

ESSEX COUNTY BOWLING ASSOCIATION GROUP 6

SPRING MEETING 27th FEBRUARY 2026 at 7:00pm

Meeting opened at 19.00

Chairman Kevin Crowley welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Kevin expressed his delight at being elected the new Group 6 chairman and he looks forward to serving with the current officers.

Kevin reiterated the thanks expressed at the last Group 6 AGM to our outgoing chairman Jim Bunce who worked tirelessly for many years to promote the activities of the group, he will be sorely missed.

Officers Present

Kevin Crowley; Chris Flack; Kevin Robertson; Ray Woollard; Ken Griffiths; David Starkey, David Birch, Mike Birch, Lee Watkins

Apologies

None

Finance Update (MB)

Mike Birch provided the latest bank account balance which is: £2441

This is an improvement on 2025 despite our investment in new shirts etc., this primarily due to the very generous support of our sponsors, MCA Childrens Trust, Aaron Lyons Goldsmiths, Not Just Banners Ltd and TGC Home Improvements last year.

We have invested in a further 20 new shirts this year, the money for which will be recouped from the representative players over the course of the season

New Shirts status (DB)

David Birch informed the meeting that a further 20 new shirts had now been received and plans were being made for the distribution to the players involved in the Inter Group Knockout, Ashford Cup, and Wally Ball teams.

The shirts will cost the selected players £12 for the first shirt and £25 for each subsequent one.

The selectors of those teams will be liaising with the newly selected players over the next couple of months to organise this.

Ashford Cup squad selection status (DB)

We have received the nominations from various Group 6 clubs and have organised a trial game at Rayleigh BC on 10th May, where all the nominated players will have the opportunity to play and push themselves forward for selection to the final squad of 30 players who will represent Group 6 this year.

Currently we have 44 nominations from the clubs.

It is unlikely that any player who IS NOT available for at least two out of the three games will get selected.

After a disappointing run in the Ashford Cup last year we are hoping for a better outcome this season.

With only one game away at Group 4 (Kings Chase BC) this year, the task of bringing home the trophy is slightly easier but still a challenge for the bowlers, but we are still confident that we have the resources to achieve our goal.

Ashford Cup trial, rink observers

As has been the case at all previous Group 6 Ashford Cup trials, the selector will be assisted by some observers who will look at each rink, in depth.

The observers will consist of Group 6 Officers who will provide feedback to David at the end of the trial, he will also be observing the rinks as they play, he will then select the squad at the end of this trial game.

Group 6 are very fortunate to have so many players who want to play in this competition and represent the group, other groups are not so fortunate, however, this does mean that selection will be tough and only the best players (in David's opinion) will make it to the squad.

We have a very good record in this competition and it is only by having a rigorous squad selection process that we will continue this success.

Wally Ball squad selection status (DS)

David Starkey outlined his plans for Wally Ball squad selection. He has a list of a small number of players who have been nominated by various clubs. He is also liaising with both the Ashford Cup and Intergroup selectors to establish the players who could be available.

He will be contacting players directly to establish their availability over the next few weeks with the aim of naming a squad by mid-May.

Like the Ashford Cup we are previous winners of this trophy, so we have our reputation to maintain, so again selection will be tough. With only one home game this season we will be severely tested.

Inter Group Knockout selection status (LW)

Lee shared with the officers his thoughts on team selection and as in previous years it revolves around trying to persuade the very best Group 6 players to play in the first game. Currently Lee has a list of 26 players who have declared their availability but this may change as we get closer to the first game.

Unlike the other two competitions, the Inter Group is a knockout competition so you can only select on a game-by-game basis.

With a maximum of three games to win the trophy and two of those games being played away, it is a tough ask, but if the best players are available, we are in with a shout.

Group 6 stickers and scorecards stock (DB, DS, LW)

After a general discussion it appears we have enough stickers and cards to last the entire season.

We will discuss again on October for next season.

Representative Game rink fees (All)

After a general discussion it was agreed that with the majority of games being away this year, we would charge the players whatever the away club rink fee is, and just pass that on to the away club.

As a minimum we would charge the players £2, and any surplus will go back to Group 6

League Status (KR)

All the fixture lists have been distributed to the competing clubs and uploaded to our website.

Kevin will shortly be updating the rules to reflect the two motions discussed at our last AGM, they being: -

- Games can be reduced to 11 ends if exceptional weather conditions prevail with the agreement of the captains prior to the start of the match
- Clubs can play their league games at any time on the scheduled day, as long as the opposing clubs agree.

The officer discussed the implications to the league program if we continue to loose teams i.e. changing the games to the triples possibly

It was agreed that the officers should keep their ears open during the coming season to listen to the mood within the clubs so we are in a position to plan for the inevitable.

Group 6 County Friendly selection status (RW)

Ray has received an email from the new County Match Secretary (Dave King), introducing himself and promising further correspondence before the start of the season.

Ray is anticipating that the new Match Secretary will want to make some changes to the program following the previous match secretary who had held that position for so many years, it is just a question of how quickly will those changes be made.

Ray will be contacting players directly in the coming weeks for their availability for the first few games.

Group 6 Friendly status (KG)

Ken identified the one friendly that is certain to take place this coming season against Chelmsford & District BA on 27th August at ECBC

Dave Birch suggested Group 6 repeat the friendly game we had last year against Rayleigh BC in aid of our sponsors MCA Trust, this would take place at Rayleigh BC, date potentially around the same date as last year, we will leave it to Ken to discuss the date with Rayleigh BC and report back.

A.O.B.

- The chairman requested the Group 6 website be updated to reflect his position
- The Secretary updated the meeting on the green testing programme for the coming season. We will have 17 clubs having their greens tested, an increase of one, being Wickford BC, who will be paired with Runwell BC

- The Secretary reminded everyone that we agreed at our July 2025 meeting our represented game 5-year venue plan has been updated, all our representative games will be played at either Rayleigh BC, South Benfleet & Canvey BC and Essex County BC for the foreseeable future. These venues will be reviewed every 12 months to ensure they are still eligible and if any other group 6 club deserves inclusion.

They're being no other business; the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:05pm