

COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP & COMPETITION RULES
Amended March 2026

All COMPETITORS are requested to familiarise themselves with the Championship and Competition Rules.

1. Conditions

1.1 The County Championships shall comprise

Singles
Pairs
Triples
Fours
Senior Fours
Junior Singles
Junior Pairs
Two Wood Singles

All others are County Competitions

- 1.2 The County Championships leading to National Championships shall be administered under the Rules and Regulations of Bowls England.
- 1.3 The Championships and Competitions shall be played under the current Laws of the Sport of Bowls and shall be under the management of the respective Executive Committees of the Royal County of Berkshire Bowling Association, hereinafter called the Association.
- 1.4 All Trophies remain the property of the Association and must be returned to the respective Competition Secretaries no later than the 31st August of the following year.
- 1.5 Final stages (including the Finals) of Championships / Competitions are to be played on fixed dates and at venues determined by the Association.
- 1.6 Variations of the dates set for all rounds and finals of Championships/Competitions will only be varied under exceptional circumstances. Those circumstances would include for example a competitor being called to International duty or if a competitor is representing the County in a National Competition.
- 1.7 The entrance fees for all Championships / Competitions, to which these Championship / Competition Rules apply, shall be fixed in a manner approved by the Annual General Meeting of the Association.

2. Eligibility

- 2.1 The Championships / Competitions shall be confined to such Clubs who have joined the Association and paid their subscriptions for the current year.
- 2.2 All competitors must be fully paid-up Members of an affiliated Club. All Championships may only be entered from one Club. Competitions need not be entered from the same Club as Championships are entered from.
- 2.3 No restriction shall be placed upon any paid-up Member playing in more than one competition.
- 2.4 Team players in the Ladies' Benevolent 2-Wood Triples, the Berkshire 60 and over Pairs Competitions and the Berkshire 65 and over Triples Competition need not be from the same Club, provided that all players are fully paid-up Members of Clubs affiliated to the Association.

3. Questions and Disputes

- 3.1 A clear statement in writing, of the point at issue shall be communicated to the Honorary Competition Secretary of the Association at the earliest possible date together with evidence, if such exists.
- 3.2 The Competition Sub Committee (President, General Secretary and Competition Secretary) shall determine all questions and disputes that may arise, and which do not come under the scope of the Umpires duties. The decision of the Committee shall be final and binding.

4. Duties of Challenger and Opponent

- 4.1 At all stages of County Championships / Competitions the first named in the draw shall be the 'Challenger' and the second named the 'Opponent'.
- 4.2 It is the responsibility of the 'Challenger' to ascertain their 'Opponent' for the next round. Competition Compiler/Delegate should not be contacted before 9.00 or after 10.00 pm.
- 4.3 In the early stages of all singles Championships / Competitions it is the responsibility of the 'Challenger' to provide a competent marker.
- 4.4 When no umpire is present the onus on checking the date stamp on the bowls rests with the player or players concerned.
- 4.5 Fixed Date Championships / Competitions:
 - (a) The 'Challenger' shall confirm the fixture and the commencement time with their 'Opponent' after receiving either (i) the draw or (ii) the details of their next 'Opponent'.
 - (b) In the event of (a) not happening it is the responsibility of the Opponent to contact the Challenger.
 - (c) Except in respect of the final stages of Championships / Competitions at venues determined by the Association it shall be competent for the 'Challenger' or the 'Opponent' to seek a variation of the fixed date provided the proposed new date is not later than the original date fixed for the round. If both parties cannot agree to the proposed variation, the match shall be played on the date originally fixed.
- 4.6 Play By Date Championships / Competitions:
 - (a) Where Championship / Competitions are not on a fixed date the 'Challenger' shall offer their 'Opponent', within 48 hours of the closing date of the previous round at least three dates for play, one of which must be a Saturday or a Sunday. The offering of two different start times on a single date does not count as two dates. A minimum of 48 hours' notice is required for any dates to be eligible.
 - (b) The 'Opponent' shall within 24 hours of receipt of the challenge, reply and accept one of the dates offered unless they are already playing in a County Championship / Competition or National Competition, in which case another date must be offered.
 - (c) If a challenge has not been made within the specified period, the 'Opponent' shall become the 'Challenger' and make all match arrangements including the offering of dates and the choice of venue.
 - (d) For preliminary / first round matches, where the draw is known prior to the start of the Competition, the 'Challenger' does not need to offer dates until 21 days before the closing date of that round, nor does the opponent need to accept a date until 19 days before the closing date of that round.
- 4.7 A 'Competitor' failing to comply with either 4.5 or 4.6 shall be scratched upon the successful application by the opposing player, side or team and failing such application before the last day of the round, both shall be scratched.
- 4.8 The time for the commencement of a match shall be mutually agreed but no player, side or team shall be compelled to accept a start time earlier than 6.00pm (Monday to Friday) or 9.30am (Saturday or Sunday), nor later than 6.30pm on any day.
- 4.9 For the Men's Club Championship & Double Fours the start time shall not be later than 6.30pm other than for the quarter finals and semi-finals where it shall be 6.00pm.
- 4.10 In accordance with Law 5.3.1 of the 'Laws of the Sport of Bowls' the start of any match shall be deemed to be when the jack is delivered by the first player to play the first end.
- 4.11 The winner of each round shall either enter their result on-line or telephone the result to the relevant Competition Secretary no later the 10p.m. on the day the game is played.
- 4.12 In the case of all pairs, triples and fours, the names of the players playing in each game shall be entered on-line or communicated to the relevant Competition Secretary by telephone.

- 4.13 A team receiving a walkover must update the on-line system with the names of their full team or notify the relevant Competition Secretary if not already entered, before entering the result.

5. Venue of Ties

- 5.1 In the Early Stages the 'Challenger' shall have the choice of 'Green' and make all arrangements for the game. The draw for rink(s) to be played on to be made in accordance with the current Laws of the Sport (Law 3) and the information contained in the glossary of the current Bowls England Rules & Regulations 50-70.
- 5.2 Final Stages and Finals of all Championships / Competitions shall be played on greens nominated and at times specified by the Association.
- 5.3 The Competitions Sub Committee reserves the right to change the published dates and venues of the Final Stages and Finals of individual competitions due to player commitments in International, Bowls England duties or Final Stages of other County Competitions.
- 5.4 Should the 'Challengers' nominated green be closed, at the start time of the match, the 'Challenger' should first ascertain whether his/their opponents green is fit for play. If the opponents green is unfit for play and there is not a playable green close by, then permission to play on another day must be sought from the Competition Sub Committee. The first point of contact shall be the Honorary Competition Secretary.
- 5.5 When games are stopped because of inclement weather etc. The Honorary Competition Secretary should be informed and the players shall mutually agree a date to complete the game as in "Laws of the Sport of Bowls". This shall not apply to the Men's/Ladies Double Fours, Men's Club Championship, and Mixed Double Fours.

6. Dress for County Championship/Competitions

Please note all reference to white clothing should read predominately white.

6.1 Ladies

- (a) Up to the Quarter Finals cream/white or Club registered coloured shirts, the same colour shirt must be worn by all members of the team/side. Grey regulation skirt, tailored full length/cropped trousers or shorts. (No jeans).
- (b) For Quarter Finals onward cream/white or Club registered coloured shirt, the same colour shirt must be worn by all members of the team/side. White regulation skirt, tailored full length/cropped trousers or shorts. (No jeans).
- (c) Flat soled bowling shoes must be worn on the green.
- (d) Hats are optional at all times, however, if worn or should protective head covering be necessary through weather conditions it must be white.
- (e) Where a Club has a team uniform (tops / skirts, trousers etc.) approved by the Association then this overrides all other references to dress code. This approved uniform can be worn at all stages of the County Championships / Competitions provided it is worn by each and every member of the side / team.

6.2 Men

- (a) Where a Club has a team uniform (tops / trousers, shorts etc.) approved by the Association then this approved uniform can be worn, together with flat soled bowling shoes, at all stages of the County Championships / Competitions provided it is worn by each and every member of the side / team
- (b) Where a Club does not have a fully approved team uniform then, for all the early rounds of the County Championships / Competitions up to and including the Semi Finals the dress shall be grey trousers or tailored grey shorts (No jeans), white tops or approved Club colours, and flat soled bowling shoes. Coloured shirts if worn must be specifically of a design approved by the Association and must be worn by each and every member of the side / team selected.
- (c) Some Clubs do not allow the wearing of shorts and if so, the local ruling must be adhered to- please check before play starts.
- (d) Dress for finals shall be determined by the Executive Committee and competitors notified accordingly.

7. General

- 7.1 No Championship/Competition shall be played earlier than 1st May.
- 7.2 On entry forms submitted to the Association, for County Championships the Contact Person (Named Entrant) must be clearly identified (Bowls England Reg. 50).
- 7.3 For each competitor entering a County Championship/Competition, which ever it maybe, the purchase of a Competition Yearbook, if published, is optional.
- 7.4 During play, personal use of mobile phones should not be used apart for emergencies or exceptional circumstances. Before play commences the Competition Organiser and the Opponent should also be advised.
- 7.5 During Final Stages and Finals of singles Championships / Competitions, subject to the agreement of the players concerned, Markers may give an indication of the state of the score by the use of visual indicators.
- 7.6 Smoking (including electronic cigarettes) on and around the green will be prohibited during all rounds leading to National Championship Finals. Failure to adhere to this will result in disqualification.

8. Substitutions in County Championships/Competitions

- 8.1 In Team matches involving Pairs, Triples and Fours, the players taking part in the first game shall constitute the Team and shall normally play together throughout the Championship.
- 8.2 One additional, and the same player, may be used as a substitute at any time provided, they have not already played in the Championship. They may play in any position.
- 8.3 The named entrant conceding a walk-over before their first game in any Championship cannot act as a substitute, as this is considered a game played and lost.
- 8.4 The named entrant of a team cannot be a member or substitute of any other team in the same Championship.
- 8.5 In Competitions involving Club Sides, substitutes/changes are allowed in the Side and disciplines between rounds, provided the players are members of the same Club and have not played for another side during the current competition.

9. Competition Formats

SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP

The game shall consist of 21 shots - four bowls each player.

PAIRS CHAMPIONSHIP (Two Players from the same Club)

The game shall consist of 18 ends – four bowls each player. The leads to play their four bowls before the skips.

In the event of the scores being equal when all ends have been played, an extra end or ends must be played until a decision is reached.

TRIPLES CHAMPIONSHIP (Three Players from the same Club)

The game shall consist of 18 ends - three bowls each player.

In the event of the scores being equal when all ends have been played, an extra end or ends must be played until a decision is reached.

FOURS CHAMPIONSHIP (Four Players from the same Club)

The game shall consist of 18 ends - two bowls each player.

In the event of the scores being equal when all ends have been played, an extra end or ends must be played until a decision is reached.

TWO BOWL SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP

The game shall consist of 21 ends - two bowls each player.

In the event of the scores being equal when all ends have been played, an extra end or ends must be played until a decision is reached.

JUNIOR SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP

The game shall consist of 21 shots - four bowls each player

The championship is restricted to all members **who will be under 24 years of age on the 1st April in the year of the Championship.**

JUNIOR PAIRS CHAMPIONSHIP

The game shall consist of 18 ends – four bowls each player. The leads to play their four bowls before the skips.

In the event of the scores being equal when all ends have been played, an extra end or ends must be played until a decision is reached.

The start time will be no earlier than 7pm on a weekday (unless mutually agreed otherwise)

The Championships shall be open to all members **who will be under 24 years of age on the 1st April in the year of the Championship.**

The two players may be from different clubs, but they must be both affiliated to clubs within the same county and have entered all other National Championships events from the same county.

SENIOR FOURS CHAMPIONSHIP (Four Players from the same Club)

The game shall consist of 18 ends - two bowls each player.

In the event of the scores being equal when all ends have been played, an extra end or ends must be played until a decision is reached.

The Championships shall be open to all members **who are 55 or over on the 1st April in the year of the Championship.**

SINGLES COMPETITION FOR UNBADGED PLAYERS

The game shall consist of 21 shots - four bowls each player.

This is a Singles Competition restricted to those members who have not been awarded a County Badge in this or any other County, except if the player has applied for and doesn't qualify for a badge transfer.

Should a player who has entered the competition be awarded a County Badge after the closing date for entry into the competition, he should immediately concede the game to his opponent as soon as the draw has been published.

A player receiving his County Badge on Finals Day will not be required to concede any subsequent rounds to an opponent.

CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS COMPETITION – SINGLES

The game shall consist of 21 shots - four bowls each player.

This is a Singles Competition, restricted to the Singles Champions of affiliated Clubs.

MEN'S CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS COMPETITION – TWO BOWL SINGLES

The game shall consist of 21 ends - two bowls each player.

This is a Singles Competition, restricted to the Two Wood Singles Champions of affiliated Clubs.

In the event of the scores being equal when all ends have been played, an extra end or ends must be played until a decision is reached.

LADIES' OFFICER'S CUP SINGLES COMPETITION

The game shall consist of 21 shots - four bowls each player.

This is a female only Singles Competition restricted to Officers on the Main/Ladies Committee of a Club, e.g., Secretary, Treasurer, Captain, Fixture/Match Secretary etc.

A maximum of three entrants per Club.

The entrants must hold office on the 1st May in the year of the Competition.

MEN'S HONORARY SECRETARIES SINGLES COMPETITION

The game shall consist of 21 shots, four bowls each player.

This is a Singles Competition, restricted to Hon. Secretaries, Assistant Hon. Secretaries, Hon. Match Secretaries and Hon. Treasurers of affiliated Clubs

This is a male only Competition limited to two entries per Club.

The entrants must hold office on the 1st May in the year of the Competition.

LADIES' OVER 60 SINGLES COMPETITION

The game shall consist of 21 shots - four bowls each player

This is a Singles Competition, restricted to those members **who are 60 or over on the 1st April in the year of the Championship.**

LADIES' OVER 60 PAIRS COMPETITION

The game shall consist of 18 ends – three bowls each player. The leads to play their three bowls before the skips.

This is a Pairs Competition, restricted to those members **who are 60 or over on the 1st April in the year of the Championship.**

Both players do not necessarily have to be from the same Club (Rule 2.4).

In the event of the scores being equal when all ends have been played, an extra end or ends must be played until a decision is reached.

LADIES' OVER 65 TRIPLES COMPETITION

The game shall consist of 18 ends – three bowls per player.

This is a Triples competition restricted to those members **who are 65 or over on the 1st April in the year of the Championship.**

Players do not necessarily have to be from the same club (Rule 2.4)

In the event of the scores being equal when all the ends have been played an extra end(s) must be played until a decision is reached.

LADIES' BENEVOLENT TWO BOWL TRIPLES COMPETITION

The game shall consist of 15 ends - two bowls each player.

Each Team to consist of three players, who do not need to be Members of the same Club (Rule 2.4).

In the event of the scores being equal when all ends have been played, an extra end or ends must be played until a decision is reached.

LADIES' COUNTY TOP CLUB COMPETITION

A club side shall consist of ten players from the same affiliated Club. The disciplines are Four wood singles (21 shots), Four wood pairs (18 ends), Three wood triples (18 ends), and Two wood fours (18 ends).

Failure to field 10 players will result in a walk-over.

Substitution is allowed in the case of illness or injury in all disciplines including the Singles for this competition. The score being resumed at the score existing prior to the interruption.

During the Competition one point is scored for each game won, there being a total of 4 point to be won in any match. In the event of a drawn game each team is awarded 0.5 point.

If the overall match finishes 2-2 after the completion of all four disciplines, the winning club will be decided from the aggregate shot score from all four games. The Club that has scored the greatest number of shots being declared the winner.

In the event of a tie in the shot scores as well as the match score, there will be an extra end played in the Pairs, Triples and Fours games to decide the winning team. Shots do not count on these extra ends, only the result of the three games.

MEN'S/LADIES DOUBLE FOURS COMPETITION

Each Club will be represented by two Fours, with all eight players being members of the same affiliated Club.

During early stages of the Competition, one rink will play at Home while the other rink will play on their 'Opponents' green, both matches to be played simultaneously.

The game shall consist of 18 ends – two bowls each player, but an extra end must be played on the green of the 'Challenger' only, the points of this end to count only in the case of a tie in the game proper.

In the Final Stages where both Fours play together on a 'Neutral Green' a draw shall be made to select which of the Fours plays against those of the opposing side.

A separate draw will be made to ascertain which of the Fours will play the extra end in the event of a tie in the game proper.

In the event of a match being unable to be completed owing to exceptional weather conditions the accumulative score in uncompleted matches in which both teams of a side have played ten ends or more will stand as a result.

The Men's Double 4's will be a Cup and Plate competition, with both competitions complying with the above rules.

See Cup and Plate information below for further details.

MEN'S CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION

Each Club will be represented by four Triples with all twelve players being members of the same affiliated Club.

During early stages of the Competition, two Triples will play at Home while the other two Triples will play on their 'Opponents' green, both matches to be played simultaneously.

The game shall consist of 18 ends – three bowls each player, but an extra end must be played on the green of the 'Challenger' only (except in the final), the points of this end to count only in the case of a tie in the game proper.

The extra end must be played by two Triples (one representing each Club) who played against each other in the game proper.

Before the commencement of the game proper, a draw must be made to select which of the Triples on the side plays against those of the opposing side.

A separate draw will be made to ascertain which of the Triples will play the extra end in the event of a tie in the game proper. In the early rounds this draw will only involve the Teams playing on the 'Challengers' green but for the Final all four Teams will be included.

In the event of a match being unable to be completed owing to exceptional weather conditions the accumulative score in uncompleted matches in which all teams of a side have played ten ends or more will stand as a result.

This competition will be a Cup and Plate competition, with both competitions complying with the above rules.

See Cup and Plate information below for further details.

MENS' BENEVOLENT FUND TRIPLES COMPETITION

The game shall consist of 18 ends - three bowls each player.

In the event of the scores being equal when all ends have been played, an extra end or ends must be played until a decision is reached.

Clubs to hold an internal Competition with a minimum entry of 2 triples. The winners of this internal Competition to represent the Club in the following years Benevolent Fund Triples Competition.

The entrance fee for this Competition to be set by the committee on the Benevolent Fund with all proceeds being donated to the Benevolent Fund.

MIXED DOUBLE FOURS COMPETITION

Each Club will be represented by two Fours, each four consisting of two Ladies and two Gentlemen who must be members of the same affiliated club.

Both Fours must play simultaneously and at the same venue. All matches to commence at 10.00am unless directed by the Competition Committee.

The game shall consist of 18 ends – two bowls each player, but an extra end must be played by one of the Fours, the points of this end to count only in the case of a tie in the game proper.

Before the commencement of the game proper, a draw must be made to select which of the Fours on the side plays against those of the opposing side.

A separate draw will be made to ascertain which of the Fours will play the extra end in the event of a tie in the game proper.

In the event of a match being unable to be completed owing to exceptional weather conditions the accumulative score in uncompleted matches in which both teams of a side have played ten ends or more will stand as a result.

For the Semi Finals and Final the dress code shall be:

- Men - White tops or Club colours (as approved by their respective Associations), white tailored trousers or shorts (No Jeans) and flat soled bowling shoes.
- Ladies - White tops or Club colours (as approved by their respective Associations), white regulation skirts/tailored full length/cropped trousers or shorts (No Jeans) and flat soled bowling shoes.
- Where a Club has a team uniform (tops / skirts, trousers etc.) approved by the Association then this approved uniform can be worn, together with flat soled bowling shoes, provided it is worn by each and every member of the side / team.

This competition will be a Cup and Plate competition, with both competitions complying with the above rules.

See Cup and Plate information below for further details.

CUP AND PLATE COMPETITIONS

If there are an odd number of teams entered into the competition, the first team drawn will have a Bye straight into the Cup Competition.

All other teams will play an initial Qualifier round with the winners going forward to the Cup Competition and the losers going into the Plate Competition.

Each round of both the Cup and Plate competitions will be played on the same date as specified.

There will be no redraw.

Teams may be allocated a Bye for the first round of the Cup or Plate Competition to ensure both Competitions are brought to a semi-final & final.