



# Outdoor Back to Bowls Survey 2021



disabilitybowls  
ENGLAND



## Back to Bowls Headline Data Report

### Background

The back to bowls survey was created to understand the appetite of the existing outdoor membership to return to club once lockdown restrictions lift. As a partnership it is important to identify any concerns and potential interventions needed to support the membership to feel safe when returning to their clubs.

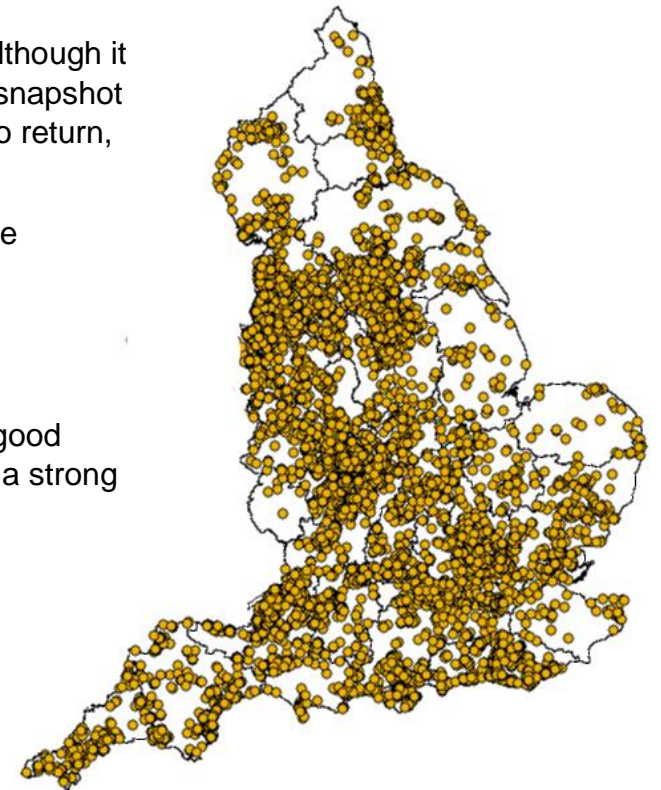
The survey was published on **8<sup>th</sup> January 2021** and shared through the BDA and its partners, Bowls England, British Crown Green Bowling Association and Disability Bowls England. It was promoted across key stakeholder websites, social media platforms and through county and local links such as the County Associations.

As of Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021, we received over **11,600 responses** to the survey and although it remains open and continues to be promoted, we are happy that this provides a significant snapshot of bowls members. Through this data we can gain an initial understanding of the appetite to return, the mindset of the members but also what they expect to see from clubs on their return.

This insight will allow us to support clubs with appropriate resources and advice on what the membership are expecting in terms of health and safety, programme of activity and communications.

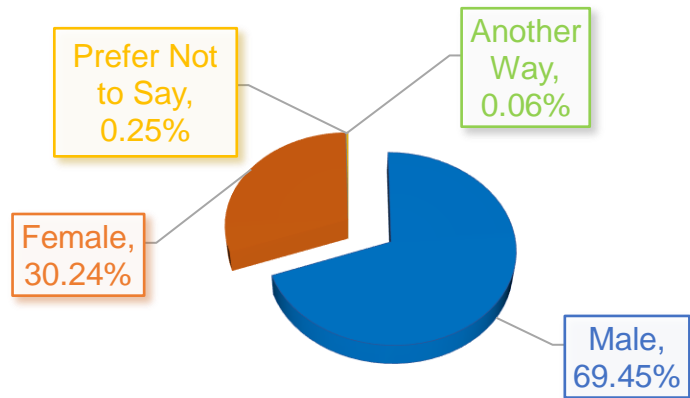
### ***Responses, Geographical Spread***

We have seen fantastic engagement from the bowls community across the country with a good geographical spread. Responses have come from every county in England which gives us a strong understanding of what the membership is feeling in terms of returning to the sport.

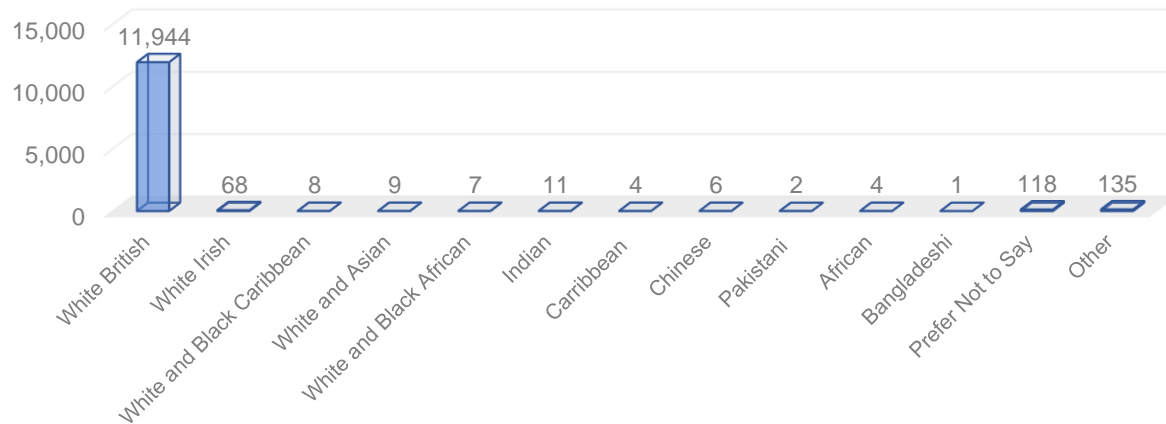


***Map showing all respondents as of 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021.***

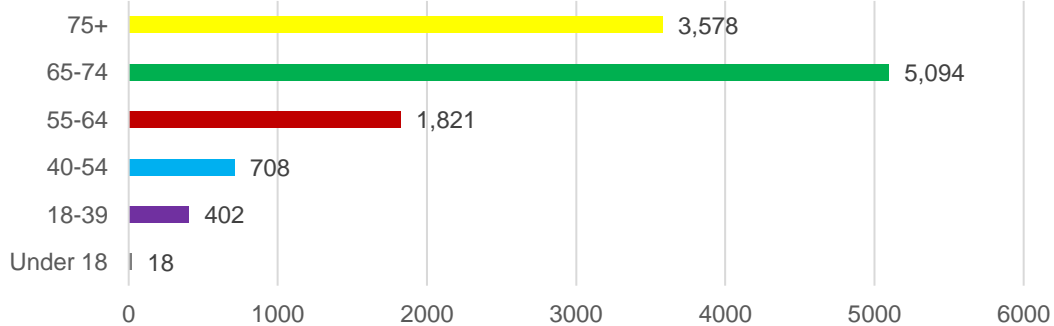
### GENDER



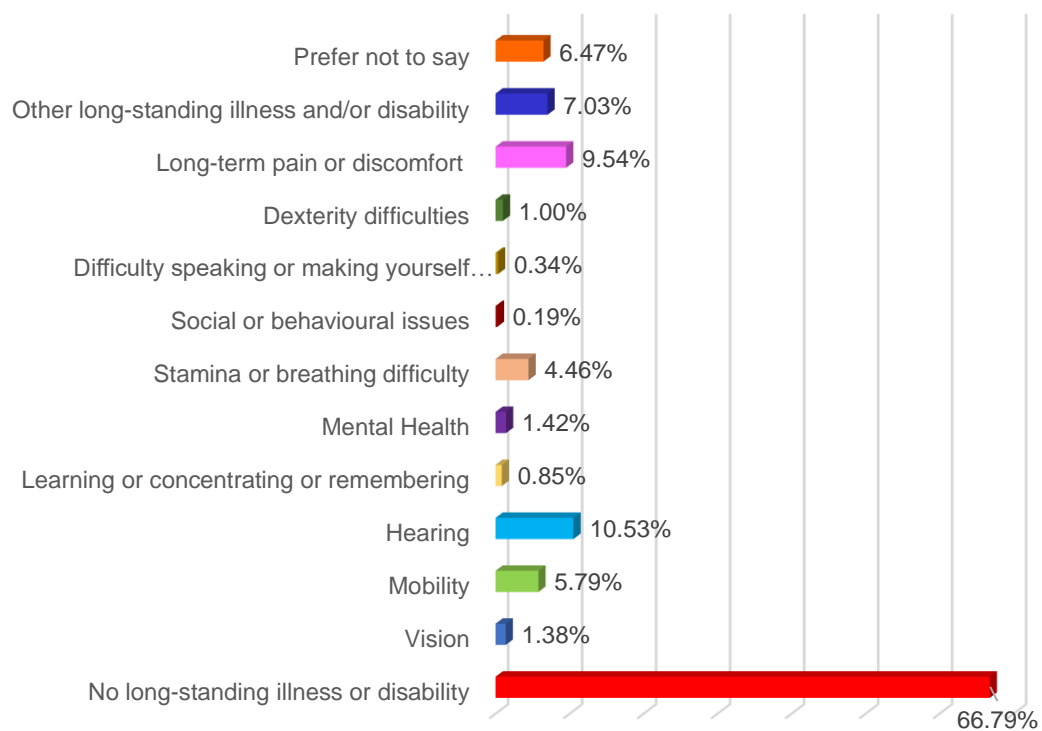
### ETHNICITY



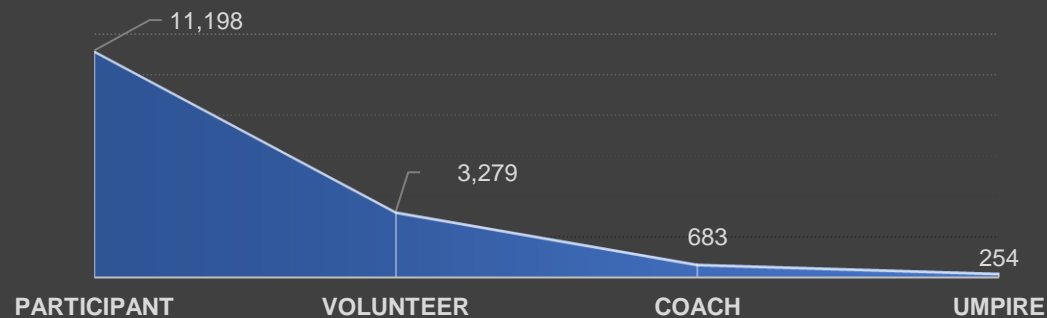
### AGE



### IMPAIRMENTS AND DISABILITY



### CLUB ROLE



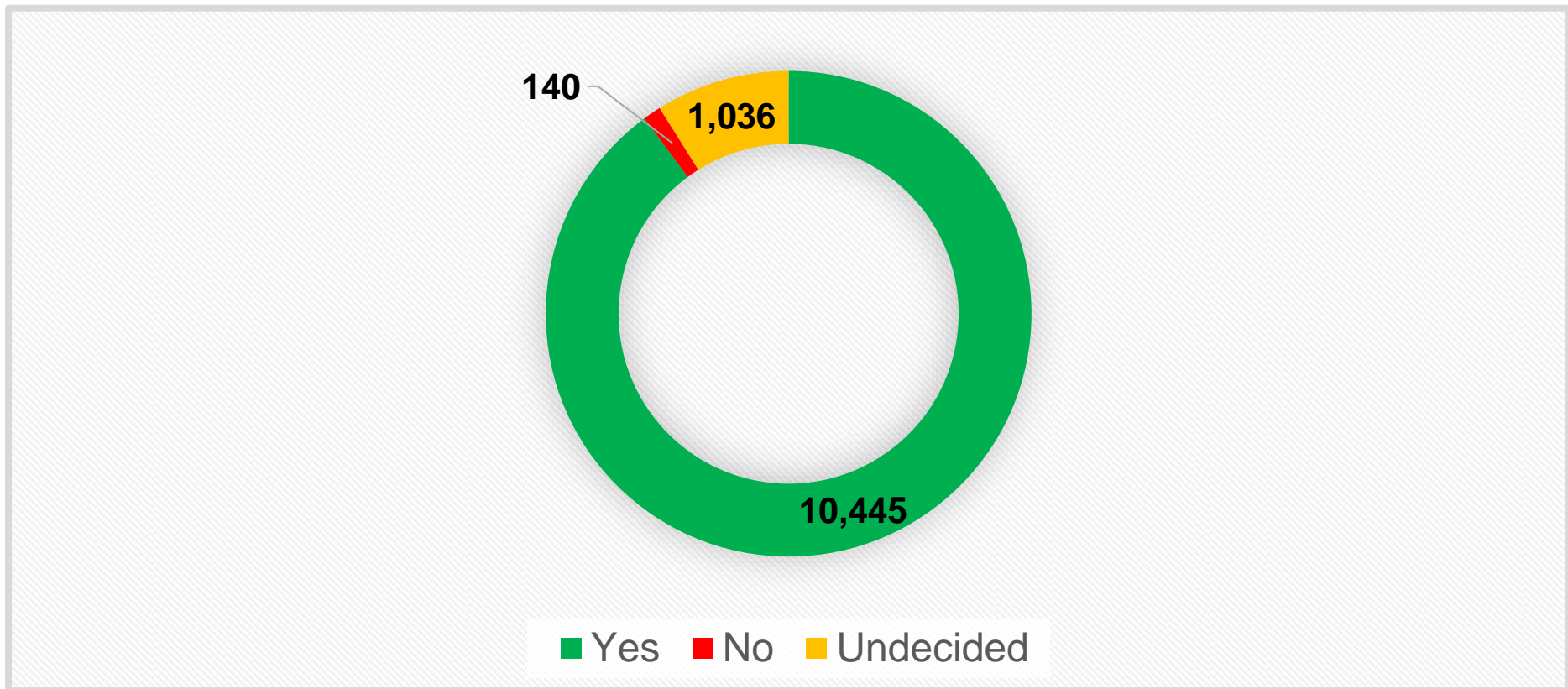
### Will you be returning to club in 2021?

We received a very positive response to this question with the consensus that members are looking to return when clubs reopen.

**89.8%** responded **Yes**, however follow up questions show that there is still some caveat to this.

**8.91%** responded **Undecided**, follow up questions evidence why.

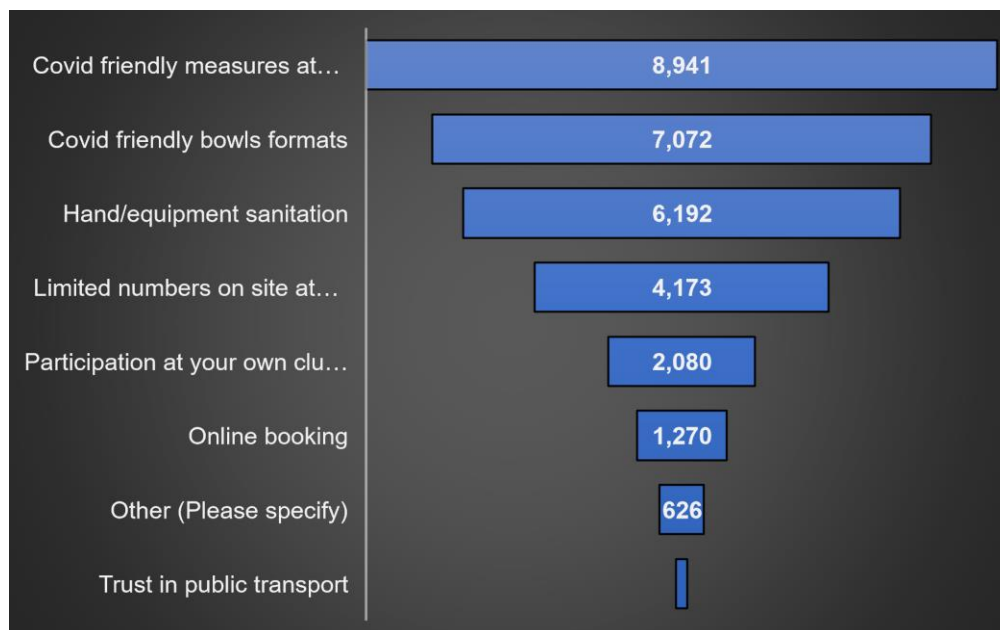
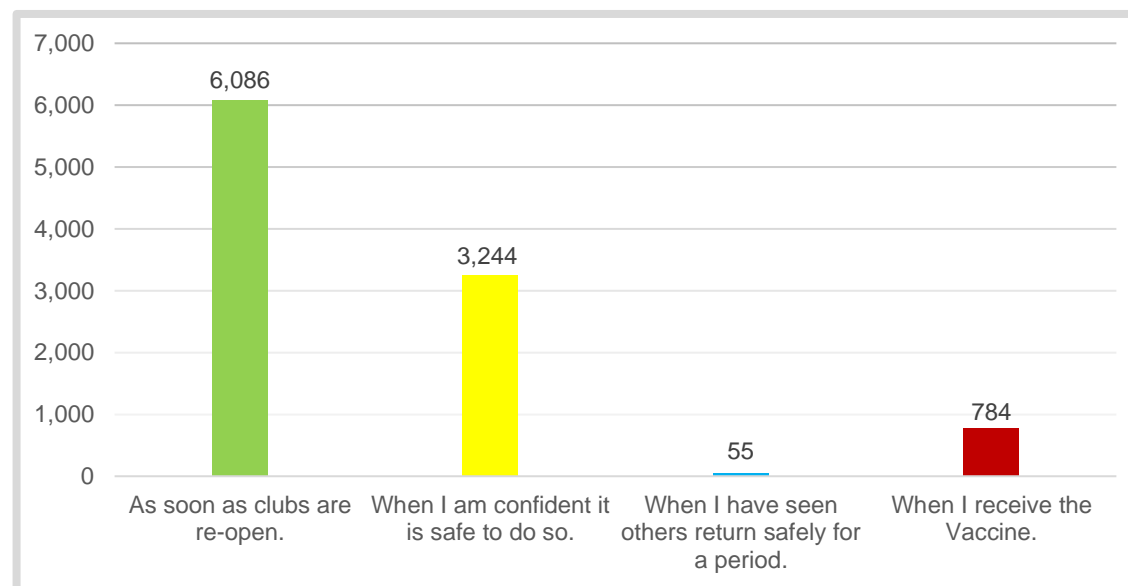
Only **1.20%** stated **No** they would not be returning to club when they reopen.



Those respondents who answered Yes to returning to club were asked a follow up question. This was to establish if their return would be immediate or if there were certain aspects they would wait for before returning.

We can positively report that **59.85%** of respondents answer, **“As soon as clubs are re-open”**.

However, this leaves over **40%** of respondents who still have some **concerns** about returning to club even though the appetite to do so is there.



### Measures you would like to see at club on your return.

Three answers came out on top:

- Covid friendly measures at club with **87.92%**
- Covid friendly bowls formats with **69.54%**
- Hand/Equipment sanitiser with **60.89%**.

The answers given to these questions are of real value to the Bowls Partnership. It enables us to discuss and develop support to put members at ease who have reservations about returning to the sport.

**“Which of the following, in your view, are most important to enable you to play in 2021” – Other Responses, Trends**

Three trends were identified from the 626 other comments received from this question, quotes to highlight these are below:

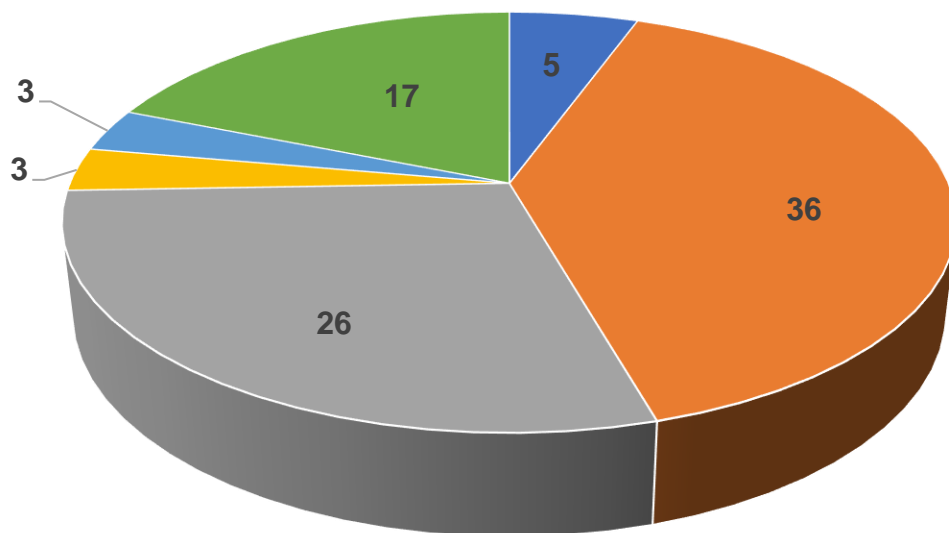
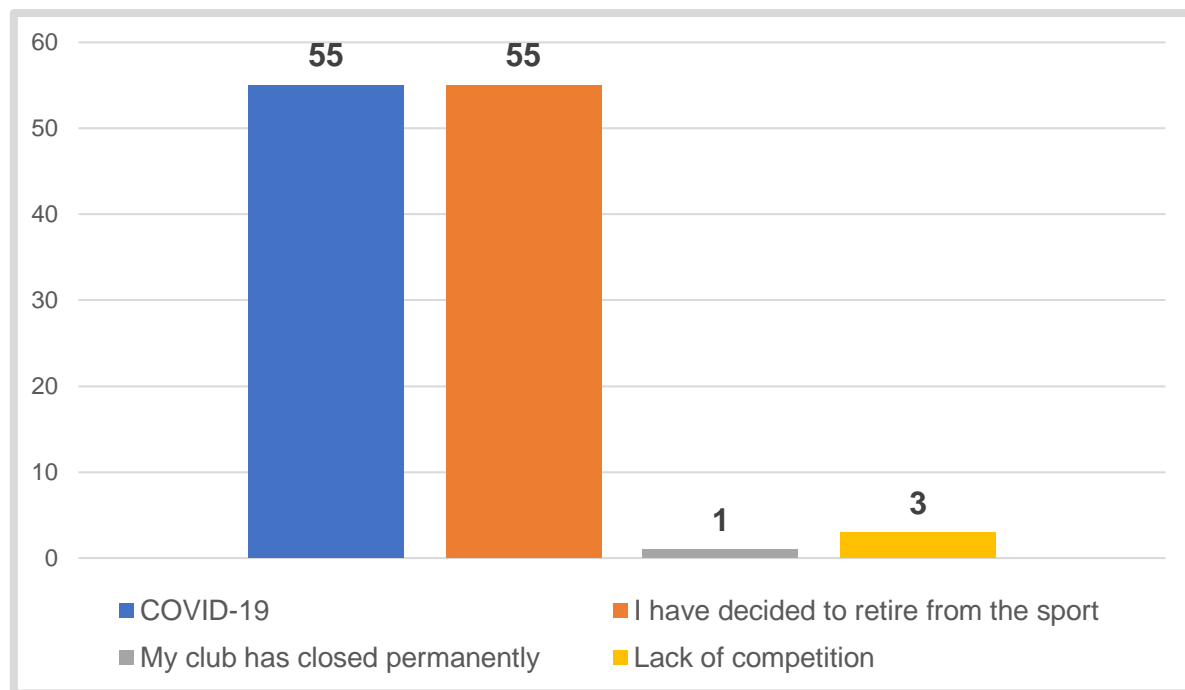
<b><u>When club facilities reopen</u></b>	<b><u>Others following safety guidelines</u></b>	<b><u>When competition returns</u></b>
<p>“When play is more or less back to normal and the facilities in the clubhouse are open, e.g., toilets and lockers”.</p>	<p>“A mechanism to deal with non-compliance with safe measures in order to keep things secure for all.”</p>	<p>“When national competitions start again”.</p>
<p>“I want to get changed at the venue as I don’t like travelling in bowls gear”.</p>	<p>“For ALL people coming on to the site for the first time to agree and be made aware of all the Covid-19 compliance requirements”.</p>	<p>“Return to friendly and competitive games against other clubs”.</p>
<p>“Safe on-site toilet facilities”</p>	<p>“Players who comply with sanitisation and social distancing conventions - last season there were some who didn’t”.</p>	<p>“It will depend on the what the government and Bowls England advice is on how bowls can be played. I would want to play competitively against other teams and players not just against other members of your club as in 2020”.</p>

### Return to Club – No Respondents

The respondents who answered No to the “Do you plan to return to Bowls in 2021.” were then asked their reasons for not wanting to return to the sport. There were two top responses:

- **39.01%** stated **Covid-19** as the reason
- **39.01%** stated **retirement** from the sport

Those who stated Covid-19 as the reason for not returning were then asked what specifically brought them to this decision. Their responses are below:



- I am self shielding
- I do not feel it is safe to return to club sessions
- I am anxious about being around other people
- I have lost my transport to attend club sessions because of the social distancing restrictions that are in place
- I am not confident in the safety of public transport

Over 1,000 respondents who were undecided about returning to club in 2021 were asked to share their reasons.

Many are undecided on their return date for a variety of reasons linked to Covid-19, including having to “**Self-shield**” and the severe impact and uncertainty of the pandemic.

Respondents also answered that they wanted to “Wait and see” which was linked to current restrictions. They are also keeping an eye on the current R rate as well as how the vaccine role out will reduce the impact of Covid-19. Words as “**Worried**”, “**Feel Safe**” and “**Risk**” are all mentioned regarding respondents’ feelings about returning to club.

One of the most prominent response was “**Social Distancing**” with a high number of people mentioning that they wanted to be sure others were following the guidelines appropriately.

There is some concern that this was not being adhered to by all during the summer months of 2020 when clubs were open and that some members were not interested in following the social distancing rules. This in turn made these members feel unsafe and at risk.

The responses ultimately resulted in members worrying about the impact on their “**Health**”. This word was one of the most used in the answer to this question. A lot of respondents also want to see the impact that the “**Vaccine**” will have on the country and Covid-19. This would be a major factor in determining how quickly they return to club.



## Conclusion

The Bowls partnership were concerned about the returning rate of members to clubs for the 2021 outdoor season, but it is extremely encouraging that well over **89%** of the **11,600** people who answered the survey are looking forward to coming back. The valuable insight taken from this questionnaire has helped us to understand the appetite and rationale for the members returning and under what circumstances that might happen.

However, there is still some work for the Bowls partnership to do with over **40%** of members stating that there would be some personal decision making to do before they would be comfortable enough to return. In addition to the **1,000** people who are still undecided, it shows a certain amount of caution and an element of worry and concern throughout. We hope to support these 40% to get '**Back to Bowls**' and into the 2021 season as soon as we can through providing appropriate resources and safe-play guidance as we adhere to government advice around easing of restrictions.

There is tangible work which the Bowls Development Alliance and NGBs in partnership can do to support members to feel safe in their club environments. This survey has allowed us to understand the members concerns and will now enable us to develop interventions and support to put those members who are worried and concerned at ease and ensure that clubs have the support that they need where required.

