elected for each team. The captain is responsible for team discipline and management of their teams in accordance with club policies.

6.3 League and cup match selection

It is expected that most teams will be managed on a rotation basis from among the nominations so that all members nominating have roughly equal playing opportunities. One league (NYBL) operates on a more selective basis and for most cup games the team captain/selection committee may choose what they consider to be the best team from the available players from match to match.

6.4 New Members joining the Club after the start of the league season and who may have missed nomination deadlines may still be selected for teams, at the discretion of captains.

Section 7: Club Clothing and Dress Code

7.1 Bowling shoes must be worn on the green (see 3.7). There are no colour restrictions for club use but other senior organisations may have their own rules.

7.2 Loose fitting, comfortable, casual clothing is typically worn for roll-ups and practice. Shorts are allowed but should be knee-length or just above.

7.3 Club clothing, consisting of grey trousers/shorts (see 7.6) /skirts if preferred by ladies and the Club's official team shirt must be worn for all league matches and when representing the Club.

7.4 The Club's official team shirt may be purchased from www.zapkam.com/p/club-shops/ at the prevailing cost. Other items may be available.

7.5 Head-wear may be of any colour for roll-ups but when wearing club uniform, it should be white.

7.6 League regulations stipulate that only grey shorts *manufactured specifically for the sport of lawn bowls*

may be worn in league matches. There is some debate about the technicality of this but to avoid potential problems this is best interpreted to mean either the shorts sold by the preferred supplier of Bowls England (with the BE logo) or the preferred supplier of the English Bowling Federation (with the EBF logo). Both may be purchased through links on their respective websites. While most Clubs (including Thornaby) allow bowlers to wear shorts on their Green, some Clubs do not. Visiting teams must respect the home club's rules and wear full-length trousers (or skirts if preferred by ladies) where shorts are prohibited.

7.7 Casual clothing is worn for internal Club competitions, except for Finals, where team clothing should be worn along with white trousers/skirt etc. and a club team shirt. In the event that a finalist has not played for a Club team and lacks an official team shirt, any white shirt may be worn.

Section 8: Smoking and Vaping

8.1 Smoking and vaping are not permitted on the green or in any Club building.

8.2 If smoking or vaping on the green surrounds, please be considerate to any non-smokers who are already there.

8.3 Please ensure that cigarettes are fully extinguished and butts disposed of appropriately.

Section 9: The Bar

9.1 Access and opening times

9.1.1 The Club does not run a full-time commercial bar. The bar will normally be open only in connection with bowling related events I.e., during and after internal bowls sessions or league and cup matches or for specific Club social events.

9.1.2 The Club does not employ staff and the bar is run entirely by the Bar Manager and other authorised volunteers.

9.1.3 The Bar Manager and Committee authorise a number of named volunteer members who have discretion to open and close the bar, serve drinks and collect money. There are no fixed opening hours (with respect to the licensed hours) or rota and the bar will generally only be open to serve drinks when the Bar Manager or one or more of

these authorised volunteers is present. However, their presence at the Club does not automatically guarantee that the bar will be open.

9.1.4 The bar is open to Club members and their guests, as well as members of visiting teams and club supporters. It is not open to ordinary members of the public.

9.1.5 Alcoholic drinks will not be served to under 18s (proof of age may be requested).

9.1.6 The Club reserves the right not to serve any individual and to ask them to leave the Club premises.

9.2 Unauthorised individuals are not permitted to go behind the bar or to serve themselves or others with drinks.

9.3 Bowls bags and other equipment may be a trip hazard and should not be brought into the bar.

Section 10: Technology

10.1 Mobile phones

10.1.1 Phones should either be switched off or not taken onto the green. The only exception is that if it is essential that you remain contactable at all

times, then phones taken onto the green should be switched to vibrate to avoid unnecessary distraction to other bowlers.

10.1.2 In the event that you need to make a phone call or send a text message, please leave the green to do so and show consideration to those continuing to bowl.

10.2 Photography/video recording

10.2.1 Club officials and other members may take photographs and record video footage for promotional material, coaching or other authorised purposes. This must be done as considerately and unobtrusively as possible without disruption to the bowling.

10.2.2 If any bowler or other person asks not to be photographed or video recorded then the activity should stop and any images of that bowler/person be deleted.

10.2.3 Children should not be photographed or video recorded or their images used without the express permission of their parent or guardian.

Section 11: Internal Competitions

- 11.1 All Members, regardless of experience or ability are encouraged to take part in internal competitions. In particular, newer bowlers may find them a good opportunity to play matches and gain experience.
- 11.2 The Club organises a variety of annual knock-out competitions each year; singles, doubles and triples with various formats. The Competition organiser will post full details and invitations for entry with an entry deadline in order for competition draws to be made.
- 11.3 One-off tournaments are also organised and advertised on an ad hoc basis, typically on a Saturday or Sunday.

Section 12: Communication and social media

- 12.1 The Club will use electronic communication wherever possible and Members will get the most out of their membership if they regularly check email. Notices will be deemed to have been served and information provided if sent to the email address you gave to the Club. It is essential therefore that you read your email regularly and let the Club know immediately if you change your email address. Information will also be posted on the Club noticeboard.

12.2 The Club may also provide other social media platforms for the use of members. You can obtain this information from the club secretary.

If provided, social media would hope to operate on two levels:

- a) A generic Thornaby Bowls Club page which *anyone* can access, providing general information marketing the Club, a link to the Club website and how to get in touch with us, for example in order to join the Club; and
- b) A Members only area, which you and other Members will have access to by virtue of the email address you provide to the Club and linked to your Facebook account.

12.3 Data Protection

The Club protects your personal data in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 implementing the General Data Protection Regulation into UK law. The Club's Data Protection Policy is available on the Club website or as a hard-copy on request and explains what data is stored, how it is stored and for how long, how it will be used, your rights to see your data or

have it corrected or deleted and what you can do if you are dissatisfied.

Section 13: Club Community

13.1 Volunteering

The Club has no employees and depends entirely on Members volunteering their time and effort to do the many jobs needed, ranging from Committee work, tending the green and surrounding gardens, maintenance and cleaning of the club house, making tea, running teams and events, writing publicity material, website development, coaching, recruiting new members etc. The tasks involved and knowledge required to run a Club are surprisingly diverse and Members who have particular skills or expertise whether in gardening, accountancy, marketing, local government, law, health and safety, website technology or elsewhere are particularly welcome to make themselves and their expertise known to the Committee. Even if you don't have time to volunteer regularly, it may be that your knowledge can save someone else a lot of time.

13.2 Requests for help

On occasion throughout the year, the regular volunteers may need and ask for help with specific jobs. For instance, when the green is verti-cut/scarified which can involve the removal of 60-80 plastic sacks of grass/roots/soil from the green and is very labour intensive. Help is always appreciated at these times.

Section 14: Emergencies

14.1 In the event of an emergency, always call 999 if it is what you would normally do outside of the Club. (A phone is available at the club if required. Tel no. 07907814143)

14.2 Take whatever action you can to minimise damage or harm but do nothing that could endanger you or anyone else and remove yourself immediately if you are in danger.

14.3 Call a Committee Member. A list of contacts can be found on the Club noticeboard.