

Smith's Dock Bowling Club Founded 1920

Constitution



Version 4 25th January 2025

1. THE CLUB

The club's name will be Smith's Dock Bowling Club, hereafter called 'the Club'

The Club aims to foster, develop and promote the game of lawn bowls at all levels, providing all members with an opportunity to enjoy the sport and to develop individual skills in competitive and recreational bowls.

The Club will be affiliated to Bowls England, Yorkshire Bowls Association and Cleveland County Bowling Association. The rules and regulations of Bowls England will take preference.

2. CLUB MANAGEMENT

The Club will be run as a non-profit-making Community Group managed by a General Committee (GC) of volunteers comprising the Club Officers and other Club members as required, all with full voting rights.

The President will act as Chairperson at all meetings except for the election of GC members (see section 6). In their absence a Chairperson will be elected from the Officers attending the meeting.

The GC will usually meet once a month with a quorum of 6 or 66%, whichever is lower.

The GC members are appointed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and will stand down at the next AGM, immediately before the election of the new GC members.

The GC member positions available for re-election will be posted on the notice board prior to the AGM. Nominees, together with their proposers and seconders, must be registered at least 10 days before the AGM. Only full or Honorary members may be nominated or act as proposers or seconders. If there are still vacant posts at the AGM, the GC may allow members to be nominated proposed and seconded by those attending the meeting.

If only one nomination is received for a post they will be elected automatically. If more than one nomination is received, a secret ballot will be held.

A GC member cannot hold two positions on the GC except in the situation when a position becomes vacant mid-term, eg due to resignation, in which case the second position is 'Acting' until the next AGM when a replacement must be elected. Alternatively, the GC may co-opt a member onto the committee to fill the vacant role until the next AGM. The roles of President, Treasurer and Secretary must always be held by separate individuals.

Sub-committees may be set up to cover various aspects of the day-to day running of the Club. Minutes must be kept for all meetings and each will appoint a representative to report to the GC.

The GC may appoint a group to run a specific project if deemed necessary.

The GC will make decisions regarding the running of the Club providing they are not inconsistent with the Club Constitution or Rules.

The GC is empowered to raise funds by any lawful means, except permanent trading, including accepting gifts and applying for grants. It may also lease or hire property or equipment.

The Club should maintain a relationship with the Smith's Dock Park Trust which holds the lease for the club premises and grounds. This would include us potentially have someone attend their committee meetings and them having someone attend ours, both non-voting.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- 1) Membership is open to any person who applies in writing to the Secretary. Members will be notified when an application is made and given at least 14 days to inform the GC if they have any concerns about the applicant joining the Club. In general any applicant will be allowed to join with a six month probationary period after which, if their conduct is not deemed acceptable to the Club, they may be expelled without a refund of their membership fees. No reason need be given in the event of rejection.

Junior members (aged under 18 on 1st April of the current year) are allowed to attend general meetings and speak but not to vote or stand for any office. Juniors must always be accompanied by an adult member who will be responsible for their conduct.

Dual membership of other clubs is accepted but no member will play for any other club against Smith's Dock in any league or county competition in which Smith's Dock participates.

The GC may recommend to an AGM that a member that has rendered outstanding service to the Club be granted Honorary Life Membership (full privileges but no membership fee). This would need to be agreed by a 60% majority vote of those present and voting.

The Secretary will be responsible for collecting fees and maintaining membership records for the purposes of administering the Club. Member details will not be passed on to third parties without a member's consent.

Members must provide the Secretary with up-to-date contact details to be recorded in the Register of Members. Any communication sent to said address or email will be deemed to have been sent. It will be the member's responsibility to inform the Secretary if their contact details change.

The Club protects your personal data in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018. The Club's Data Protection Policy is available in the Club Policies & Documents file in the clubhouse.

Members must comply with the Club Constitution and Rules and the Bowls England Code of Conduct. Copies are on the clubhouse noticeboard.

4. MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership fees will be recommended by the GC and agreed by members at the annual AGM in October. They will become due on 1st February the following year. Members must renew by the end of February or their membership will be deemed to have lapsed and they will no longer be allowed to use the greens or other Club facilities or represent the Club in any league matches. To become a member again they will need to reapply.

Full fees apply up to the end of June and 50% thereafter.

Junior members will pay a reduced membership fee.

Honorary Life Members do not pay a membership fee.

New members will be charged a reduced fee in their first year. Former members who return to the Club are not considered to be new members.

Potential new members will be able to take out a one month trial membership after which full membership will be payable. The fee paid for the trial membership will be deducted from the full membership fee.

A member who leaves the Club will not have their membership fee refunded.

5. FINANCES

The Club's financial year will run from 1st October to 30th September.

The GC will authorise the opening of a bank account or accounts into which all Club funds, including fees, donations, grants, etc, will be paid.

The Treasurer will control and record all financial transactions made on behalf of the Club. They will update the GC at the monthly meetings.

The accounts will be presented for approval at the AGM where an auditor will be appointed. This should be a non-GC member.

The Treasurer and at least two other Officers will be authorised to sign cheques on behalf of the Club. All payments made by cheque will require the signatures of two of the nominated signatories, one of which should be the Treasurer.

Internet banking will be allowed provided the GC has authorised such transactions.

6. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held each year in October for the purpose of receiving annual reports and accounts, electing GC members, appointing an auditor, confirming fees, agreeing any amendments to the Constitution and confirming new Honorary Life Members.

Members will be given at least 28 days' notice of the meeting – by email and notices posted in the clubhouse. In the same way members will be notified of the agenda and GC nominations at least 7 days before the meeting.

The quorum will be 20 members entitled to vote or 33% of the full membership at the time, whichever is greater. If this is not achieved another meeting must be called. Should the second meeting not be quorate it will still go ahead and any decisions taken will be binding.

Only full and Honorary members may vote. Junior members may attend and speak but not vote.

Unless one third of those present and entitled to vote demand a secret ballot, voting will be by a show of hands. Votes will be passed by a simple majority with the Chairperson having a second or casting vote.

If there is more than one nominee for a GC post voting will be by secret ballot. The GC will nominate a Chairperson to preside over the election who should not be in the current GC or have been nominated for any post in the new GC. The Chairperson will appoint two members to act as tellers (show of hands or secret ballot) and report the results to the Chairperson. In all cases, if there is a tie, The Chairperson will have a second or casting vote.

7. PRE-SEASON MEETING

A meeting will be held in early April (before the greens open) to discuss any issues reference the coming bowling season and to agree fixtures.

8. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

The Secretary may call a Special General Meeting (SGM) at any time at the request of the GC, or by members of the Club if requested in writing and signed by not less than 10 members. The meeting must take place within 28 days of receipt of the request, members being given at least 14 days' notice. The notice will specify why the meeting has been called, which could be for one or more reasons, but no other business will be transacted at that meeting. Quorum and voting rules are as for the AGM.

9. LIABILITY

The Club shall have Public Liability insurance and insurance for the buildings, contents and greens.

The Club does not provide personal accident insurance. Members helping to maintain the premises, greens, etc, do so on the understanding they do so at their own risk. Members using the Club premises and any other facilities also do so at their own risk.

Neither the Club, nor any official or any member will be liable for personal injury to members or visitors, or loss, theft or damage to their property while on the Club premises or in the adjacent car park. A notice regarding this will be displayed in prominent positions on the Club premises.

Should an incident occur, no admission of liability should be made and the Secretary must be informed as soon as possible with full details of all those involved.

10. INDEMNITY

GC members, or any person or sub-committee delegated by the GC to act as an agent for the Club or its members, shall be indemnified out of the assets of the Club for all reasonable expenses and other liabilities properly incurred by them in the management of the affairs of the club and authorised by the GC.

They will not be indemnified if they knowingly commit a crime, are negligent, act unreasonably or in bad faith, personally benefit from the risk that occurred or are fully compensated by other legal means.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY

The GC will arrange an annual pre-season inspection of the premises and surroundings and existing measures to eliminate or control any risk areas, updating these as required. Records of the annual inspections and any actions taken will be kept.

A Health and Safety notice will be displayed in prominent positions on the Club premises which members are required to familiarise themselves with and adhere to.

12. SAFEGUARDING

The Club fully accepts its legal and moral obligation to exercise its duty of care and to protect all children and vulnerable adults participating in its activities and to safeguard their welfare.

The Club shall adhere to the Safeguarding Adults and Safeguarding Children policies of Bowls England, copies of which are in the Bowls England file in the clubhouse or visit the Bowls England website (<https://www.bowlsengland.com/safeguarding>).

Details of the Club's Safeguarding Officer are posted on the noticeboard to whom any concerns should be addressed. When necessary, eg the Club has junior members, the Safeguarding Officer must have a DBS (Disclosure and Baring Service) certificate and have it renewed every three years.

13. COMPLAINTS AND MISCONDUCT

For all minor cases of complaint or misconduct the GC will endeavour to resolve the matter quickly amongst those concerned. If this is not possible the complainant should address their concerns to the Club President in writing within two weeks of the matter arising and it will be investigated according to Bowls England Regulations 9 and 9A a copy of which is in the Bowls England file in the clubhouse or visit the Bowls England website (https://www.bowlsengland.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Regulation-9_01.12.2025.pdf). Should this lead to the expulsion of a member no membership fees will be refunded and they must return their keys and any property belonging to the Club.

14. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Proposals to amend this Constitution may only be considered at an AGM or SGM and must be submitted to the Secretary not less than 21 days before the meeting. Any changes must be approved by at least 66% of the members present and entitled to vote.

15. DISSOLUTION

A decision to dissolve the Club can be made at an AGM or SGM provided it is supported by at least 66% of those present and entitled to vote. The GC would then be responsible for winding up the affairs of the Club. After payment of all debts and liabilities any remaining liquid assets and equipment would be handed over to either 1) Bowls England; 2) a similar bowling club in our area or 3) a local registered community amateur sports club, the decision to be made by the members at the said AGM or SGM.

16. ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION

Complying with the rules in section 14, this Constitution was adopted at the AGM/SGM meeting held on:

_____ (date)

Confirmed by:

Position:	Name:	Signed:	Date:
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President:	_____	_____	_____
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Secretary:	_____	_____	_____
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15. REVISION HISTORY

Version	Date	Changes
1	15/4/23	Complete rewrite
2	10/2/24	Major changes
3	5/10/24	Change to when membership fees due – section 4
4		Adoption of Bowls England policies ref Code of Conduct, Safeguarding and Disciplinary Issues. Change in definition of a Junior member and Juniors now allowed to attend and speak at general meetings. New 'Complaints & Misconduct' and 'Indemnity' sections. Added option of a trial membership. 6 month probationary period for new members. Ref to GDPR. Some sections partially or fully rewritten to make clearer.