

# Banbury Cross Indoor Bowls Club

## Development Plan Summary

### Background

Following the AGM in April 2023 the new committee set about assessing the position of the club. This included what the objectives were for the short, medium and long term, what a successful club would look like, what the committee wanted to see from a successful club.

There was a good deal of agreement and also challenges about how the club should proceed.

And so was born our Club Development Plan. As much a process as an outcome and the process is ongoing. This iteration marks a significant step because it begins to articulate the priorities and objectives that we have been working on and gives the Club Committee a basis for further consultation with the club membership and the club partners.

The future of our club is important to many folk in Banbury. It is a place to connect with others, it is a sport that does not require significant physical strength and so can be enjoyed on an equal basis by women and men, young and old, the less able and the fully able. Hence our vision is :

**of an inclusive, vibrant and financially viable Indoor Bowls Club  
that welcomes and nurtures new players of all ages,  
offering a strong community with opportunities to develop  
and participate in matches at all levels**

We hope that you will find this document of interest. If you come and bowl regularly then perhaps you'd also consider one action, as we'll as bowling, that you could contribute to continue the progress of this season. There are many small tasks that when reliably delivered make a big difference to everyone and the more folk who share the load doing those things also makes it easier for all of us. If you are able to join our efforts then please make contact.

## Membership

Our membership has been reducing over the last 10 years with the largest reduction happening over the covid years of 2019/20 & 2020/21. This can be seen in the table below:

Year	Membership
2013/14	222
2014/15	225
2015/16	217
2016/17	199
2017/18	198

Year	Membership
2018/19	186
2019/20	195
2020/21	0
2021/22	163
2022/23	159

The total figures of membership can hide the real attrition rate and so the last five years are also shown below with the number of new members also recorded.

Year	Total Membership	New Members
2018/19 (pre covid)	186	31
2019/20 (part covid)	195	37
2020/21 (covid)	0 (195)	0
2021/22 (post covid)	163	50
2022/23	159	26

## Finance & assets

The figures below show our position as it has emerged over the last 5 years. As we have seen in membership numbers the impact of Covid has been significant.

Since the 2016 user agreement the club has not hired the rinks, but rather Legacy Leisure have collected all membership, rink fees and locker fees, and the facility has been delivered and managed by them including expenditure on capital costs, heating, lighting, cleaning and maintenance.

The club receives 33% of the membership fees paid to Legacy through the season and reimbursement of the EIBA membership levy. This is the only fixed source of income which is currently around £3k per annum. Whilst this arrangement has limited the financial risk to the club it has also resulted in a reduced sense of ownership and control of the club by the membership.

Year	Total Income	Income from memberships	Expenditure	Surplus/Loss
2018/19 (pre covid)	7,428.42		6,570.55	857.87
2019/20 (covid)	5,855.95		4,832.13	1,023.82
2020/21 (part covid)	1,848.64	0.00	1701.16	147.48
2021/22 (post covid)	9,067.63	5,288.00	8,963.41	104.22
2022/23	7,987.63	3,237.07	8,999.93	-1,012.30

As can be seen the total turnover of the club is small but just about sufficient to cover the immediate expenses of the club's season.

To contain costs this season it was decided that the starting point for all activities of the club was that they should each stand alone and even make a small contribution to the club funds to provide for the administration advertising and marketing that was required but which cannot be afforded from the annual income

The long term funds of £56,275 resulted from the 2016 change in user agreement. At the time they represented 150% of the annual turnover and have been held should there be a need to revert to the previous style of user agreement or to provide the seed for longer term plans for a purpose built facility of our own.

<b>Long Term Investment Bond</b>		<b>£56,275</b>
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## The Future

The viability of any Bowls Club is highly dependent on the number of members that are attracted to play. Any club membership will have movement both in and out. Our National Governing Body has reported that clubs have suffered a 30% reduction in membership post COVID. Sport England advise that economic viability is based on a target population size and that a population of 14,000 – 17,000 should support a rink of 80 members. The target population of Banbury is expected to be around 64,000 and so this would suggest that 4 rinks with a yield of 320 members should be our target. However, we are blessed with a 6 rink facility and this would suggest a target of 480 members.

Whatever activities the club undertakes the ultimate objective is to increase the club numbers to 480 with an initial 5 year plan to target pre covid levels at around 240 members and maintain that level of membership, with the consequent benefits. For this reason the environment, ambience, welcome and induction are all crucial factors in both gaining and retaining members. It is also clear that we cannot simply rely on doing what we have always done.

We need to engage with **new** constituencies within existing bowlers to ensure that our menu of activities is relevant to the new members we want to attract as well as maintaining the support and interests of our long term members.

The following graph shows how a steady growth of 10% of our current membership will be needed over each of the coming years to set a trajectory for attaining the ultimate target.



This 5 year trajectory will lead us back to the levels of membership that the club had in 2014 and this will be the springboard for the next piece of work to extend the membership into high 200's and beyond.

## The Challenge

The challenge for the committee and therefore for the club is to find a way of working that enables continuity and progress on this ultimate objective whilst running the operations of the club effectively and efficiently on a season by season basis.

The strategic objectives set out below are intended to be the basis of several working groups that are able to focus on each of the areas identified and take up the initial 5 year challenge of increasing our membership by bringing in new players that extend the range of demographic groups within the club; increasing the number and level of organized opportunities through the week for all, increasing the percentage of our membership that participate in organized leagues.

## Strategic objectives

We have identified 7 long term objectives which we believe will add stability to the club, and enable the club to increase its membership in a sustainable way which will gain the confidence of current and future partners and sponsors. These objectives are mostly outward facing but we have 2 inward looking objectives to help us ensure that we keep the infrastructure of the club in good shape, ensuring that we maintain continuity and a steady approach over the coming years.

### Our key objectives are :

1. **To create a greater sense of ownership of the club by the membership**
2. **To modernize and raise the visual profile of the club**
3. **To improve the advertising of the club in the local area**
4. **To raise the profile and presence of the club on social media**
5. **To extend the bowling activities of the club**
6. **To improve the operational finances**
7. **To ensure that the committee has the skills and experience needed for it's future work**

The target timescales have to be realistic and so are categorized as :

Short Term	this season	completed by 31st March 2024
Medium Term	next season	completed by 31st March 2025
Long Term	3 years	completed by 31st March 2026

The detail of the strategic objectives can be found in the full document.

Having assembled the above information and considered the strengths and challenges that the club faces the committee identified three key items that it could immediately work on and these items were :

1. We can work to make this a season where what we do and say is about encouraging members to see the club as theirs. (Make this Your Club) . This becomes the foundation of new members being welcomed and introduced to the club.
2. We can improve the décor, layout, tidiness, presentation of almost everything in the bowls hall and this can start with the noticeboards and end of rink information/notices
3. We can work to produce an Emergency Plan for the club which would include identification of, and consultation with, partners and alternative provisions etc.

We hope that you will be encouraged and have increased confidence that our Bowls Club will have a long and healthy future. Of course it is easy to be positive and create ideas, it takes commitment and determination to see things through. We hope that between us all, and those who are yet to join, that we will together, become once again a club of significance to the town of Banbury as well as within the county and national structures of indoor bowls.