



Inclusion Plan 2025 - 2027

*A community for all
A game for life*

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Statement of Intent

At Bowls New Zealand, we aim to foster an inclusive, supportive, and safe environment for all New Zealanders in the bowls community.

Bowls is one of the most **accessible** organised sports available in Aotearoa, mainly because a person's age, gender, race, size, social status and physical or mental capability need not impact one's ability to access and play the game of bowls.

It is easy to say we will **celebrate diversity** and embrace inclusivity – it is a lot harder to **challenge ourselves** with actions that support these statements.

Over the next three years we plan to **support** bowling clubs in creating programmes and opportunities that will **encourage** New Zealanders to be active users of their community bowling club, as well as helping to promote a **wider culture of inclusivity for all Aotearoa**.



Social Membership

Our clubs offer a sanctuary for New Zealanders, especially those over 50, dealing with issues such as loneliness, depression, retirement, family changes, divorce, loss, or declining health.

Bowls supports both mental and physical wellbeing, being a low-impact sport that encourages movement—each game involves about 3,000 steps. It's accessible to everyone, regardless of ability or disability.

Twilight Bowls

21st century New Zealanders are **time precious** and the idea of playing bowls all weekend as their grandparents did, is met with a big "NO".

Over the past five years, social bowls membership has grown from **5000** to **15,000**.

Let's continue this momentum and by 2027 have 20,000 people playing social Twilight Bowls, as registered club members.

Our social bowler profile demonstrating the accessibility of our clubs to New Zealanders. All ages, all genders, all races and cultures, any and all abilities are **WELCOME**.



*A community for all.
A game for life.*



“Check your” campaigns

With strong connections to local communities and a diverse membership base, Bowls New Zealand is uniquely positioned to champion causes that go beyond the sport itself.

The 'Check Your...' campaign reflects our commitment to the health and well-being of the bowls community, aiming to raise awareness and spark important conversations around issues such as breast, skin, testicular, and prostate cancer, as well as mental health, loneliness, and depression.

Check your bowls - campaign

Prostate cancer is the most diagnosed cancer (apart from skin cancers) in Kiwi men.

Every year more than 4000 men are diagnosed and over 700 will die from the disease.

Breast cancer is New Zealand's third most common cancer and accounts for more than 600 deaths every year.

Check your Moles - campaign

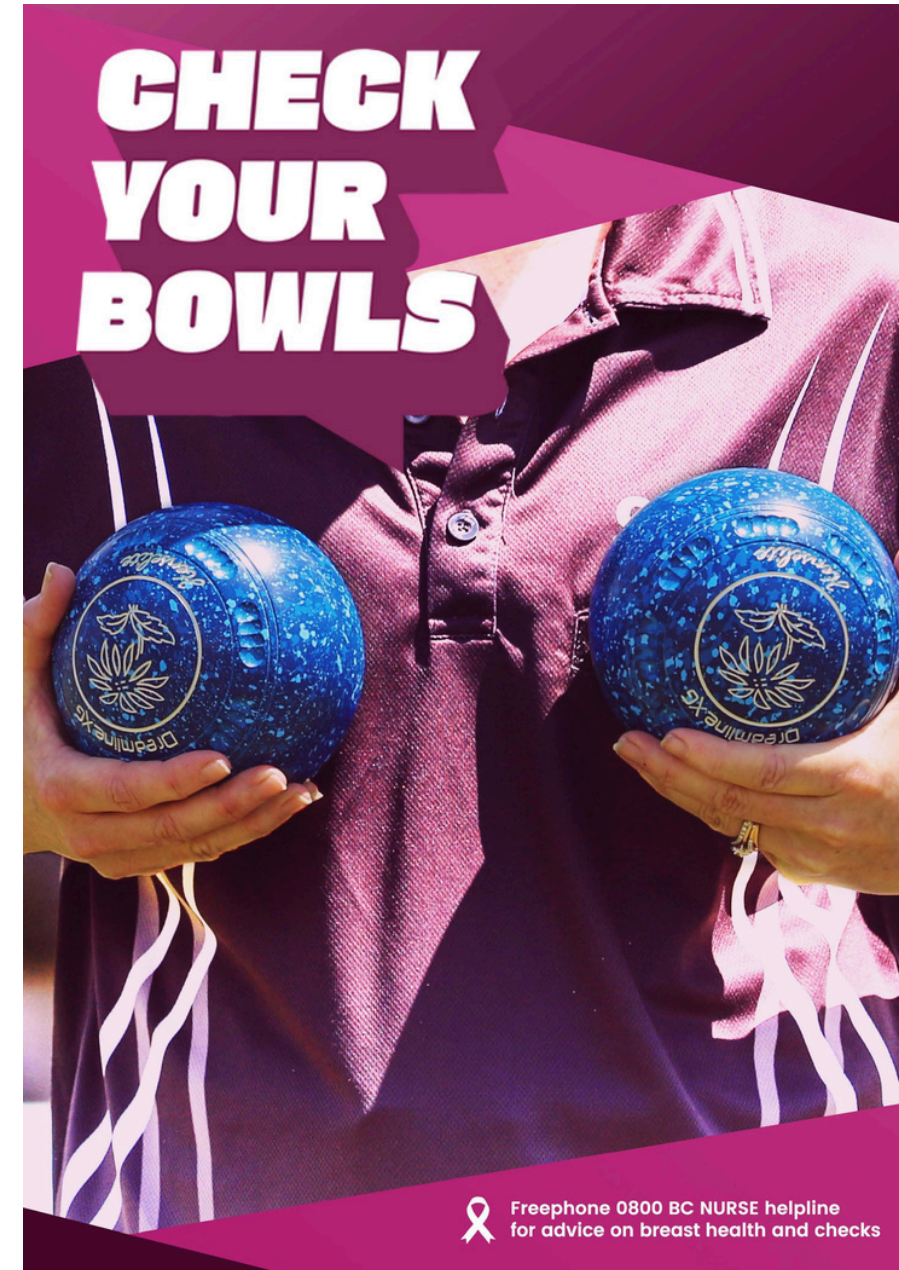
More New Zealanders lose their lives to melanoma than in road accidents. However, with early detection, most melanomas can be effectively treated by a doctor. Let's promote sun safety awareness within the bowls community.

Check in on your mate - campaign

We aim to spark crucial conversations around mental health challenges such as loneliness, alcohol abuse, depression, and more. By raising awareness, we can begin conversations that are often not happening, especially among our male bowlers.

Each campaign will run across our social channels and in our broadcast space.

Posters/videos and social tiles will be made available for any club to download and use.



Inclusivity

Inclusion is at the heart of our community. We are committed to creating an environment where all individuals feel valued and empowered, ensuring that every person can participate and thrive.

By embracing our different backgrounds and experiences, we make our community stronger and our shared moments more meaningful.

Imagery

Change the perception that bowls is only for “old white men” by using inclusive imagery in our marketing - without appearing tokenistic.

Pride Month

We are proud to promote and support our LGBTQIA+ bowlers, ensuring everyone feels welcomed and valued. Through powerful imagery, social media posts, and an upcoming larger campaign, we are making a statement of inclusion.

Picture this: a rainbow bowl rolling across every bowling green in New Zealand, from Cape Reinga to the Bluff – demonstrating unity, support, and the strength of our LDBTQIA+ inclusive bowls community.

Mixed Gender and Ability Events

Remove the historical thinking around separating genders and abilities. Let's further promote mixed gender/ability events at club, regional and national level, by ensuring all new events on the bowls calendar are gender neutral.

Retirement Villages

There are approximately 100 retirement villages with greens, that are currently “outside” the support of Bowls New Zealand and the bowls community. Let's engage with these villages and offer support/interaction between villages, local community and bowling clubs.

Female Role Models

Increase representation of females in our media/marketing through our live streaming, podcasts, promotional information and overall imagery. “Let her see what she can be”

Vision and Hearing Impaired

Promote New Zealand Sign Language week with signed videos/social posts - reach out and show options and pathways for our hearing-impaired bowlers.

In 2027, we will deliver and host the Vision Impaired Bowls World Champs.



Culture

Culture plays a key role in shaping our experiences and perspectives. By recognizing and respecting cultural differences, we foster an environment where everyone feels included and valued.

Embracing this diversity helps us work better together and grow as a community.

Te Reo Māori

Bowls New Zealand to deliver a welcome in te reo Māori to thank those attending meetings and events. Every broadcast to start with a te reo Māori greeting.

Create a social media campaign to **promote** te reo Māori as well as **educate** our community and authentically **integrate** it into our everyday language eg: Socialise the te reo Māori word for bowls, “Maita” into the bowls community of Aotearoa.

Pacifica

Promote the development of bowls in the Pacific Islands by including these nations in our national events.

Deliver an Oceania Championship for pacific bowls, hosted by New Zealand.



Technology

By leveraging tools like MyBowls and YouTube/Bowls TV, we can use **technology to highlight the diverse levels of inclusion** within our bowls community and facilitate stronger relationships between clubs and their members.

MyBowls

MyBowls will allow Bowls New Zealand to keep one centralised **database** that effectively captures demographics and enable us to refine our **strategies** based on the data.

BowlsChat

Creation of Club Chat Room - using technology to **connect** club members online/via mobile, for bowls and **wellbeing** benefits.

Bowls TV

Produce coverage of local and national bowls events that demonstrate the **inclusiveness** of the sport of bowls and the **accessibility** to all in our community.

MyBowls

Build a fully integrated platform that brings together our bowls community within the one place.

This digital platform includes:

- BowlsHub
- BowlsChat
- Bowls+
- BowlsTV
- BowlsShop



Rangatahi

The opportunity to introduce the game of bowls to our rangatahi is particularly enticing.

Our targets though will not be the 'sporty kids'; instead, our plan and activations should target those rangatahi that are either not interested or not able to engage in competitive sports that are physically, mentally or technically demanding.

Awareness Sessions

Support opportunities within the school day (lunchtime/PE lessons or even after school).

In School Competitions

Support full day of bowls via internal school sports days (Houses or Colours) - more students likely to participate particularly those who are sports shy.

Mixed Gender Events

Deliver events and trainings that are mixed gender - removing for the next generation any gender differences in the playing of the game of bowls.

Rangatahi Twilight Bowls

Help promote bowls to our rangatahi in an easy and fun social environment, support clubs to run secondary school student only Twilight Leagues after school.

Special Needs

Provide support to 20 schools and clubs in the implementation of our bowls program, specifically designed to engage and empower rangatahi with special needs, fostering inclusion and skill development.



Fostering a safe community

Creating a safe and inclusive environment in the world of bowls requires a commitment to celebrating and embracing the diversity of all participants.

Establish clear, **respectful communication** channels and implement policies that actively combat **discrimination and harassment**, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their background, have **equal access** to opportunities and support.

New Judicial System

The bowls community should **not tolerate** bullying, harassment, sexist, homophobic or racist behaviour at any level. We will establish an independent (of club) judicial process that respects natural justice, so we can **support a safer community**.

Safeguarding

Bowls New Zealand will Police Vet all club coaches and members of the community that work with children or vulnerable adults.



Continuous learning and development

We believe that diversity isn't just a checkbox; it's the cornerstone of our success.

Inclusive workplace

We are committed to fostering an inclusive workplace where every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their unique perspectives and talents.

This commitment isn't just about policies; it's about creating a culture where diversity of thought, background, and experience drives innovation, collaboration, and growth.

We will showcase a diverse workplace at Bowls New Zealand and to highlight the significance of diversity to our clubs and centres.

RESPECT

Bowls New Zealand promotes AND models one organisational value, that being RESPECT.

Surveys

Bowls New Zealand will conduct surveys (VOP - Voice of participation) to understand our bowls community better and leverage this data to enhance our support and strengthen our connections.

