

ENGLISH INDOOR BOWLING ASSOCIATION LTD



BOWLS RECRUITMENT SCHEMES

Guide on Recruitment

This Guide is a collection of tried and successful schemes undertaken by clubs around the country to recruit new members.

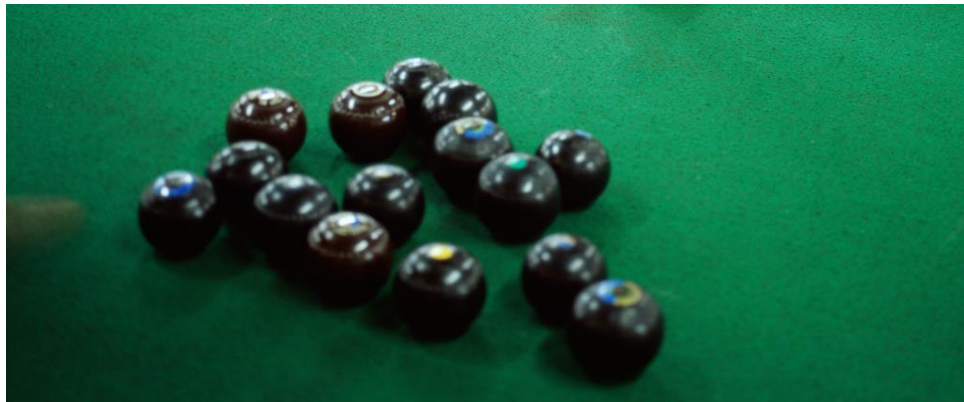
The EIBA Projects Team would like this to be a living document so if you have tried a recruitment scheme, which is not covered in this Guide, please forward your ideas to: -

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There is also an accompanying Guide on exercises/games, which can be used during your Junior Section sessions, which you could adapt to suit all ages and perhaps help with recruitment. Once again, if you would like to assist we are happy to add your ideas. Please forward your schemes so we can keep adding to both Guides.

Projects Committee EIBA Ltd.

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Recruitment

1. Estates

Target Estates, around the bowls club, one at a time, (so as not to be overwhelmed with response), inviting individuals, and families to come along and have a go at bowls on a fixed date and time. Tea/coffee provided, offering free use if equipment and free coaching. Invite by letters, delivered by your members and notices/posters in the local shops. It may even be possible for one of the shops to perhaps have a stall (crafts) at the club on the day and it would then provide an incentive for the shop owner to press people to come along.



Ensure you have enough printed material available to pass on the day to prospective members so they know whom to contact and when best to visit the club when coaches and rinks will be available for them. Common sense perhaps, but it is surprising how we can miss out on opportunities by not following up.

Why not also ask all who turn up for their contact details.

2. Regular Coaching Sessions



Your club should allocate regular rink space with free coaching for prospective new members and not necessarily when it is convenient for the club, surely more important to make the time when your prospective new customers can make it. You will obviously have to ensure you always have qualified coaches and perhaps helpers available for these sessions.

Whilst it is great to encourage families along, sometimes the ages do not mix, and separate junior sessions may well be more acceptable.

It is also advisable to be selective on the choice of your helpers, avoid the ones who talk too much about themselves rather than getting the newcomers on the rinks and start bowling.

3. Stewards/Reception

Whilst it may be impossible to consider for some clubs, with falling membership, (and what appears to be the trend nowadays, of fewer volunteers), but that first impression of a club to the prospective member is so important. Make sure it is a friendly face to greet them and the club itself appears to be a place where people would wish to spend time in.



It is therefore important that the right members man the first point of contact. Some clubs may well find it worthwhile to train some members in customer care. It would be an interesting statistic if we knew how many prospective players we have lost because their first contact with our sport was with 'Mr. Grumpy' or 'Mrs Correct Dress', which we all seem to have in our clubs.

4. Joining Fee



This custom, when we had waiting lists to join our clubs may well have been a nice earner then, but does it put off prospective new members?

Perhaps not the really keen ones but it may be enough to put off the hesitant ones.

Perhaps an experiment of no joining fee for a time may persuade you to abandon the practice.

5. New Bowlers Meeting

Remember how difficult it was, when new to a sport, to get involved, then why not invite all new members, at the end of the season, to meet with the club management, for a cup of tea and a chat, and persuade them to form themselves into teams and join the domestic leagues, or at least encourage them to put their names down on the 'reserve list' or for club friendlies.

Why not also take the opportunity of asking them to complete a survey sheet about their experiences when joining the club. Some may not wish to speak openly about impressions and are happier to put it in print. The 'new eyes' so often spot things the regular visitors miss.



6. Dress Code

Certainly when introducing new members to the sport no dress code should be insisted upon. Is it really necessary for gentlemen to wear ties when playing a sport?

More suggestions about dress code are contained in the Retention section.

7. Social Club

Some people may not be that interested in serious or competitive bowls and the social side of the club may have more appeal.

Additional social events such as coffee mornings for raising money for club or charity, bowls holidays, quiz nights, bridge nights, crib nights, dart nights or similar social events may well persuade someone to join a club and we must not forget a very important selling point, that we also provide a safe environment for our members.

8. Press

It is of great benefit to the bowls club to build up a working relationship with the local Press. A regular column in the local paper is always very welcome by the Newspapers but only if from a reliable source.

Once this relationship has been set up it is very easy to put in details on when the club is open, when coaching takes place, recruitment schemes etc., when also reporting the league results.

It is also important to set up a photograph library so that your press officer can add photos to his reports.



9. Website

With so many now regularly using the web, many clubs have invested time and money in producing their own website. There is usually someone within the club with enough IT knowledge to undertake this task. It is also an opportunity to encourage sponsors to the club with links to their website.

By making the site interesting, newcomers may well decide to drop in to have a look around.



10. Notice boards

There are so many notice boards around for a permanent advert for your club (always acetate them). Take an extra minute or two to design an eye catching display, use village notice boards, surgeries, shop windows, sponsors premises, shop checkout areas, anywhere that people have to wait.

Add to these when special events are on at the club, a race night, or open day, or coffee morning.



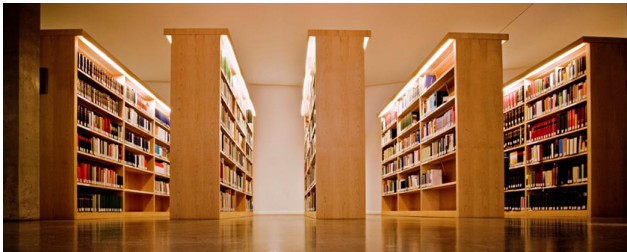
11. Prizes



Be selective with the prizes that your club donate to school fetes etc.

Instead of a bottle of wine why not offer a 6-week free bowls coaching course voucher.

12. Local Authority Libraries



Always make the effort to complete the information sheets sent out by local authorities for details of your club to be included in their latest sports directory or in the information section of the local library.

13. Corporate Days

Invite the local Chamber of Trade (possible sponsor), Women's Institute, Young Wives Group, larger companies with Social clubs to come along to have a go at bowls with a snack or drinks afterwards.

You may even get a regular booking from this to hire for a meeting room or their own social events.



14. Community Events

Involve the club in fund raising for popular charities such as the Macmillan Nurses Greatest Coffee Morning, once locals come into the club they may be so impressed they may wish to return and have a go at bowls, if warmly received in the first instance.

15. Open Days

We have all tried these no doubt, but next time instead of doing all the advertising yourselves why not join in with another organisation who may be staging an event in the area and let them do some of the work for you and share the crowds. Always make sure you have enough helpers and coaches on hand, with ' Mr Smiley 'on the door.



16. Uniform Groups

Every town and city has a hard working group of individuals that keep us all safe in our every-day lives.

Your local, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Guides, Young Farmers are always looking for something new to have a go at, why not invite them to your club.

The Police, Fire Brigade and Ambulance service are always looking for ways to build a bond between them and the community and Bowls is a great way to increase team building, keeping fit and active as well as learning a new sport which can be less competitive than some of the mainstream sports.



17. Buddy Days



If you have a youth section, why not ask the kids to invite their buddy along for a free coaching week.

18. Free Week

At the beginning or end of the season why not have a free week for all members if they bring along a friend to have a go.

19. Promotional Stand

Setting up a promotional stand in the main street or market place of your town centre can be a great way of getting out and meeting people. Asking different age groups to help out will encourage both young and old to try the sport, make sure that you have lots of promotional literature with your up and coming events and any other clubs that may use your club's facilities.

20. Addendum Notes

See Addendum Notes for further reading. www.eiba.co.uk/Guidance/addendum-recruit-retain.pdf

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