



Eight Ideas To Grow Your Membership

Gone are the days where clubs had people waiting to join – in efforts to attract the next generation of members clubs are now trying different membership recruitment techniques.

This guidance note provides some snapshots of what clubs have tried and how it might work for your own club.

Not all of these ideas will suit your situation and we recommend delivering one recruitment initiative well will have a bigger impact than trying too much at once.

If you would like further advice and guidance on recruiting new members contact the Bowls Scotland development team by emailing development@bowlsscotland.com or phoning **01292 294 623**.

Local Advertising

Many people are surprised to know that they have a club on their doorstep that is 'open for business'. Increasing your local profile is often a simple and easy way to attract new members:

- Improve your club signage – roadside banners etc.
- Poster campaigns in local shops & notice boards
- Online - develop website & social media
- Mailshots / letterbox drop to local homes
- Advertise in local paper & local radio
- Partner with local businesses to promote your club (i.e. taxi firms, house builders, etc.)

Link with Community Groups

People who participate in other activities sports are more inclined to try something new.

By making links with other clubs and groups locally you can generate new members, and more clubhouse business.

- Partner with local sports clubs who don't have a clubhouse (i.e. cycling, walking, running)
- Hold inter-club fun events with similar sports (i.e. curling, golf, indoor or carpet bowls)
- Link with youth community groups (i.e. scouts & guides, cadets, etc.)
- Link with local charities
- Link with schools, universities, and education

Create a Member Benefits List

Seems obvious, but few clubs 'sell' the benefits of being a member of the club.

Take the time with fellow members to identify the benefits of being a member of the club and emphasise these:

....unlimited bowling.... competitions.... make new friends.... great social scene.... Stay fit & healthy.... Represent your club.... Clubhouse facilities.... Etc...

Buy-One-Get-One-Free

Looking to bring more young people into the club, or encourage partners & spouses to join in the club fun?

Consider a one-off offer for your new members to get a free social membership or junior membership with their full membership.

This could be used for family members, children, friends, grandchildren.

TryBowls Beginner Package

Many clubs have realized that they can grow membership through attracting non-bowlers to take up a new sport.

New bowlers will not be attracted to pay full membership and take part in club competitions when they don't even know how to play... instead create a beginner package where they can borrow bowls, get coaching, and attend club social events for a reduced price.

Member-Get-Member

The best source of new members is your existing members.

Create a recommend a friend scheme where your existing members are rewarded for bringing in NEW members

I.e. Every new member gets 10% off membership and the recommending member will receive 10% off next year's membership.

Alternative Payment Options

Not everyone can afford a large one-off membership bill, especially if it falls near or after Christmas.

Consider what kind of alternative payment options would work for members, maybe paying next years membership a year in advance, or breaking the charge into affordable chunks.

Contact Lapsed Members

How often do you follow-up with lapsed members to find out why they left?

This information can help you retain those members, and it also is a good opportunity to see if you can convince past members to rejoin.

Youth, Family & Corporate

Consider introducing new membership categories for specific target groups that can grow your club:

- **Youth Membership** for people who no longer qualify as juniors – those under 30, university students, etc.
- **Family Membership** grouping together memberships to offer for families and extended families – i.e. 1x full membership, 1x social membership, 1x junior membership.
- **Corporate Membership** create a package that would appeal to a local businesses – i.e. 2x full memberships, unlimited social memberships, and free clubhouse hire for events.

One-Off Membership Deals

Money talks!

Many people are price sensitive, so run a limited-time, one-off cut-price membership. Perhaps a half-season membership in July will attract fair-weather bowlers, or a two-season deal.

Important Note: your existing members will be sensitive to this kind of offer, so consider adding limitations to the reduced price offer... i.e. only full members may compete in club matches, or competitions.