



Try Bowls 2023 Season Survey Analysis



Introduction

Try Bowls is Bowls Scotland's national campaign aimed at bringing new people into bowls and thus increasing membership in clubs. As a result of feedback from clubs, in 2022 we moved our Try Bowls Programme from a single event sign up to a Try Bowls Club approach, this allows clubs the flexibility to meet the needs of the club and the local community.

In addition to the change in approach to Try Bowls, in 2023 we committed to invest £65,000 to create 24 Try Bowls Activator positions to provide strong, meaningful, localised support for clubs; specifically, community to club transition, retention, and membership growth in addition to the support provided by our wonderful National Development Officers.

2023 Season Survey

2023 saw a 46% increase in the number of clubs registering as a Try Bowls club, bringing the total to 375 clubs across Scotland.

At the end of the 2023 Season, we surveyed Try Bowls clubs with a 10% response rate. In addition, we captured feedback from the 8 Try Bowls Activators as well as insights and data from informal conversations our three National Development Officers had with the clubs they support.

This report provides some insights from the survey analysis and club conversations.



Approach, Planning and Resources

We asked clubs if they thought moving to the 'Doors Open' approach for the local community to come and try, rather than having to run specific events provides clubs with more flexibility to help meet the needs of the local community, was better reflects the various ways in which clubs can attract new members into their club.

Over 61% of clubs agreed that this change from a specific event run approach to a 'Doors Open' approach better reflects the various ways in which clubs can attract new members.

Comments:

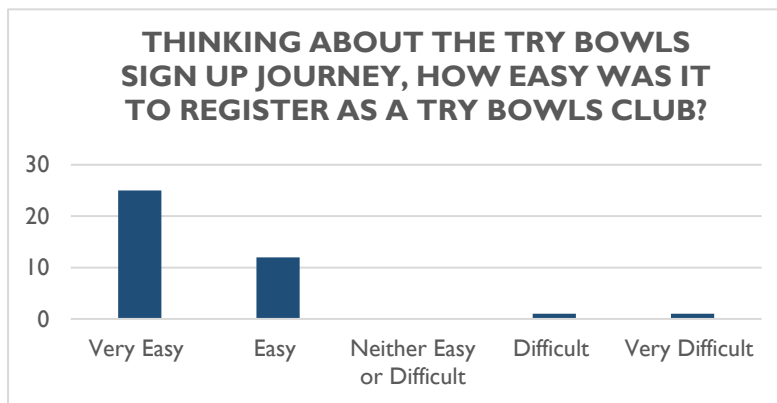
"100% This is fantastic way to run try bowls."

"We like holding a 'Specific Day' as a focus but are always open for people to come along and try at other times during the season".

"I think you need both, they complement each other"

"A specific date range of dates has more focus".

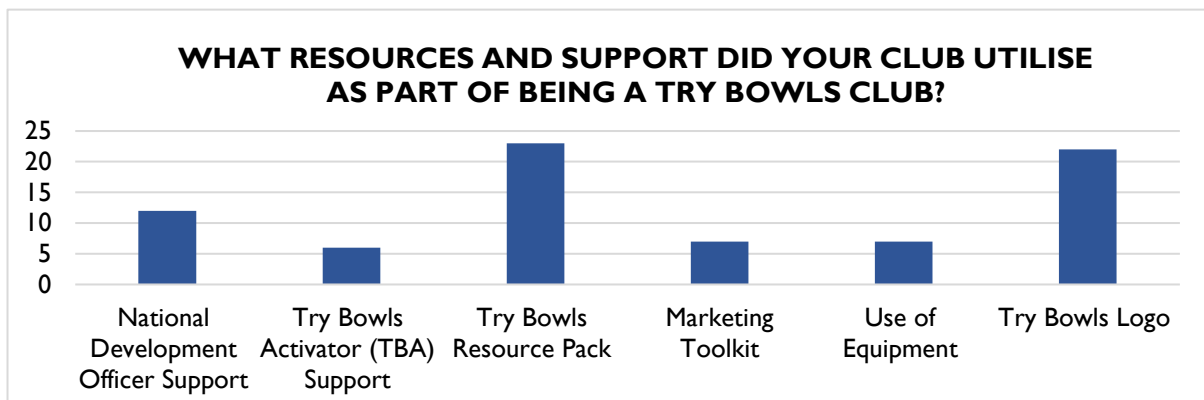
We asked clubs about the Try Bowls sign-up process, overall, 94% of clubs found the sign-up journey easy or very easy.



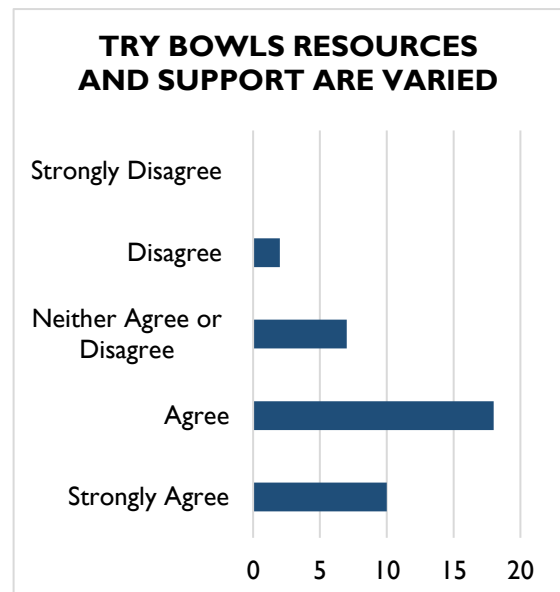
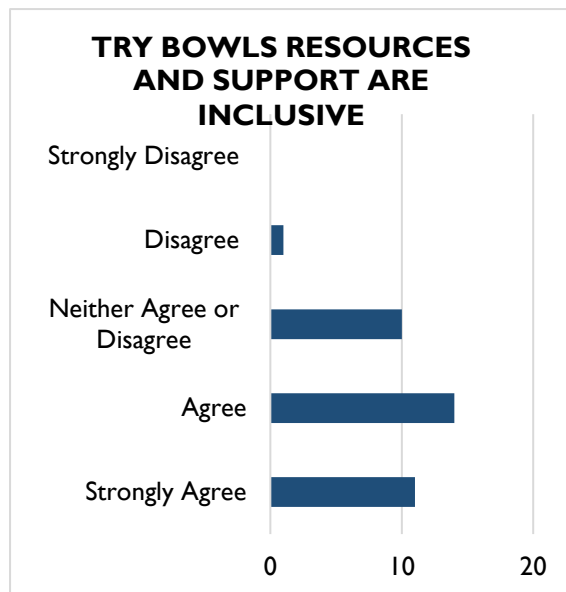
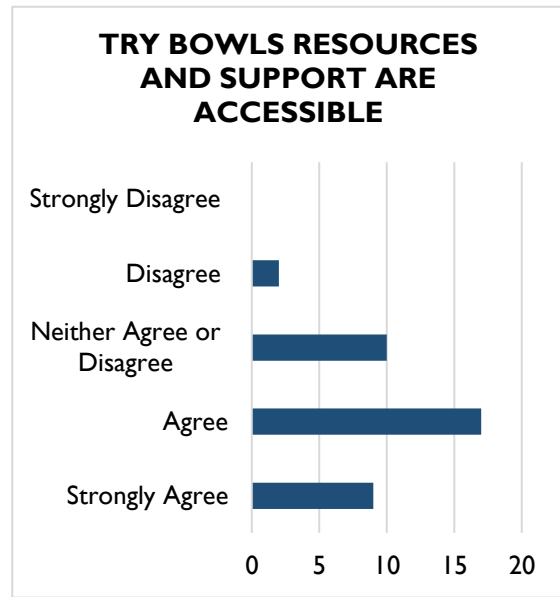
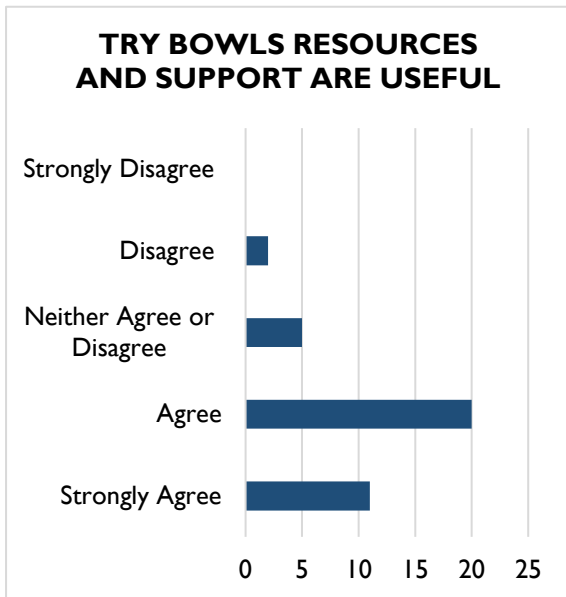
Additional Comments:

"Registering online did not work and we had to contact Development Officer to confirm registration"

We asked clubs what resources and support the club utilised as part of being a Try Bowls Club? The Try Bowls Logo and the Try Bowls Resource Pack were the two highest resources utilised by Try Bowls Clubs. However, some respondents stated they didn't use any of the listed support or resources.

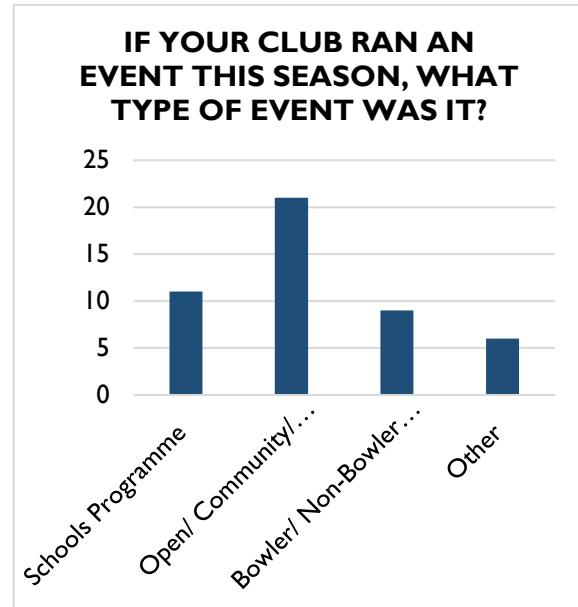
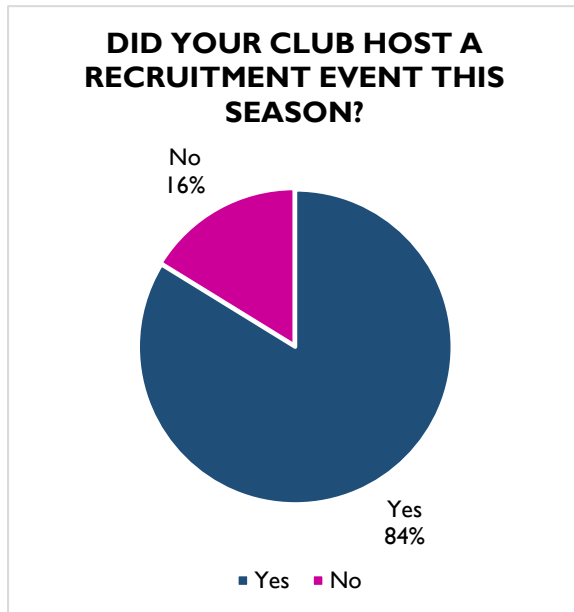


We asked clubs to rate the resources that are available for Try Bowls Clubs to access in terms of **Usefulness, Accessibility, Inclusivity and Variety**.



Event Delivery

Clubs were asked a series of questions about their Try Bowls Event delivery and how successful these were in attracting new members into the club.



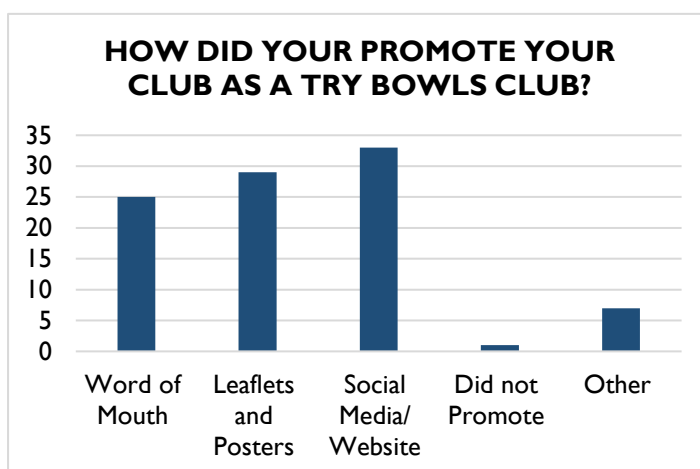
Additional Comments:

“Club BBQ with members inviting friends and family”.

“Scout & Brownie Groups + interest groups, e.g. musicians + support workers with clients with additional support needs + New Scots. We also took part in Doors Open weekend”.

“Resource Centre (Challenged youngsters) sessions during the summer holidays and the same for primary school pupils”.

“Craft Fayre using local businesses with a try bowls day at the same time”.



Additional Comments:

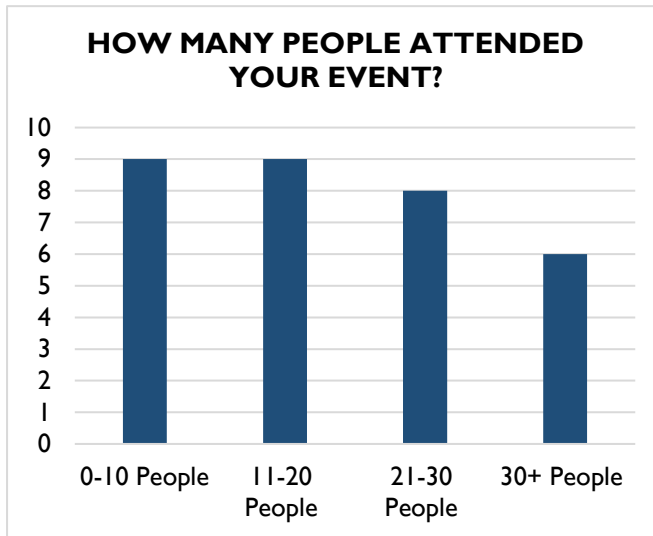
“Local community magazine delivered to every household”.

“Local newspaper + Metal sign outside the club”

“Active Schools Contract Completed”

“Family and friends, work colleagues, former work colleagues”

“Open days”



Additional Comments:

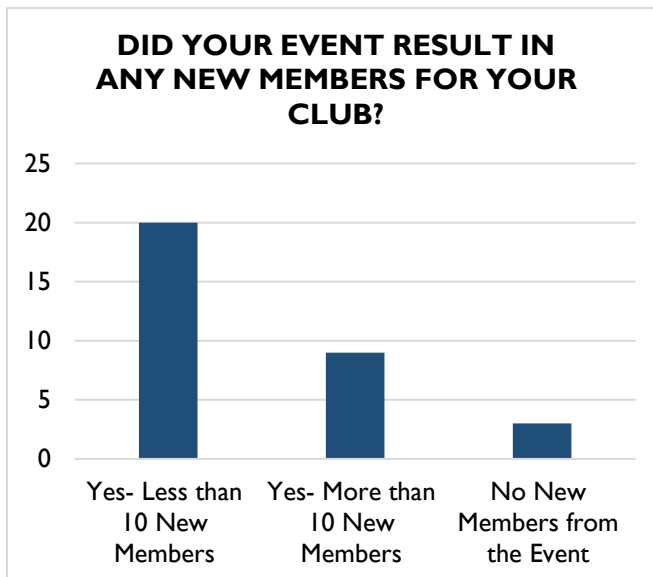
“Approx 75 people turned up at our latest open day”.

“80”

“16”

“one event 42 children + other 7 sessions with 7 to 10 children”

“On first occasion only 1 attendee, second attempt only 2 people. We have still to run our annual event with the local Scout group”.



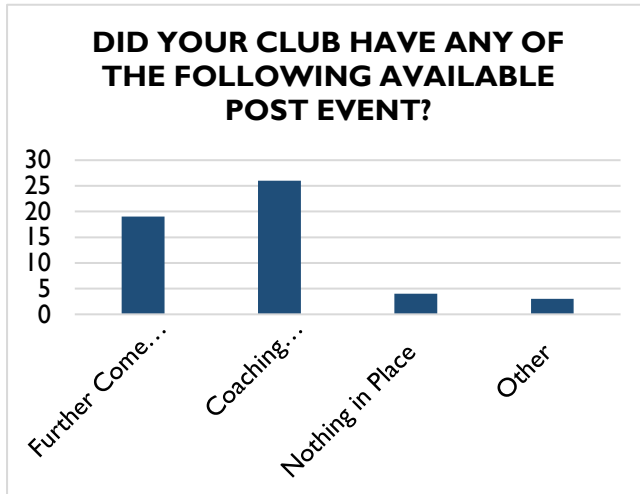
Additional Comments:

“3 months free trial”

“Free coaching”

“Lower annual fee for all to make it accessible to all on a continued basis”.

“Some joining paid full membership subscription (including short carpet) others have paid half (including short carpet) depending upon time of year joining”.

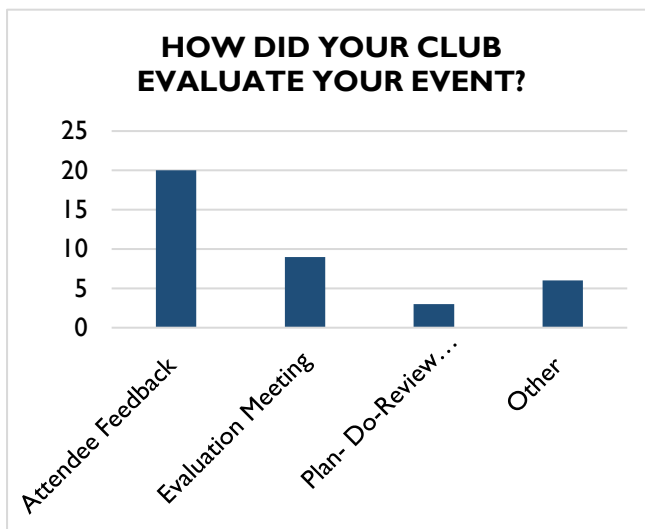


Additional Comments:

“Regular novice aggregate”

“Bowler/ non-Bowler event”

“Try Bowls every Sunday afternoon with coaching”.



Additional Comments:

“We have attendee feedback on the day and reinforced the bowling opportunities the club offers backed up with coaching”.

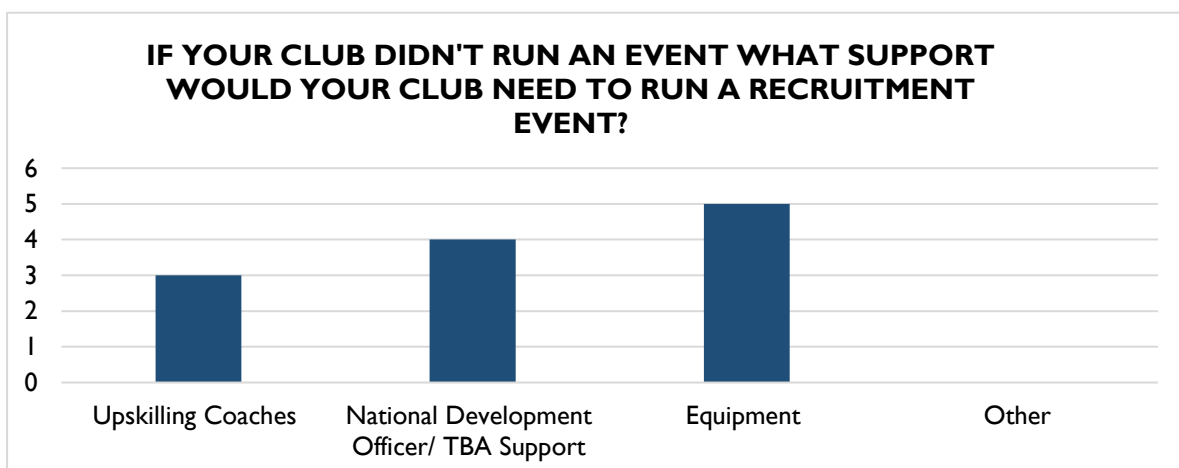
“Committee in depth discussions”

“No formal evaluation”

“Report submitted to Active Schools Coordinator”.

“Members comments”

We asked clubs that did not run an event, what support their club would need in order to run a recruitment event at their club. Responses show that access to equipment and support from the National Development Officer where the most common answers.



Recommendations

Once again, we would like to thank clubs who completed the 2023 Try Bowls Survey and/or had conversations with our National Development Officers and Try Bowls Activators. These insights are invaluable, and allow us to further develop the Try Bowls Programme.

Some key recommendations arising from the survey and localised conversations:

- **Bowls Scotland to progress with the creation of a Try Bowls working group to review the programmes content, communication process, delivery and evaluation.**
- **Bowls Scotland to continue providing more targeted localised support in relation to membership growth and retention, in addition to the National Development Support.**
- **National Development Officers to consider hosting more local forums, giving the clubs the platform to share information and their evaluation of their Try Bowls journey with other local clubs.**
- **Bowls Scotland to continue to modernise and progress the Try Bowls resources in consultation with existing Try Bowls Clubs to ensure they are accessible, relevant and diverse.**
- **Bowls Scotland to continue to raise the profile of Try Bowls Clubs by sharing good practices from Clubs around Scotland.**
- **Bowls Scotland to Host a National Try Bowls Event at the National Championships lead by the National Development Officers**