



ESMBA STATEMENT 17th JULY 2021

The latest Government guidance has removed the legal Covid requirements, but it is still their advice to follow good practices, and the ESMBA Committee would ask you to consider your own safety and that of your fellow bowlers and take a cautious approach to returning.

We can all be proud that there have been no recorded outbreaks at any Short Mat bowls club and if everyone remains sensible and respectful this can continue.

SAFE BOWLS CERTIFICATE - The ESMBA continue to strongly recommend that clubs/counties apply for the safe bowls certificate, and we will continue to offer support and guide you via our network of CSGOs with any updates received from Sport England and the Government Department DCMS. The safe bowls status covers the full protocols for covid compliancy and can be returned to in any future outbreaks, local lockdowns or circuit breaks the Government might reinstate and may enable your club to continue bowling through any future eventuality.

Clubs/Counties who have obtained Safe bowls status already have all the weapons in their armory to ensure safe play. They can now consider relaxing these protocols to return to a way of bowling which more closely resembles that of pre Covid times. Your Venue protocols, which must be adhered to, may continue to dictate some aspects of your bowling, and the ESMBA strongly recommended that you continue with the simple and safe practices you have embrace such as sanitising, keeping good attendance records and ensuring a good airflow to maintain Covid safe standards. Your CSGOs will forward the full list of minimum requirements and will liaise with you on any points of relaxation you may wish to undertake.

We would recommend for the continued safety of your members that you only visit other clubs with Safe Bowls status.

COVID AWARENESS GUIDANCE – Although the ESMBA consider it of paramount important that all clubs apply for Safe Bowls status we are mindful of the latest Government guidance and have drafted an interim checklist for those clubs/counties that are considering taking the responsibility upon themselves to return without an approved risk assessment. We consider this Covid Awareness Guidance to be the absolute minimum requirements for a return to bowls. It has been created in the form of a checklist for display at club/County so members can see what measures have been implemented. Its purpose is to highlight areas you should consider.

This Guidance should be signed by the club member taking responsibility for implementing and overseeing these changes and put on display at the venue. It should also be available for visiting teams, counties, or league representatives on request.

For all clubs we would ask, as a matter of good practice upon return, that you review and audit the information you hold on your members to ensure it is accurate and up to date, as this may play an important role should covid tracking be needed.

Additionally, we would also recommend that physical contact be avoided.

Above all, as we come out of this pandemic, we would ask that you be both respectful and tolerant of your fellow bowlers. Please respect their opinions, their choices and their personal space and be supportive of those who are returning to bowls after a long absence.

Barry Hedges ESMBA Chairman on behalf of the Management Committee

