

Bowls Scotland Facility Report

March 2025



Facility Survey Final Report

Bowls Scotland's mission is to work together with our clubs to ensure bowls is at the heart of your community. Our game would simply not exist without the bowls facilities our clubs provide. At the same time, we recognise that management and maintenance of facilities is the biggest cost and pressure on our clubs and volunteers. We know that many clubs have seen the costs of running their facilities rise significantly in recent years. We want to help our clubs manage these pressures, but to do so we need better data on these facilities.

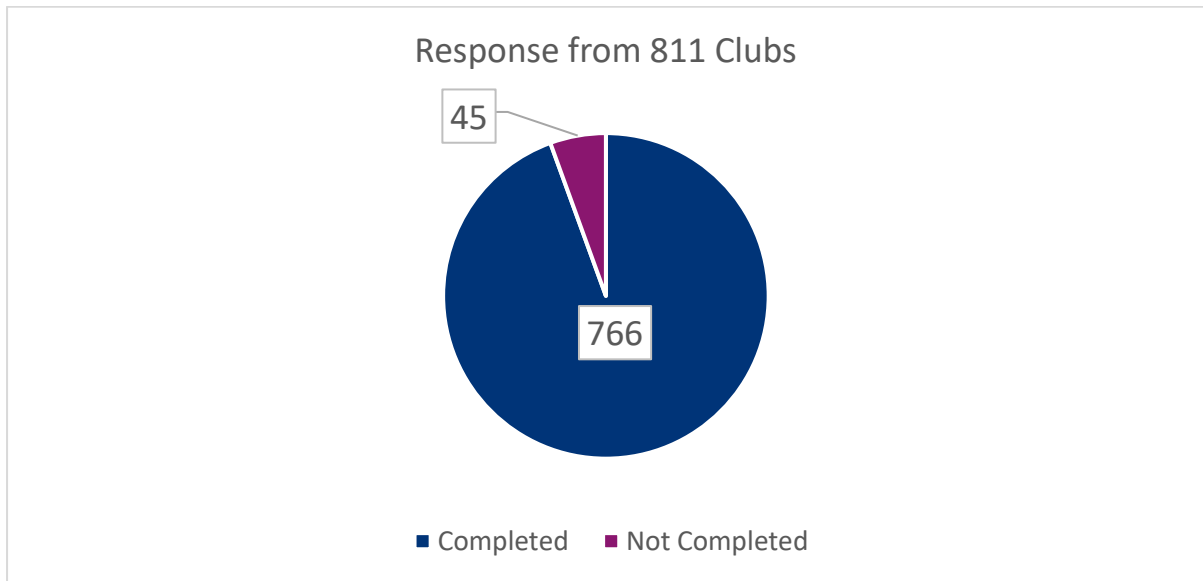
In December 2023, Bowls Scotland launched a Facility Survey to establish key baseline information on club ownership, accessibility and various individual clubhouse questions covering internal facilities, sustainability and health and safety. The survey was circulated to all clubs via the main contact information from our Online Club and Membership System, JustGo. In addition, District Coordinators also received the survey and were encouraged to support clubs with completions.

A supporting video launched on Facebook raised awareness of the survey, with several reshares updating on returns and calls to complete the survey. The survey remained open for 6 months, providing ample opportunity for clubs to complete, eventually closing on 31st May.

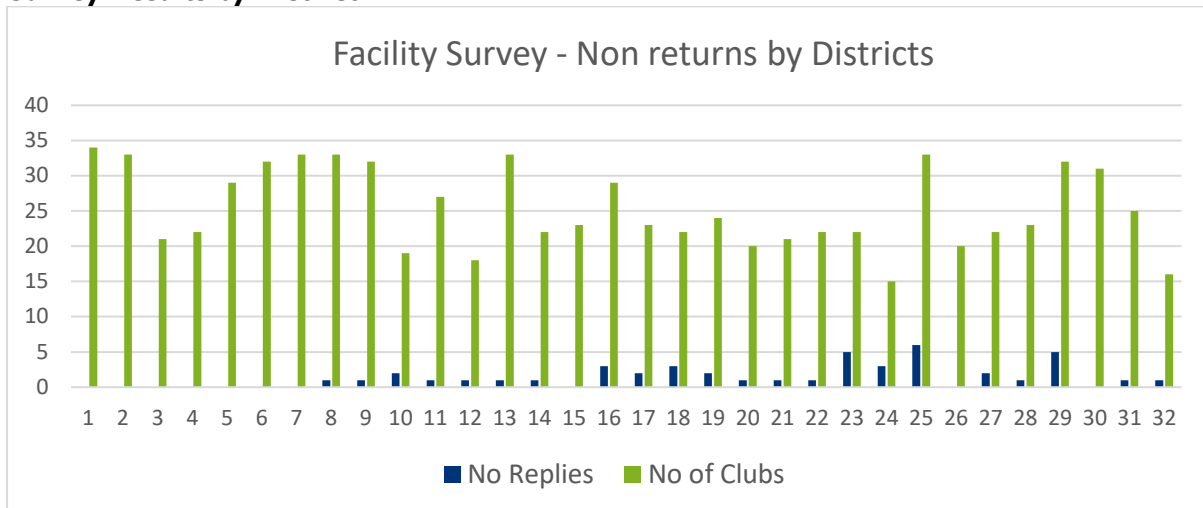
By the closing date, 767 clubs out of 811 clubs had completed the survey, a 94% return rate. Unfortunately, one club did not add their name to their survey return, this meant that with another few clubs in that Local Authority area also not returning, we were unable to confirm the actual club, therefore all charts and information are based on a return from 766 clubs.

We would like to thank all the clubs and volunteers who took the time to complete the survey. Your responses will help us to help you. Some of the support that Bowls Scotland provides to our clubs can be found in the summary at the end of this report.

Survey Return from affiliated Clubs



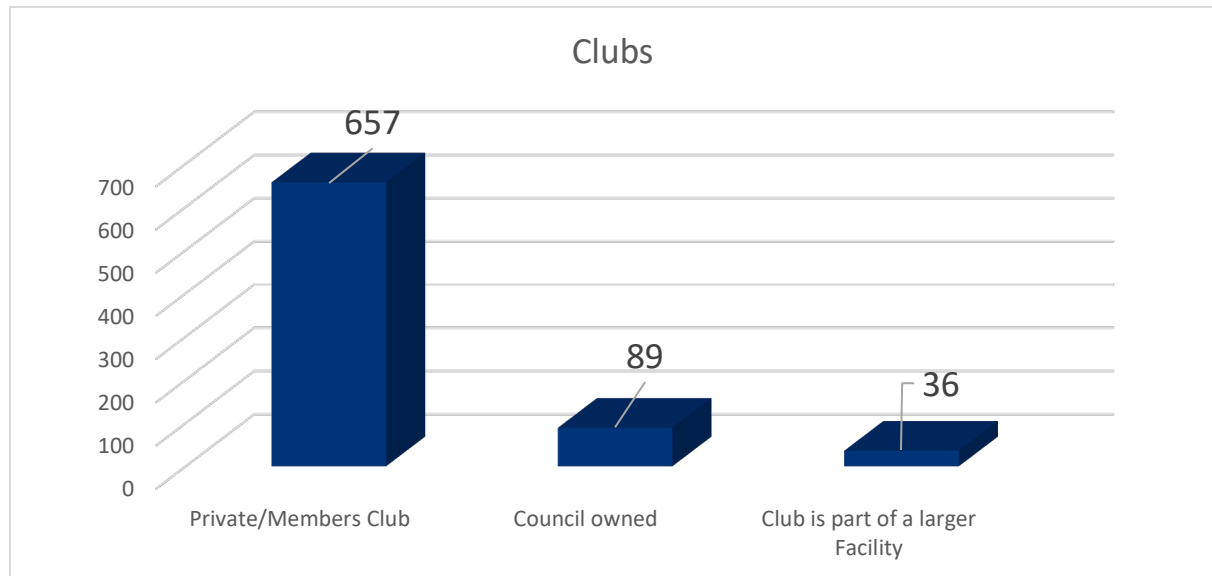
Survey Results by District



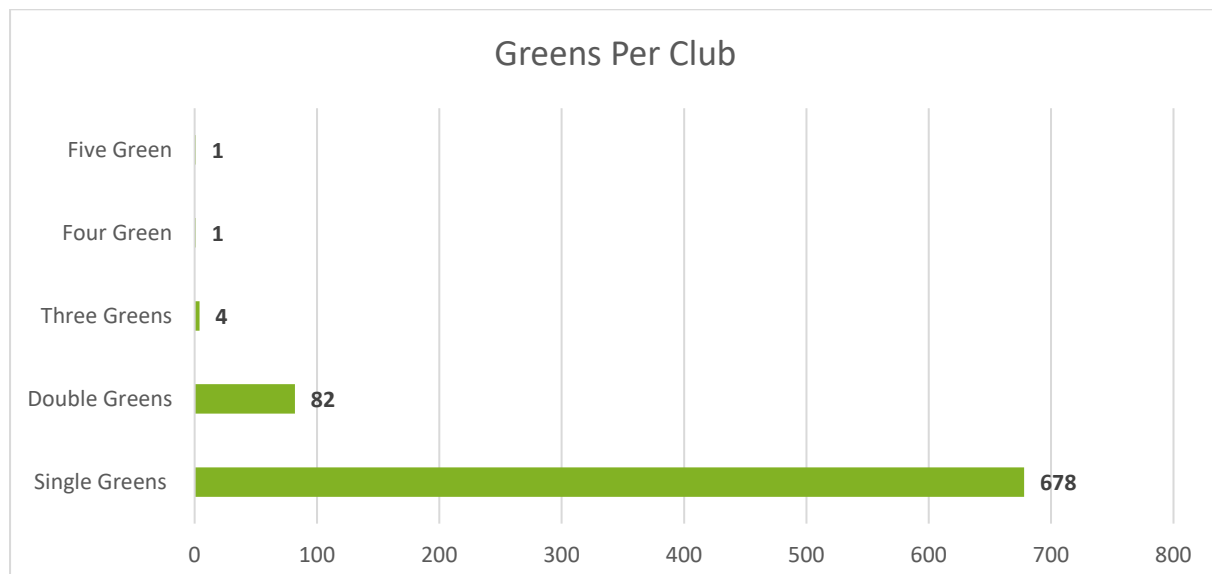
Club Structure

The following breakdown is based on returns that clubs provided on ownership of the club. As expected, the majority of clubs returned as private clubs. There were some dual returns where the club either owned the green or the clubhouse.

For those returns as part of a larger facility, this covered both community facilities and Miners Welfare clubs.

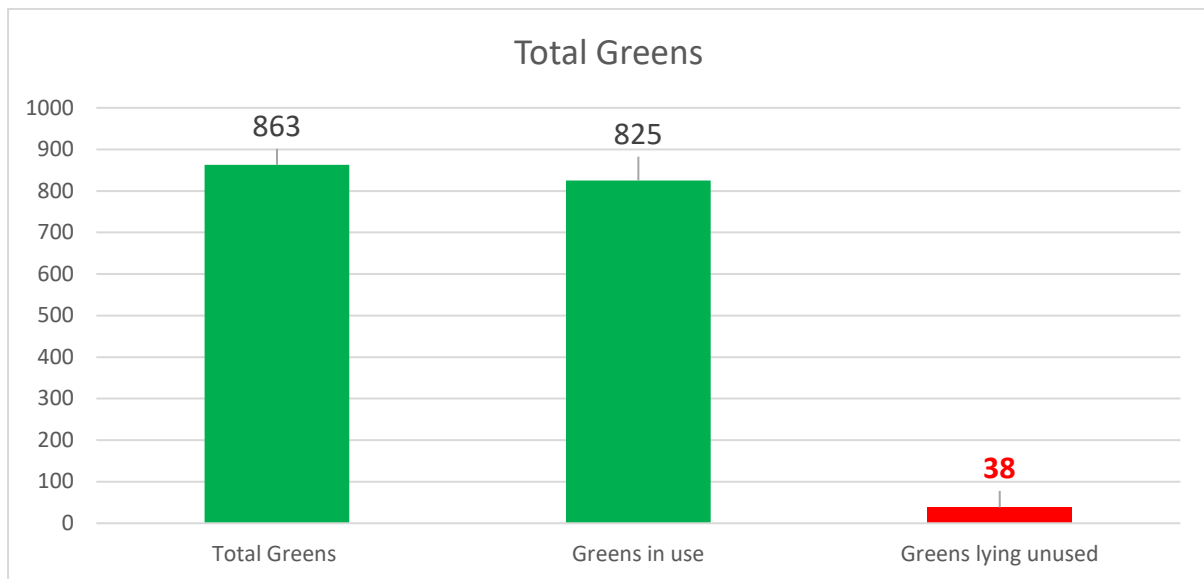


To establish a baseline of playing facilities, clubs were asked how many greens were within the club grounds. 10% of clubs replying indicated that they have a facility that has more than one green.



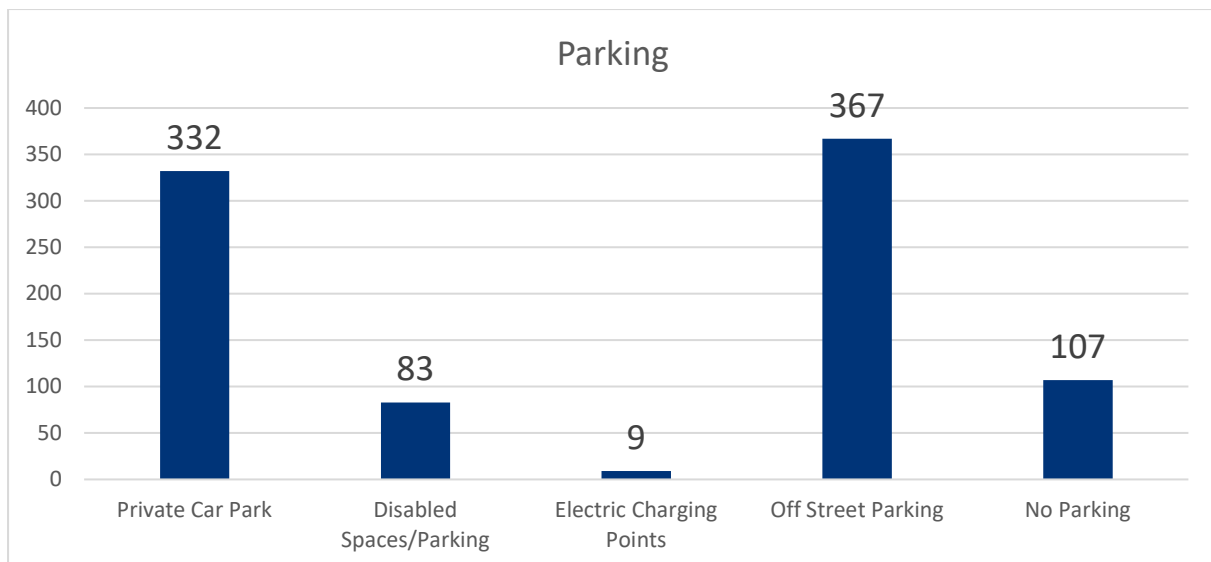
Following on from the above question, clubs providing more than one surface, were then asked if every surface was in a condition ready for use, or if any green was lying dormant.

In total, there are 863 greens recorded from affiliated clubs, with 4% of these, 38 in total, that were recorded as lying dormant and not currently used.



Additionally, the size of the greens was recorded and clubs supplied information on how many rinks per green were available for use. The total number of standard size rinks available from the 'greens in use' for play across Scotland is 4992.

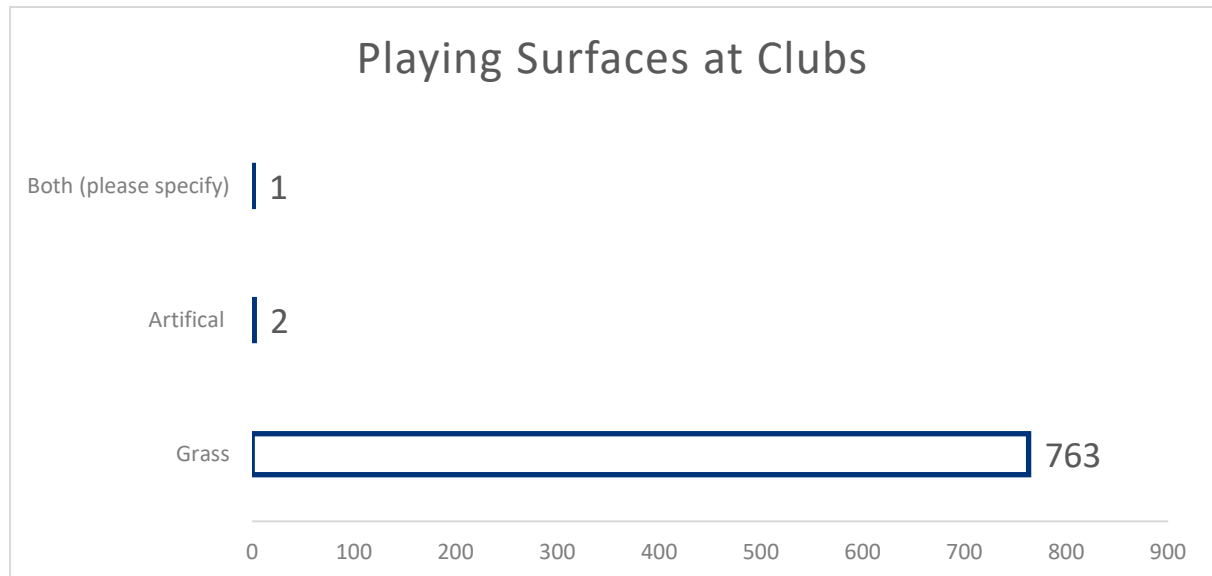
In terms of car access to the club, 40% of clubs reported having access to their own private car park. With the majority of clubs (58%) recording on street/public car park or no recognised parking at the club. Some clubs recorded access to multiple options.



Greens

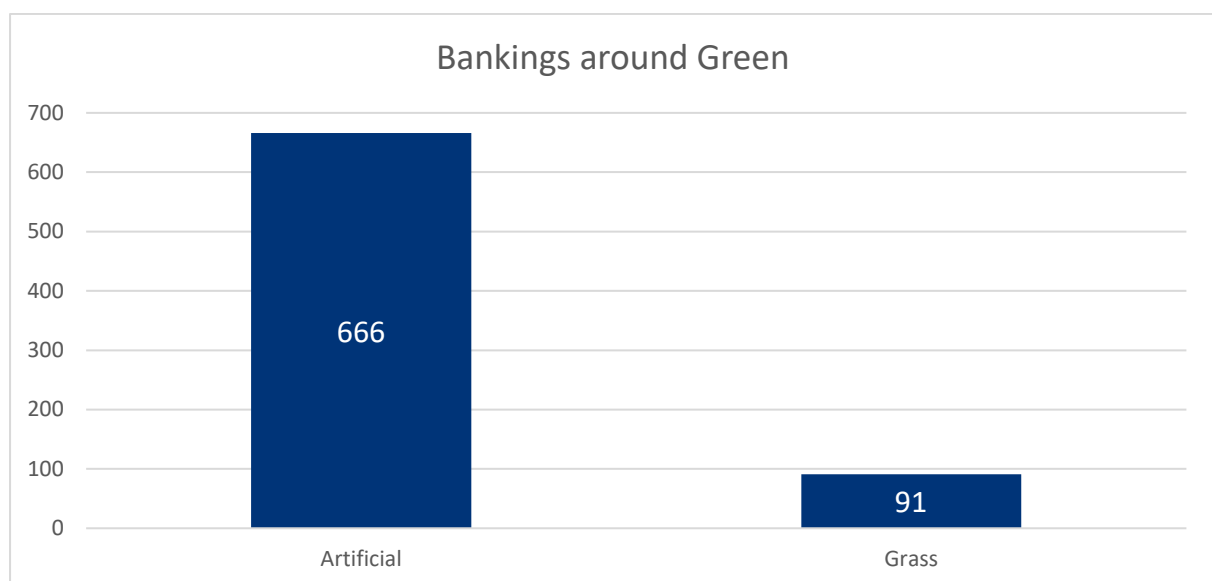
This section records types of playing surfaces, bankings surrounding the greens and the various ways that the greens can be accessed. This information will help shape current and future access to the sport and contribute to making the sport more accessible and inclusive.

One club, based on the Orkney Islands offers both artificial and grass playing surface, with the other two clubs that offer an artificial surface based in Highlands and Aberdeenshire Council areas.

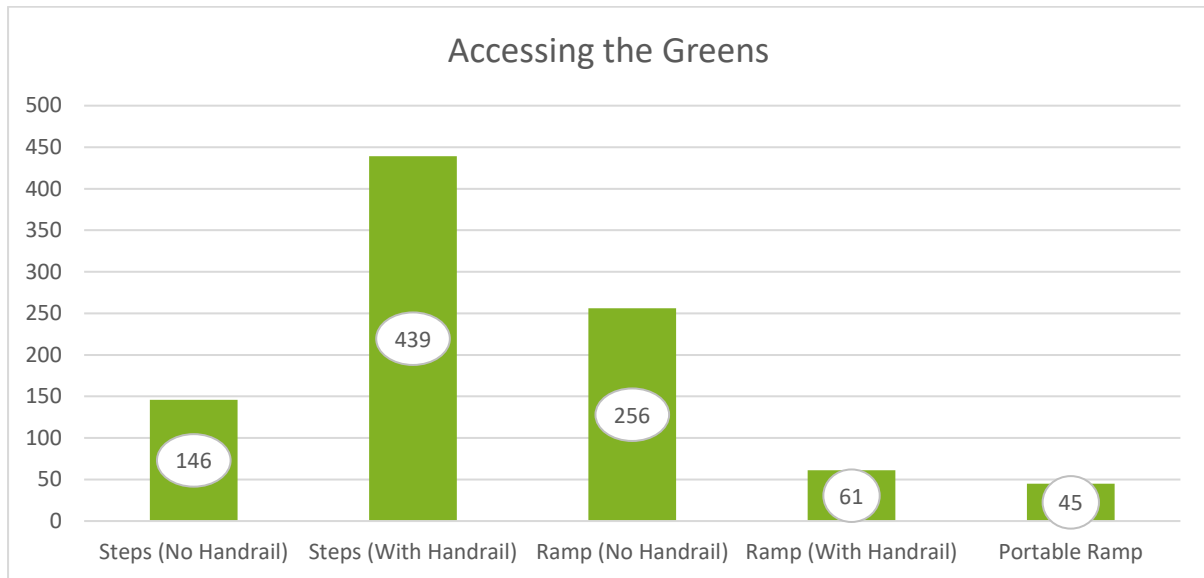


In terms of extending access to the facility with the use of Floodlights, 97 clubs provide that opportunity at their club facility.

In terms to the bankings surrounding the green, 87% reported having an artificial covering. 91 clubs still have a traditional grass surface and may provide an opportunity to seek funding to have artificial bankings installed, that incorporate disability access to the green.



In terms of access the green, clubs were asked to list all options currently available at their own club to access the green. There are multiple responses from clubs included in these figures.

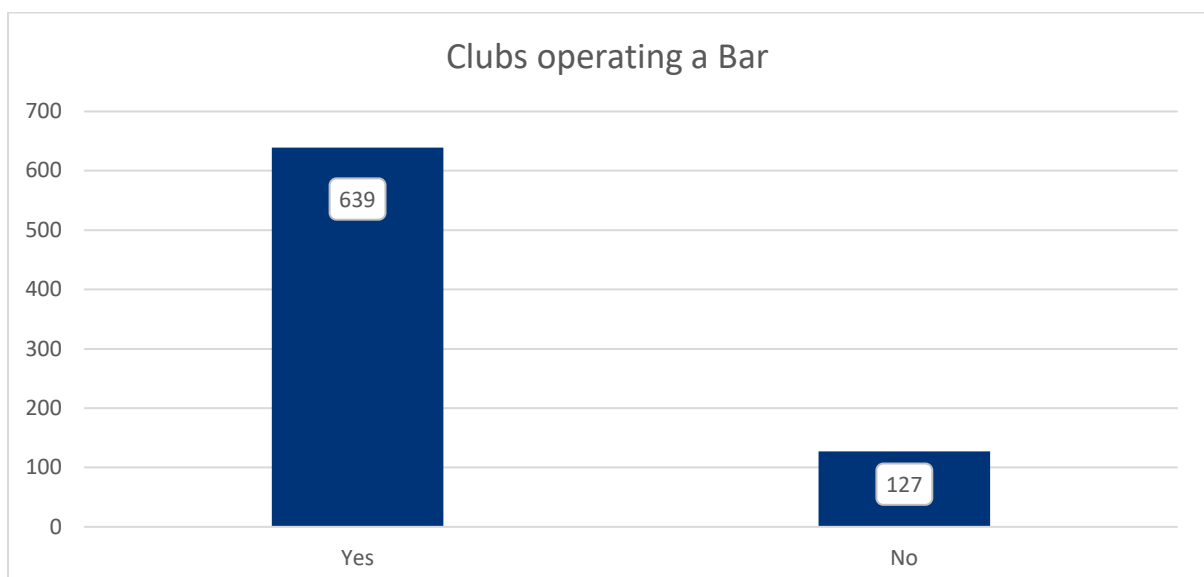


Internal Facilities

An overview of the facilities located at the club, focusing on three main areas. Those clubs that operate a bar, toilet facilities available and what changing room provisions are available to members and visitors.

83% of clubs operate a bar. Although 127 clubs indicated not having a bar, there were times when some of those clubs offered this facility via an occasional license for the club.

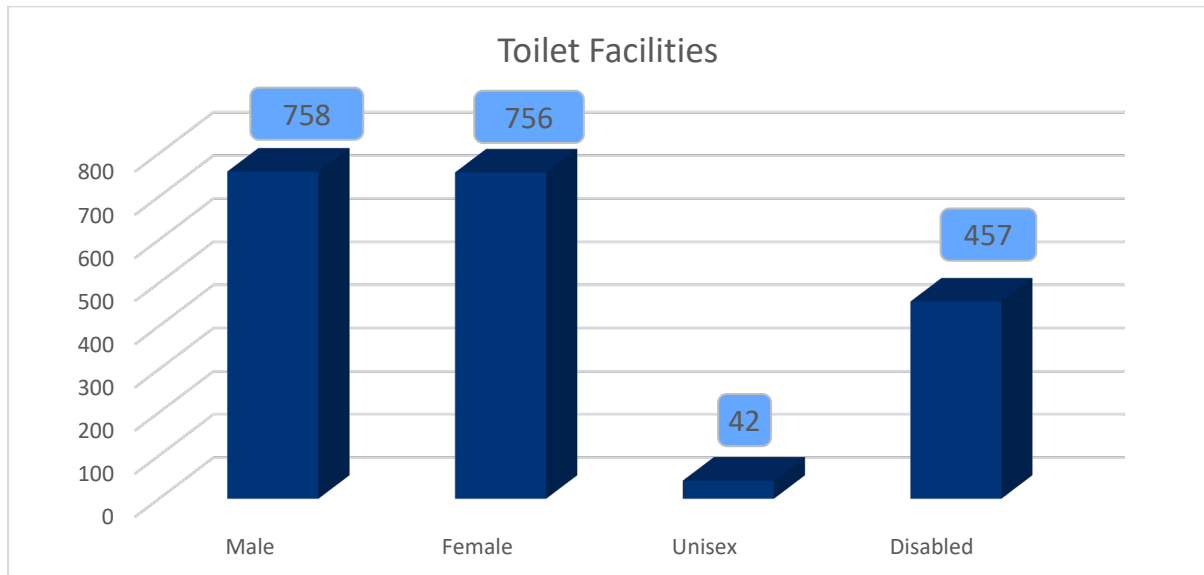
53 of these were recorded in the North of Scotland and another 19 in the South of Scotland. Only 4 clubs from the III returns from Glasgow City and Edinburgh Council areas indicated not having a bar.



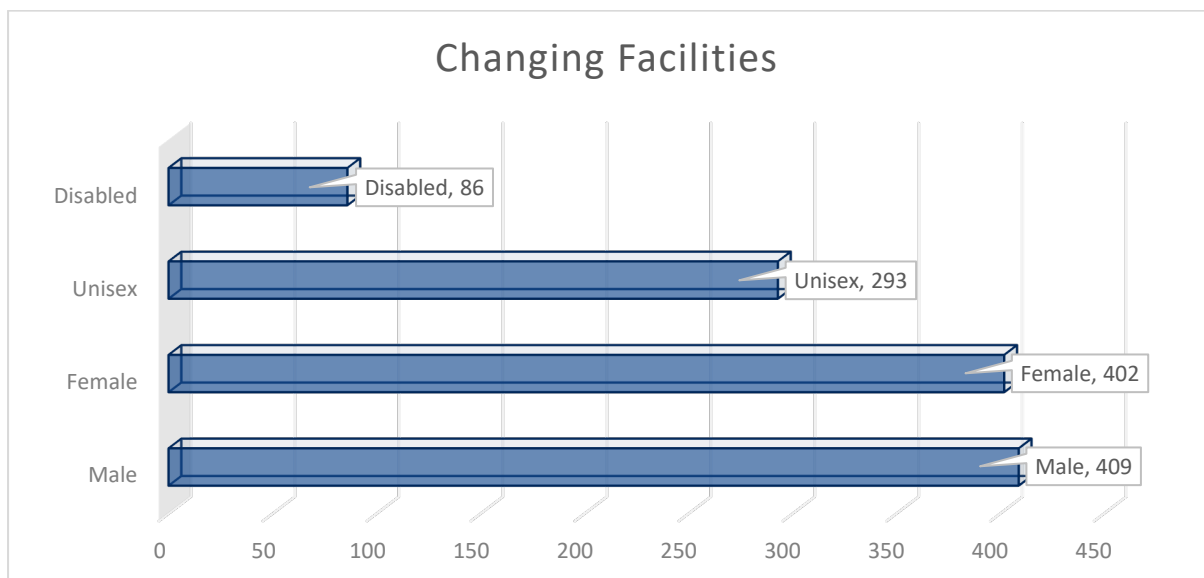
In terms of toilet provision at clubs, there were a number of clubs that are part of a larger facility, that recorded no toilet provision in the bowling clubhouse, but had toilet access in the wider complex available to members.

In terms of Disabled accessible toilets, 60% of clubs indicated that their club provided this facility, although some comments that pre-existing toilets were accessible require further investigation to establish how many have been adapted to fully meet requirements.

There were some additional comments that some club's toilets were external to the main clubhouse building.



In terms of changing facilities, most clubs offered either gender specific or unisex changing facilities within the clubhouse. The remaining clubs commented that members would utilise indoor or sitting outdoor for changing to appropriate shoes rather than having a dedicated changing area.

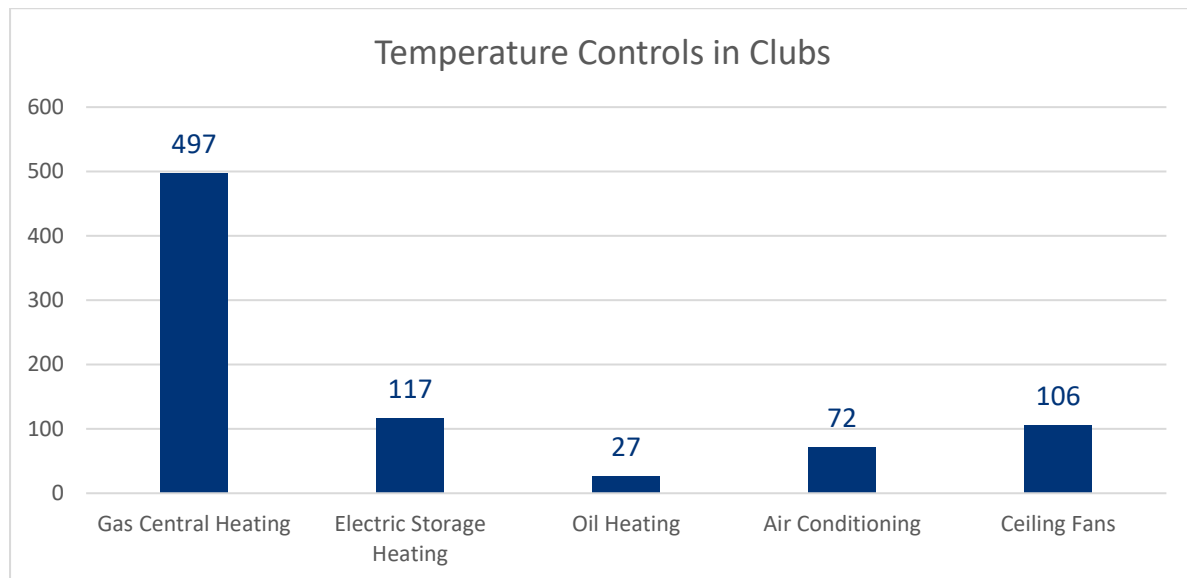


491 clubs now have internet access within the clubhouse. This was not investigated to establish if used by the club for providing a service or just as a members benefit with phone use in the current climate.

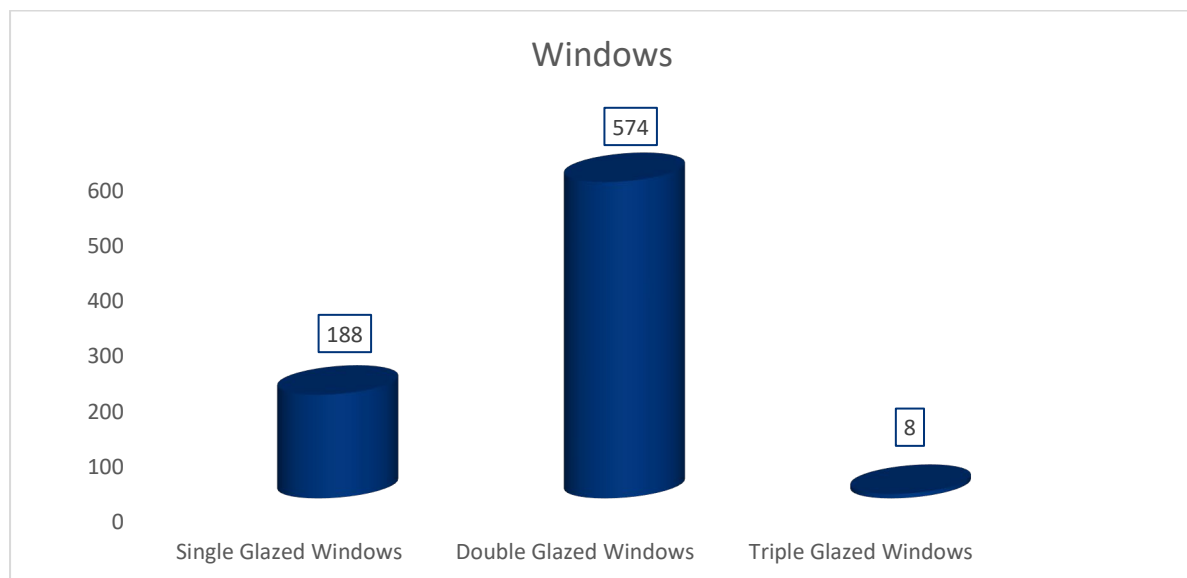
Sustainability

This section will highlight both Internal and External energy efficiencies currently installed or in use at clubs.

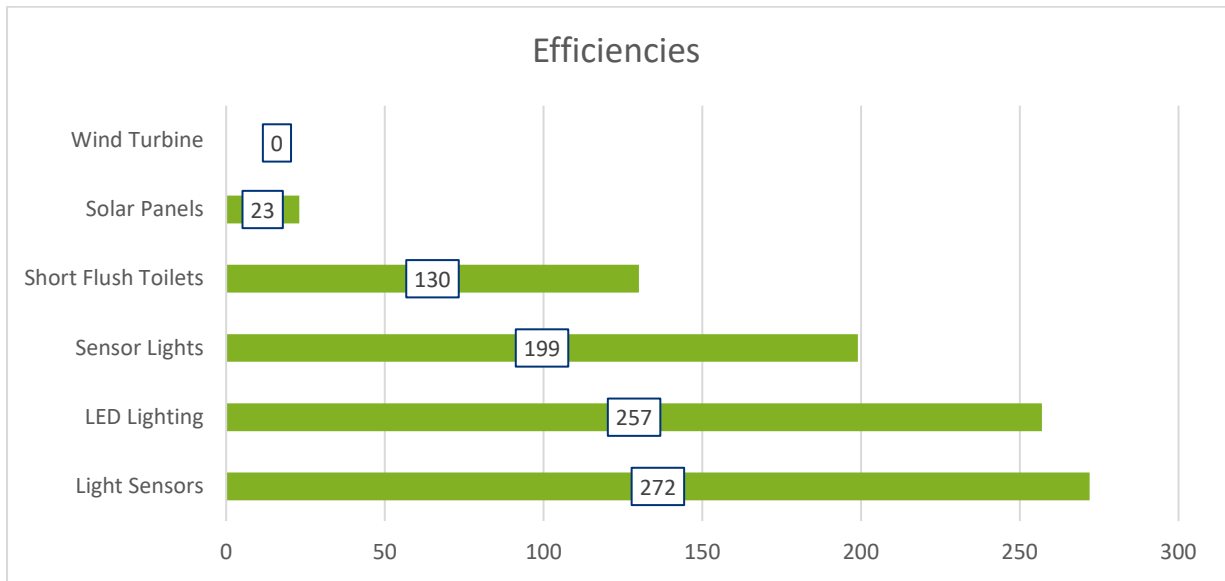
Two thirds of clubs have heating currently provided via a gas boiler system. A number of clubs did not list any heating provision within the clubhouse, due to heating available within the larger facility or in some cases, heating was never installed due to the consideration of facility use only in the summer months.



To establish potential funding areas to prevent heat loss, clubs were asked to note current window provision. In some clubs the window provision was not the same throughout the clubhouse, hence the return greater than 766.



Clubs were also asked to tick if they had installed any energy saving efficiencies within the club. Although no club has a wind turbine installed, 23 clubs now have solar panels installed at the club. One other club indicated that it was currently going through a funding process to install this feature.

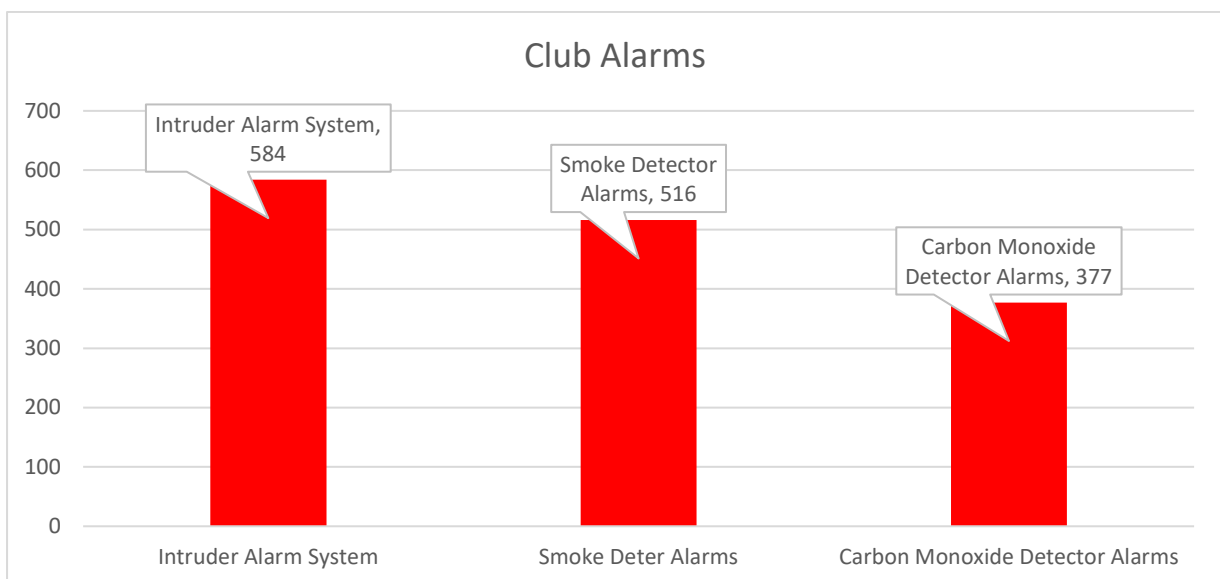


Health & Safety

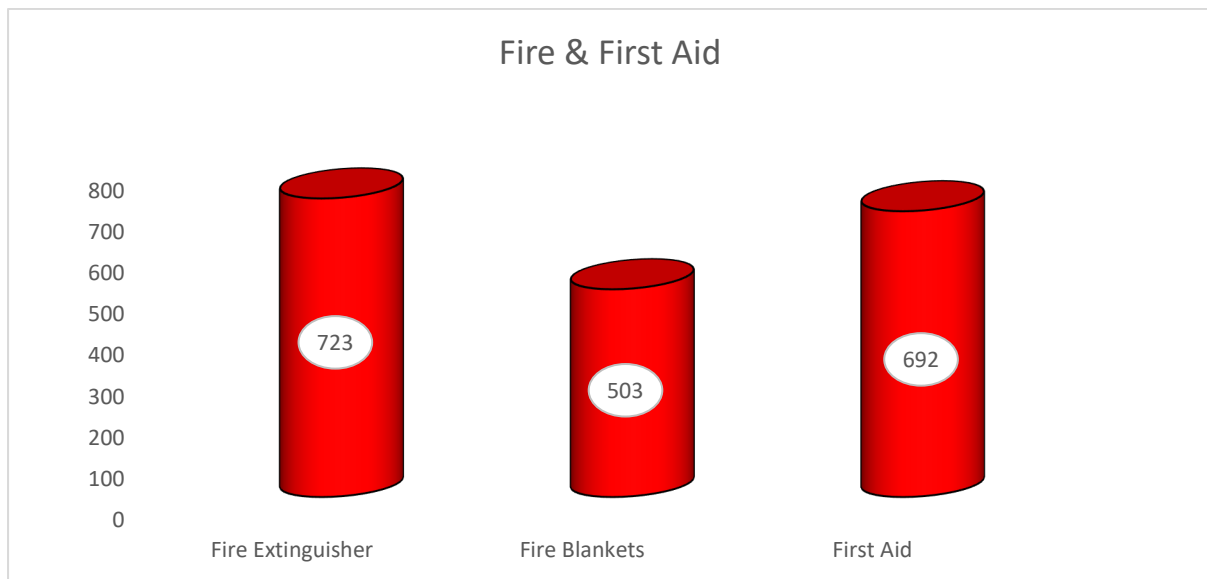
This section looks at building safety in terms of alarms installed to protect against unwanted access and for warning members of potential fire/smoke hazards at the club.

In terms of safety of members, clubs indicated if they had a First Aid box within the clubhouse and were also asked if they had access at the club to a defibrillator.

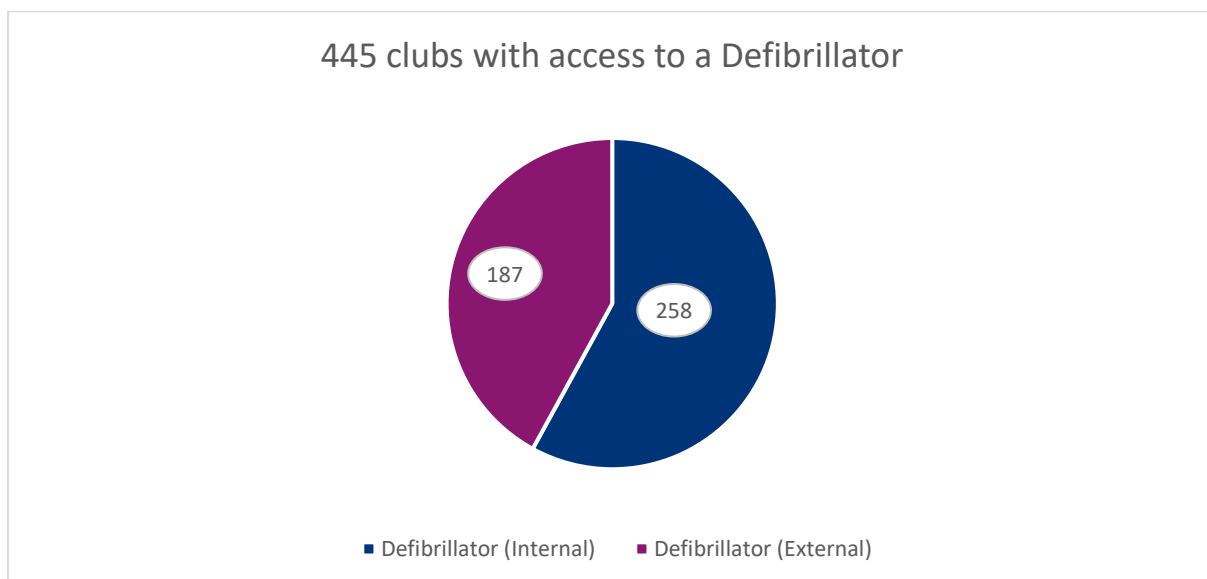
75% of clubs returned having an intruder alarm installed, with two-thirds having a smoke alarm inside the clubhouse. Almost 50% of clubs indicated having a Carbon Monoxide detector, although from the return of 497 clubs with a Gas Boiler, 138 of those clubs indicated NOT having this detector installed in the club.



94% of clubs indicated having a Fire extinguisher in the clubhouse, with 90% of clubs having a basic first aid kit in the club. Two-thirds of clubs indicated having a Fire blanket at the club, although clubs were not asked in this survey if they carried out cooking on the club premises.



58% of clubs, a total of 445 clubs, had access to a defibrillator at their club. With more than half of these being fixed to the external wall of the clubhouse and being readily available for community use, if required.



Summary and Opportunities Ahead

Having provided a starting point on the bowling landscape across our affiliated clubs, there are a number of options and support available to help clubs who are looking to improve their facilities into modern, sustainable facilities open for community access.

With 89 council owned facilities there are opportunities for clubs to consider an Asset Transfer and to take ownership of their club. Bowls Scotland has directed previous clubs' requests for support to Club Development Scotland, who can assist in this process.

Contact - Andrew Jenkin andrew@clubdevelopment.scot or for more information visit: www.bowlsscotland.com/club-development/funding

With 38 greens lying empty and the vast majority of clubs not at capacity, Bowls Scotland can assist clubs with the Try Bowls Programme to help recruit new members, provide assistance in some areas with a Local Try Bowls Activator and provide further support for all Try Bowls Clubs.

Contact - trybowls@bowlsscotland.com for further information on support available

The report highlighted various areas where some clubs have improved accessibility to our sport and also made their club more sustainable and safe.

There are still 91 clubs with grass bankings around their greens – previously, funding has been achieved to make the sport accessible with the installation of artificial bankings, incorporating ramped access to make our sport fully inclusive.

For public funding, clubs need to modernise their governance and constitution. Your NDO can take you through BowlsMark – the Bowls Scotland accreditation award to help improve your chances of accessing public funding.

For BowlsMark info please visit- www.bowlsscotland.com/club-development/bowlsmark

Sustainability and reducing costs and/or waste should be considered by all clubs. Clubs have implemented Solar Panels, Sensor lights amongst other money saving options. Speak to your NDO to discuss ways of saving money.

sportscotland Funding Page - <https://sportscotland.org.uk/funding>

Our facilities should also provide a safe environment for our members and visitors to our clubs. With 445 clubs having access to a Defibrillator, funding support is available through various organisations to support clubs. <https://www.stjohnscotland.org.uk/home/defibrillators>

Clubs also need to ensure that the club itself is secure with the appropriate alarms and equipment in the event of an accident. Contact your local council or Fire Department in relation to Fire requirements and smoke/carbon monoxide alarms.

Bowls Scotland's Commercial Partners can also support clubs in reducing their costs. With a range of services from Waste Collection and Water to Insurance and Legal, visit our website or browse the 'Partners Pack' to find out how your club could benefit.

Find out about Bowls Scotland's Partners here: www.bowlsscotland.com/about-us/partners