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Subject: Message from the Board Chair
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SENT ON BEHALF OF DAVID TUCKER – BOWLS ENGLAND BOARD CHAIR

Message from the Board Chair

I am writing to you in what is arguably one of the toughest periods this generation has ever faced.

The Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak is a global pandemic that will challenge us all on a business, social and most importantly personal level.

Therefore, may I start by saying that I hope you are keeping safe and well. Now is the time to show our unity as a sport more than ever whilst ensuring that we all strictly follow the latest Government guidelines.

The effect this pandemic has already had cannot be underestimated and the likely consequences are at times difficult to comprehend. Clearly, the sport of bowls is not immune from this global situation.

Already, we have taken the unprecedented step to cancel all of our National Competitions and National Championships for the 2020 season, and of course the World Championships due to be played in Australia in May have been postponed indefinitely. We have also, understandably, been inundated with queries from our clubs who are seeking guidance at this uncertain time.

It is however important that we remain hopeful of brighter times ahead and work together ready for when we are able to return to the green. A key focus of work for the staff team in the coming weeks will be preparing material in support of clubs – more details will be circulated at the appropriate time.

Bowls England has had to adapt, but our aim is to conduct 'business as usual'. The staff team has been working from home since last Monday, in accordance with the Government guidelines, and I have to thank everyone for taking it in their stride. The team is staying well engaged, making the best use of the technology available, and showing their support and encouragement for each other. The Board, myself included, is also embracing new ways of working to ensure we are fully informed and our first 'video conference' is arranged for next week.

Our Chief Executive, Tony Allcock OBE, officially retires on Tuesday 31st March, and it would be remiss of me not to thank him once more for all of his work over the years. Sadly, we were not able to say farewell in the manner that we all wished, but I am sure it will be a case of 'au revoir' and we shall see him around the greens in the future.

1

Alistair Hollis and Penny Maguire are leading the staff team during the interim period ahead of the arrival of Jon Cockcroft on 1st June.

In looking to the future, we are committed to keeping all of our members informed and entertained during this period. We have already produced a series of guidance documents and more will follow. We are currently finalising a bowls specific on-line activity guide together with a series of interviews with members of the bowls community to keep us engaged.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with one of the team if we can help you during this period.

I feel sure that when we come out of the current situation we will return to a sport that will be better and stronger for us all.

Stay safe.

David Tucker
Chair
Bowls England