ANGEL INDOOR BOWLS CLUB
Bowling Etiquette and Conduct Policy
October 2026

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the standard of etiquette and conduct expected of all members during bowls play at the Club. It exists to protect the enjoyment, concentration, and performance of all players, to uphold the club's reputation with members, visiting clubs and governing bodies, and to ensure the club remains a welcoming environment for members of all levels, including those new to the sport.

This policy is specific to conduct arising during bowls play and organised bowling activity. Matters not related to bowls play are handled under the club's Complaints Policy, and matters of a safeguarding nature under the Safeguarding Policy or Safeguarding Adults Policy.

This policy sits alongside, and should be read in conjunction with, the club's Complaints Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Disciplinary Rules in Relation to Misconduct. It does not replace those documents. Where a matter cannot be resolved under this policy, or where the conduct meets the criteria at Section 9.2 below, it will be escalated to the club's Disciplinary Rules in Relation to Misconduct.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all members during:

- Internal league matches and competitions
- Matches representing the club
- County and national competition entries
- Roll-ups and any other organised play

3. Bowling Etiquette

The following are examples of the etiquette expected of members on and around the green. They are not intended to be exhaustive — members are expected to show consideration for fellow players at all times.

- Members should be mindful of play on adjacent rinks, e.g. if a player is in the act of delivering their bowl, woods and/or displaced jacks near the edge of the rink.
- Members should not walk behind a rink while a player is about to bowl on that rink.

4. Definition of Bowling Misconduct

For the purposes of this policy, bowling misconduct is defined as any behaviour during play that risks affecting the concentration, performance, or enjoyment of players on the bowling green. This includes, but is not limited to, the examples set out in Section 5 below.

5. Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour

5.1 Behaviour Affecting Opponents and/or Teammates

- Any verbal or physical behaviour that, intentionally or not, has the effect of distracting or putting off an opponent
- Speaking to players or observers during play in a defeatist or disruptive manner, including excessive self-criticism or negative commentary
- Expressing indifference to the outcome of the game and/or making no genuine effort to win
- Deliberately losing or attempting to lose a game, cheating, or otherwise engaging in unfair play
- Updating the scoreboard before the completion of an end, implying an assumption about the outcome of an opponent's final shot

- Arguing with, or criticising the performance of, a fellow team member during a game

The Club also operates an Anti-Bullying Policy which all members must abide by.

5.2 Language

- Repeated or sustained use of inappropriate or offensive language during play. The club recognises that occasional strong language may occur; it is persistent or targeted use that will be treated as potential misconduct.

5.3 Selection-Related Conduct

The club acknowledges that not every member will agree with all selection decisions. Any member with a concern about selection should raise it directly and privately with the relevant selector, in a calm and respectful manner.

Openly and negatively criticising selectors because of selection decisions is unacceptable. Issuing ultimatums in relation to selection — such as threatening to leave the club, refusing to play in a particular position, refusing to act as a reserve, or indicating that certain conditions must be met in order to participate — is unhelpful and unacceptable. Members who behave in this way should be aware that it may be taken into account in future selection decisions.

Members are asked to respect that selection decisions are made solely in the interest of fielding the strongest and most balanced team(s), taking into account factors including playing position, partnerships, home or away conditions, and current form. Selections are never made with personal agendas against any individual.

5.4 Wider Conduct

Members should be mindful that their game will often take place alongside roll-ups or other games involving visiting clubs, county or national fixtures. Unacceptable behaviour may cause reputational harm to the club or discourage newer members from continuing with the sport. All members are expected to conduct themselves accordingly at all times on the green.

6. Competition Entry and Availability

Members entering a competition are responsible for checking their availability across the finals dates before submitting an entry form. Where a member knows in advance that they will not be available on any of the dates that may be offered, they should not submit an entry.

Should a member's availability change after an entry has been submitted, the default position is to withdraw from an individual competition, or, for a team event, to seek a substitute rather than causing a fixture to be cancelled or rearranged.

Where a change in availability arises from a personal or family emergency, such as illness, the member should contact the Competition Team as soon as possible. The Competition Team will review the circumstances, and their decision on how to proceed will be final.

As with selection decisions (Section 5.3), any concern about a competition scheduling decision should be raised directly and privately with the Competition Team.

7. Dress Code

The Club's Byelaws set out the dress requirements for the bowling hall, and all members are expected to comply with these at all times. Regulation bowling shoes must be worn at all times on the green. Members who are not wearing appropriate footwear will be asked to leave the playing area. This is particularly important in the interest of preserving the condition of the club's carpet.

8. Rink Bookings and Priority of Play

County and national competitions take priority over internal competitions, leagues, and rollups. Where a member has a county or national competition requirement and a preferred rink is needed, they may request the transfer of an existing internal booking to another available rink, subject to the following:

- Where at least 48 hours' notice is given to the member(s) holding the internal booking, the transfer must be accepted, provided that an alternative rink remains available for the internal booking.
- Where less than 48 hours' notice is given, the transfer is at the discretion of the member(s) holding the internal booking.
- In all cases, the member requesting the transfer must ensure that the member(s) affected are left with an available rink for their original game.
- Any dispute or difficulty arising from a rink transfer request must be escalated promptly to the Bowls Committee, whose decision will be final.

9. Completing a Game

In internal club competitions played on a fixed ends basis, a game must be concluded at the point at which it is mathematically impossible for the trailing team or player to win, regardless of the number of ends remaining. At that point, the trailing team or player is required to concede the game.

This requirement applies to internal club competitions only. It does not apply to internal leagues, roll-ups, or external matches, which are governed by their respective competition rules. Any dispute as to whether the mathematical threshold has been reached should be referred immediately to the Bowls Committee.

10. Reporting a Concern

Any member who witnesses behaviour that may constitute a breach of this policy is encouraged to report it to a member of the Bowls Committee.

Reports may be made verbally or in writing. Where a report is made verbally, the receiving member of the Bowls Committee must confirm the concern in writing to the individual(s) involved within seven days, setting out the nature of the concern reported and the date it was received.

Where a report is instead made to a Director, it will be handled in accordance with the Disciplinary Rules in Relation to Misconduct.

All reports will be handled sensitively. The member(s) against whom a concern has been raised will always be given the opportunity to respond before the outcome is determined.

10.1 Initial Assessment

On receiving a report, the Bowls Committee will carry out an initial assessment against the categories of misconduct listed at Section 9.2 below.

Where the initial assessment indicates the conduct may fall within one of those categories, the matter is referred without delay to the Directors for consideration under Section 3.1 of the Disciplinary Rules in Relation to Misconduct, and the remainder of this policy's procedure at Section 10 does not apply.

Where the initial assessment does not indicate this, the matter continues to be handled by the Bowls Committee under this policy.

10.2 Categories Warranting Escalation

The following categories of misconduct, as defined at Section 2 of the Disciplinary Rules in Relation to Misconduct, are those most likely to require escalation to the Directors following the initial assessment at Section 9.1 above, rather than being handled informally or by Bowls Committee sub-committee review:

- Section 2.6 — Conduct prejudicial to the interests of the AIBC or its reputation
- Section 2.7 — Profane, indecent or improper language
- Section 2.8 — Violent, threatening, intimidating or offensive behaviour

- Section 2.9 — Sexual, religious, disability or racial harassment, where arising during bowls play or organised bowling activity. Harassment arising outside of bowls play or organised bowling activity continues to be addressed under the club's Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Section 2.15 — Physical assault

This list is not exhaustive and does not prevent other categories of misconduct under Section 2 of the Disciplinary Rules from applying.

11. Procedure

Where the initial assessment at Section 9.1 indicates the matter should be referred to the Directors, it is referred immediately under the Disciplinary Rules in Relation to Misconduct. Sections 10.1 and 10.2 below apply only where that is not the case.

11.1 Informal Resolution

In all cases falling within Section 10.2 below, the Bowls Committee will seek to resolve matters informally in the first instance. This may involve a conversation with the member(s) concerned, with the aim of resolving the issue without the need for further action. This approach reflects the club's preference for proportionate, constructive resolution wherever possible.

Informal resolution should be completed within 14 days of the matter being reported. Where it has not been resolved within that time, the matter proceeds to formal sub-committee review under Section 10.2 below.

11.2 Formal Sub-Committee Review

Where a matter is not suitable for informal resolution, where informal resolution has not been successful, or where a member has been the subject of repeated reports, the Chair of the Bowls Committee will convene a sub-committee of Bowls Committee members. The sub-committee will review the matter formally, ensuring alignment with the club's Complaints Policy and Disciplinary Rules in Relation to Misconduct.

The review will seek to establish the facts of the matter, hear from all relevant parties, and determine whether a breach of this policy has occurred and, if so, what outcome is appropriate. In conducting its review, the sub-committee may request written statements from relevant witnesses, whether in support of the concern raised or in support of the member(s) against whom the concern has been made.

The aim is to complete any formal review within 28 days of the matter being referred to the sub-committee. Throughout this process, all parties will be treated fairly and with respect, and confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible.

12. Sanctions

Where a member is found to have committed a breach of this policy, the Bowls Committee will determine appropriate sanctions. Sanctions may range from informal warnings to more formal outcomes such as being withdrawn from internal club competitions and selection for team county / national games. The sanction will ultimately depend on the seriousness of the offence.

Where the sub-committee determines that the conduct falls within one of the categories listed at Section 9.2, or where sanctions available under this policy have been exhausted without resolution, the matter will be referred to the Directors and handled in accordance with the club's Disciplinary Rules in Relation to Misconduct. The full range of penalties available under those rules, up to and including suspension or expulsion from the club, may then apply.

13. Appeals

Any member who has had a sanction imposed under this policy has the right to appeal against that decision. An appeal must be submitted in writing within 14 days of receipt of the written decision, setting out the grounds for the appeal.

An appeals panel will be convened, made up of members of the Bowls Committee who were not involved in the original review or decision. The appeals panel will consider whether the process was followed fairly

and whether the outcome was proportionate, and will communicate its decision in writing within 28 days of the appeal being received, where possible. The decision of the appeals panel will be final within this policy. Where a member remains dissatisfied following the conclusion of the appeals process, they may make a further appeal to the relevant county or national body.

14. Relationship to Other Club Policies

This policy operates alongside the club's existing framework of governance documents. In the event of any conflict between this policy and the club's Constitution, Byelaws, Complaints Policy, or Disciplinary Rules in Relation to Misconduct, those documents will take precedence. Serious misconduct — as defined in the Disciplinary Rules — must be reported and handled under those rules and will not be dealt with solely under this policy.

Where a matter escalates from this policy to the Disciplinary Rules in Relation to Misconduct, the notification period under Section 3.1(a) of those Rules for notifying the accused member in writing begins, or restarts, at the point of escalation, rather than from the date of the original report under this policy.

15. Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Bowls Committee to ensure it remains effective and current.