

EMPOWERING WOMEN IN BOWLS

Empowering Women in Bowls Survey Results – Summary

In October 2020, we launched an Empowering Women in Bowls survey aimed at obtaining the views of females who do not currently participate in bowls. The focus of the survey was to capture current perceptions and perceived barriers but also to help us better understand what would encourage women to participate and engage in our wonderful game.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the survey, we had just over 200 responses. We have outlined some of the key findings and some recommendations for consideration.

Current Perception

- 45 % of respondents said their current perception was that bowls is played by older or retired people.
- 14% of respondents perceived bowls to be a male dominated sport.
- 13% believed bowls was a sociable sport.

Barriers to Participation

The top three reasons respondents do not play bowls or have not considered playing bowls are:

- Do not have time / a time-consuming game (18%)
- Do not know about the sport and have not seen bowls advertised (16%)
- Not interested in participating in bowls and/or believe it to be boring (13%)
- Just under half of all respondents (48%) reported the belief that participation is generally restricted to older people as a barrier to taking part in bowls.

Increasing Participation

- 42% of respondents stated that flexible membership options would encourage them to participate in bowls.
- 36% of respondents stated that a welcoming and safe environment would encourage them to participate in bowls.
- 36% of respondents stated that more awareness of bowling would encourage them to participate in bowls.

Engagement

- Just under a third (31%) of respondents suggested greater promotion and advertisement of the sport would engage more female participants.
- A quarter of respondents suggested offering open days, including female only and family specific days where non-participants could come and try bowls.

Our Key Recommendations:

Bowls Scotland to:

- Identify female role models (coaching/playing/volunteering) to help promote the sport
- Deliver a marketing campaign aimed at specific female demographics.

- Conduct further research on how to engage females.
- Identify partner organisations and/or other SGB's to share learning on engaging female participants.
- Conduct a further Empowering Women in Bowls survey aimed at obtaining views of females who are currently participating in bowls.

Clubs to:

- Consider what they can do to encourage participation, including:
 - Making it easy to join
 - Building relationships
 - Being flexible in your approach
 - Creating a welcoming environment
 - Working with Bowls Scotland and other national and local organisations
- Consider developing and promoting flexible membership opportunities and game formats (i.e., faster game format)
- Utilise existing Bowls Scotland Try Bowls programme to target Women Only events