

'Stay home, stay safe, stop the spread'.

That's the message from Bowls England to its members and clubs in response to the latest Government guidance on the Coronavirus outbreak.

Bowls England last week announced the cancellation of all its domestic events ahead of the 2020 lawn bowls season including its National Championships, and now wishes to ensure that members and clubs play their part.

Tony Allcock OBE, Bowls England Chief Executive, said: "Understandably Bowls England has been inundated with enquiries from clubs and county associations regarding the Coronavirus outbreak. Within the past week we have made decisions regarding our events that would have been unimaginable only a month ago. However, from the enquiries we continue to receive there is clearly still some confusion within our membership as to whether they can continue to participate in the sport of lawn bowls at club level during this period.

"At this stage, we must urge our members to follow the Government's latest guidance, which clearly asks every person within society to stay at home if at all possible to help to stop this disease from spreading – and this is an appeal to everyone, not just those aged over 70 or the 1.5 million of the most at-risk people who have been told that they should stay at home for 12 weeks.

"Again, we encourage our members to keep an eye out for everyone within the bowls community during this time, for example by maintaining contact and undertaking shopping for those who are isolated, with special thought for those members who may live on their own. A telephone call, e-mail or Skype to another member of the bowls community will, I am sure, be welcomed at this time. We are also in the process of producing a 'Bowlers' Workout' in order to keep members fit and active during isolation and/or working from home, so we're all ready to play when bowling resumes. We would also encourage members to support their club financially by continuing to pay their annual subscriptions in order that the clubs will be there for them when we are able to resume bowling."

Bowls England will be providing support and advice to clubs and county associations over the coming weeks and working on a number of initiatives including club recruitment and a potential 'Festival of Bowls', which will be subject to Government guidance.

Alistair Hollis

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