



2026 Bowls Scotland AGM

Frequently Asked Questions

CONTENTS

1. About the AGM

Page 3-4

- When is the AGM?
- Who votes at the AGM?
- Why is the AGM online?
- What is being proposed at the AGM?
- How can I ask questions at the AGM?
- What is the Pre-AGM Member Engagement Evening?
- How do we vote if our club/association can't attend the AGM/ How do we vote by proxy?

2. Capitation fee

Page 4-8

- What is being proposed?
- Why is an increase to the capitation fee being proposed?
- What benefits do members get from their membership of Bowls Scotland?
- Where does Bowls Scotland income come from?
- What does Bowls Scotland spend its money on?
- How many staff do Bowls Scotland have and how are they funded?
- How does Bowls Scotland staffing level compare to other similar organisations?
- How much do Bowls Scotland pay staff?
- Why do the Bowls Scotland National Championships cost so much to deliver?
- What is happening with the future of the National Centre for Bowling?
- How does the Bowls Scotland capitation fee compare to other similar organisations?
- How should clubs handle an increase?
- What happens if clubs under declare membership?

3. Annual Report and Financial Statement

Page 9

- Why are Bowls Scotland reporting on a 7-month financial year?

I. ABOUT THE AGM

When is the AGM?

The 2026 Bowls Scotland AGM will take place via Zoom Webinar on Wednesday 28th October at 6.30pm.

To attend and vote at the AGM, voting members must submit an authorised representative form to Bowls Scotland no later than 6.30pm on Monday 26th October 2026.

Who votes at the AGM?

In line with our Articles of Association, all Member Clubs and Associate Members who affiliated for the 2026 season are entitled to vote at the AGM.

Why is the AGM online?

Following the 2023 AGM, Bowls Scotland undertook a survey of member clubs and associations to gather views on holding the AGM online, hybrid or in-person. 53% of responses preferred an online AGM (22% hybrid, 27% in-person).

At that time, costs of hosting an AGM in-person were estimated to be £4,000-5,000, primarily due to covering travel expenses for attendees. The cost of the hybrid model was estimated at £6,000-£7,000 with the technology to ensure equal voting and participation for people online and in-person complex. The cost of an online AGM was estimated at £180.

Given the continued financial pressures we face, the desire to allow as many members as possible to vote at the AGM, and the results of the 2023 AGM survey, we propose holding the AGM online as a virtual meeting again this year.

What is being proposed at the AGM?

The Board are presenting 11 resolutions to the AGM for approval. Most of these are routine annual processes and relate to receiving the annual report and financial statements, appointing accountants for the forthcoming year, appointing the Presidential team for the next year, and appointing Honorary Members.

There is also a resolution proposing an increase in the capitation fee for clubs from £7 to £7.20 per adult member. If passed, this increase would come into effect in October 2027.

A background to each of these resolutions is provided in the AGM notice, with further detail provided in the FAQs below.

How can I ask questions at the AGM?

We welcome questions as part of the AGM. However, we will prioritise time for questions and discussion of the resolutions. Then under item 10 'Questions submitted to the Board' we will prioritise questions submitted in advance of the AGM. Questions should be submitted to info@bowlsscotland.com by 6.30pm on Monday 26th October. If time allows, following questions submitted in advance, we will take questions on the night from attendees. However, given the agenda we cannot guarantee that there will be time to answer all questions on the night. We will, of course, commit to following up any unanswered questions directly to you following the AGM.

What is the Pre-AGM Member Engagement Evening?

Ahead of our 2026 AGM, Bowls Scotland will be holding a pre-AGM Member Engagement Evening. At this event Board members and senior staff will provide an update on the organisation's delivery and finances over the past year, look ahead to 2027, outline the resolutions being presented at the AGM,

take questions and listen to views from our members. This is aimed to provide a forum for engagement between Board and Directors outside the formality that is required of the AGM.

Given low turnout at the 2025 in-person events, significantly higher turnout at the online event, and what is expected to be lower interest in 2026 given the nature of the proposals at this year's AGM, there will be one online pre-engagement event.

To see the date and book your place, visit:

<https://www.bowlsscotland.com/about-us/agm>

How do we vote if our club/association can't attend the AGM/ How do we vote by proxy?

Proxy forms have been issued to all voting members with the notice of the AGM. Proxy forms must be completed, signed and returned to Bowls Scotland by 6.30pm on Monday 26th October.

2. CAPITATION FEE

What is being proposed?

The Board are proposing an increase in the capitation fee for clubs from £7 to £7.20 per adult member. If passed, this increase would come into effect in October 2027.

There is no proposal to increase the cost of associate or affiliate membership.

Why is an increase to the capitation fee being proposed?

At the 2025 AGM, the Board proposed two options for an increase in the capitation fee, from £5 to £7 or £8, to address the significant financial challenges facing the organisation. The Board welcomed member agreement to set the capitation fee at £7. This rate will be applied for the first time to the affiliation fees paid by clubs in October 2026

While the financial outlook remains challenging, the approval of the increase to £7, additional funding from **sportscotland**, and further steps to control costs have eased the financial pressure in the short-term. As a result, the Board has determined that they do not need to return to the membership with the request to increase the capitation fee to £8 at this time.

However, as with all organisations, as a result of inflation, Bowls Scotland's costs increase each year. One reason for a large increase in the capitation fee being required in 2025 was that the fee had remained flat for the previous four years, during a period of high inflation. During engagement around the AGM last year, some members highlighted a preference that the capitation fee rise steadily in line with inflation each year, rather than being held flat for several years, followed by one-off significant increases.

The Board of Bowls Scotland believe that increasing the capitation fee annually by inflation is a prudent approach and are therefore proposing an inflation-linked increase in the capitation fee for 2027. The Bank of England reported inflation rate in August 2026 was 3.1%. Applied to the current capitation fee, this would mean an increase of £0.22. The Board have rounded this down to propose an increase in the capitation of £0.20, from £7 to £7.20 per registered member over 16.

What benefits do members get from their membership of Bowls Scotland?

We believe that Bowls Scotland offer a wide range of benefits to members, providing good value for money. These benefits include:

- **Advice and support to clubs:** We respond to a wide range of ad hoc enquiries from clubs. This includes through National Development Office visits, our phone line, and our enquiries inbox.
- **Try Bowls:** 65% of our clubs have signed up to our national campaign aimed at getting new people into bowls and increasing memberships in clubs.
- **Bowls Mark:** 111 clubs are accredited through our programme which aims to support clubs to develop safe, effective welcoming practices and improve participant experiences based on good practices.
- **Coach education:** We provide four formal coach education qualifications. We provide free places for Bowls Mark clubs and **sportscotland** funded subsidies for individuals from target groups. Almost 500 clubs now have a qualified coach.
- **Safeguarding support & PVGs:** We processed over 400 free PVGs this year for our members and offer free safeguarding courses. We recently appointed a Safeguarding & Administration Officer to help meet the increased demand from member clubs.
- **National Championships:** Over 700 of our clubs enter the National Championships, with almost 40% of club members participating at stage 1. Over 1,300 players qualify for the finals at Northfield each year.
- **Adult & youth competitions:** We deliver a number of other national competitions, including a variety of competitions for young bowlers to keep them engaged and allow them to develop against their peers.
- **Senior and age group Scotland squads:** Through the podium process any member can put themselves forward for selection to our under 18s, under 25s, men's, women's and para's. national squads to represent Scotland in international competition.
- **Partnerships:** We have negotiated partnerships with water, waste and recycling, insurance, and financial services companies who can offer high quality and cost-effective services to our member clubs.
- **World Bowls affiliation:** Through Bowls Scotland, member clubs are affiliated to World Bowls supporting the overall development of our game across the world.

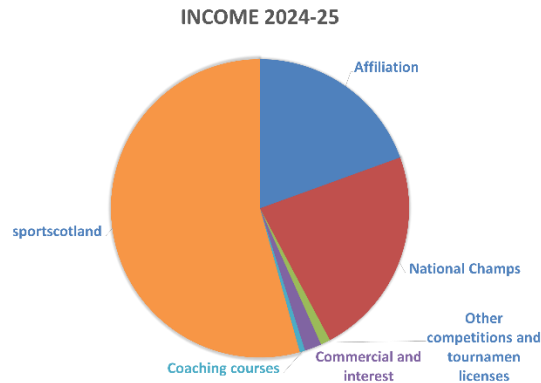
Where does Bowls Scotland income come from?

Our income is approximately £1.2m.¹

Just over half of our income comes from **sportscotland**, the national agency for sport. This funding is ring-fenced for specific staff posts and activities. If we do not spend it on those staff and activities, we have to return the funding to **sportscotland**. We are not allowed to move the funding to cover other activities.

Around 25% of our income is generated from our National Championships through competition entry fees, spectator ticket sales, a council grant, and income from vendors, the bar, programmes, raffle, etc. Affiliation fees are the next biggest area of income, with around 20% generated from membership fees. The remainder is made up from other competitions, tournament licenses, commercial income, coaching courses, etc.

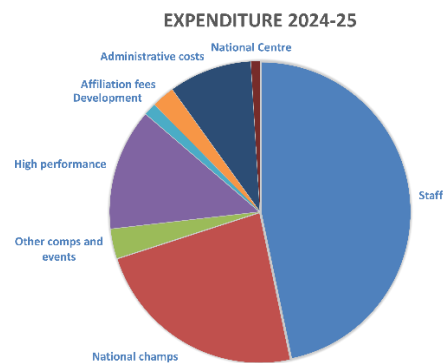
¹ Financial figures in this report are for the September 2024 to August 2025 period as this was the last full 12-month reporting figure.



What does Bowls Scotland spend its money on?

Our total expenditure is also approximately £1.2m.

The biggest area of expenditure is staffing costs. The next largest area of spend is the National Championships, followed by our high-performance programme (our men's, women's and para's senior national squads). More detail of each of these areas is provided below.



How many staff do Bowls Scotland have and how are they funded?

Bowls Scotland operate a small staff team with 18 staff. Taking into account part-time staff, we have the equivalent of 16.67 full-time staff. Staff are our biggest asset, allowing us to deliver all our services to members. Our staffing breakdown is:

- CEO
- Development: 6
- Performance: 3
- Competitions & Events: 2
- Marketing & Communications: 2
- Operations & Finance: 4

14 of our 18 posts are fully or partly funded by **sportscotland**. In 2024-25, **sportscotland** funded 83% of our wage bill.

How does Bowls Scotland staffing level compare to other similar organisations?

Compared to similar Scottish Governing Bodies of amateur sports, Bowls Scotland has a small staff team for the number of members we are serving.

	Members	Staff
Bowls Scotland	48,226	18
Scottish Gymnastics	32,469	29
Scottish Swimming	22,645	32
Scottish Athletics	19,414	34
Netball Scotland	9,805	18
Scottish Curling	8,868	12
Judo Scotland	8,662	17

How much do Bowls Scotland pay staff?

In line with the wider sports sector, Bowls Scotland does not pay high salaries. Only 3 of 18 staff earn above the national average salary for a full-time worker. Our lowest paid staff earn the Real Living Wage. The three members of our senior leadership team have all been recruited in the last four years on lower salaries than their predecessors.

Why do the Bowls Scotland National Championships cost so much to deliver?

The Bowls Scotland National Championships are one of the biggest domestic bowls events in the world, with over 1,300 players competing and 16,500 visitors over the 8 days of competition. It is a real festival of bowls and we received very positive feedback this year, with satisfaction levels of players and spectators over 94% across all categories – event organisation, venue, ticket prices, food & drink, park & ride, and overall experience.

Putting on large scale sports events comes at a cost, with inflation in the events sector having been very high since the pandemic. The event costs well over £250,000 to deliver. Examples of areas of spend include £22,000 in prize money, £16,500 in umpire expenses, £16,000 on stage 1 and stage 2 medals, £25,000 on streaming, £20,000 on security, £26,000 in marquee hire, £16,000 on toilets, fencing and modular units, £26,000 on park and ride and traffic management, £7,000 on waste management and cleaning, and £2,500 on first aid. We know the level of many of these costs may come as a surprise to those not involved in delivering large scale events.

Overall the event is roughly breakeven, without accounting for staff salaries. Any surplus generated by holding the National Championships will be reinvested back into the event and the wider sport.

What is happening with the future of the National Centre for Bowling?

The National Centre for Bowling at Northfield has become an iconic home for Scottish Bowls. As the home of our National Championships, as well as the venue for age-group and full international fixtures, and other Bowls Scotland competitions, we know that many members dream of playing at Northfield. While other venues have been considered, with five greens and spectator seating, Northfield is the only venue that could hold the National Championships in their current form and scale.

Ahead of the 2025 AGM, the Board reported on efforts to secure the future of the National Centre. Our long-term lease came to an end in late-2025. During this lease period South Ayrshire Council who own and operate the site had not increased Bowls Scotland's rent. We were paying the Council less annually now than the Scottish Bowling Association was paying the Council 20 years ago simply for hosting the men's National Championships. The Council informed us that those arrangements were untenable. The Council indicated that we would be required to take on the management and full costs of the pavilion and stands at Northfield or the building will close and the stands will be removed. The cost to Bowls Scotland of retaining the National Centre is estimated at £70,000 per annum.

The negotiations with South Ayrshire Council to agree a new future operating model for the National Centre continued during this period. Bowls Scotland are committed to securing a financially sustainable deal and have been able to secure an extension to the existing arrangements and charges through a temporary License to Occupy while these negotiations conclude. However, it is still expected that Bowls Scotland will take on greater responsibility and cost burden for the future running of the pavilion, stands and greens at the Centre. This increased cost will be reflected in the accounts once these negotiations conclude.

How does the Bowls Scotland capitation fee compare to other similar organisations?

An increase in the capitation fee would be broadly in line with Bowls England capitation fee, which increases their fee by inflation each year. The Bowls Scotland membership fee remains significantly below the membership fee for other Scottish Governing Bodies of Sport.

	Membership Fee
Bowls Scotland	£7
Bowls England	£7.35
Scottish Gymnastics	£25/£60*
Scottish Swimming	£59.50
Scottish Athletics	£25
Netball Scotland	£16/£43
Scottish Curling	£34
Judo Scotland	£40

*Lower membership fee is for non-competitive participants. Higher fee is minimum paid by those taking part in competitions.

How should clubs handle an increase?

The Board are acutely aware that our member clubs are also facing financial challenges with rising costs. We do not make these recommendations lightly. Our clubs are the heart of bowls and we never want to negatively impact our clubs. Setting the membership fee a year in advance is intended to allow clubs to pass any increases in the capitation fee on to members. We would encourage our members to consider passing this increase on to your members, providing transparency to them as to how much of their club membership is paid to Bowls Scotland.

What happens if clubs under declare membership?

Bowls Scotland belongs to and exists to serve its member clubs, associations and affiliates. You, our members have collectively agreed that we should operate a club membership fee based on the number of playing members in the club. This is enshrined in our articles. Accurately reporting membership numbers to Bowls Scotland is a condition of membership contained in our Articles. While disciplinary action can be taken against clubs who breach this condition, we hope and trust our clubs will act honourably in declaring their membership accurately.

The Board is aware that we need to articulate the benefits that members receive through their membership of Bowls Scotland. We hope that our communications throughout the year, our annual report, the AGM documents and our pre-AGM engagement evening will help to build this understanding. Ultimately, any clubs which under declare their membership are cheating their fellow clubs by not paying their fair share. We hope you will agree that is not in keeping with the fine traditions of bowls and our commitment to fair play and mutual respect.

3. ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Why are Bowls Scotland reporting on a 7-month financial year?

This year's Annual Report and Financial Statements are unusual in that they only cover a seven-month period, September 2025 to March 2026. This reflects the decision, approved by members at our AGM in 2025, to move our financial year to April-March. This change will simplify the management of our finances and help us to provide improved financial transparency to our members, with the bowls season now falling into a single financial year and alignment to the **sportscotland** annual grant that represents half of our income.

As a result, we are reporting on a shortened financial year to facilitate this move. This period covers the tail-end of the 2025 season and the 2025-26 off-season.

We returned to twelve-month financial years from 1 April 2026. The affiliation window and payment of affiliation fees remain in October. We do not anticipate this change in our financial year having an impact on member clubs.