

MALVERN HILLS DISTRICT COUNCIL OPEN SPACE, SPORT & RECREATION STUDY: ASSESSMENT REPORT

PART 18: BOWLS

Structure

- 18.1 Bowls in Malvern Hills District is predominantly played on flat greens. Malvern Hills District has a small number of bowls clubs, situated at a variety of locations with two clubs using park greens and three clubs playing on private greens. The main league servicing clubs in Malvern Hills District is the Worcestershire Bowling Association. An inspection is conducted by the Association to ensure that green quality is up to standard. In the most recent inspection, all the greens in Malvern Hills District were rated as adequate or better.

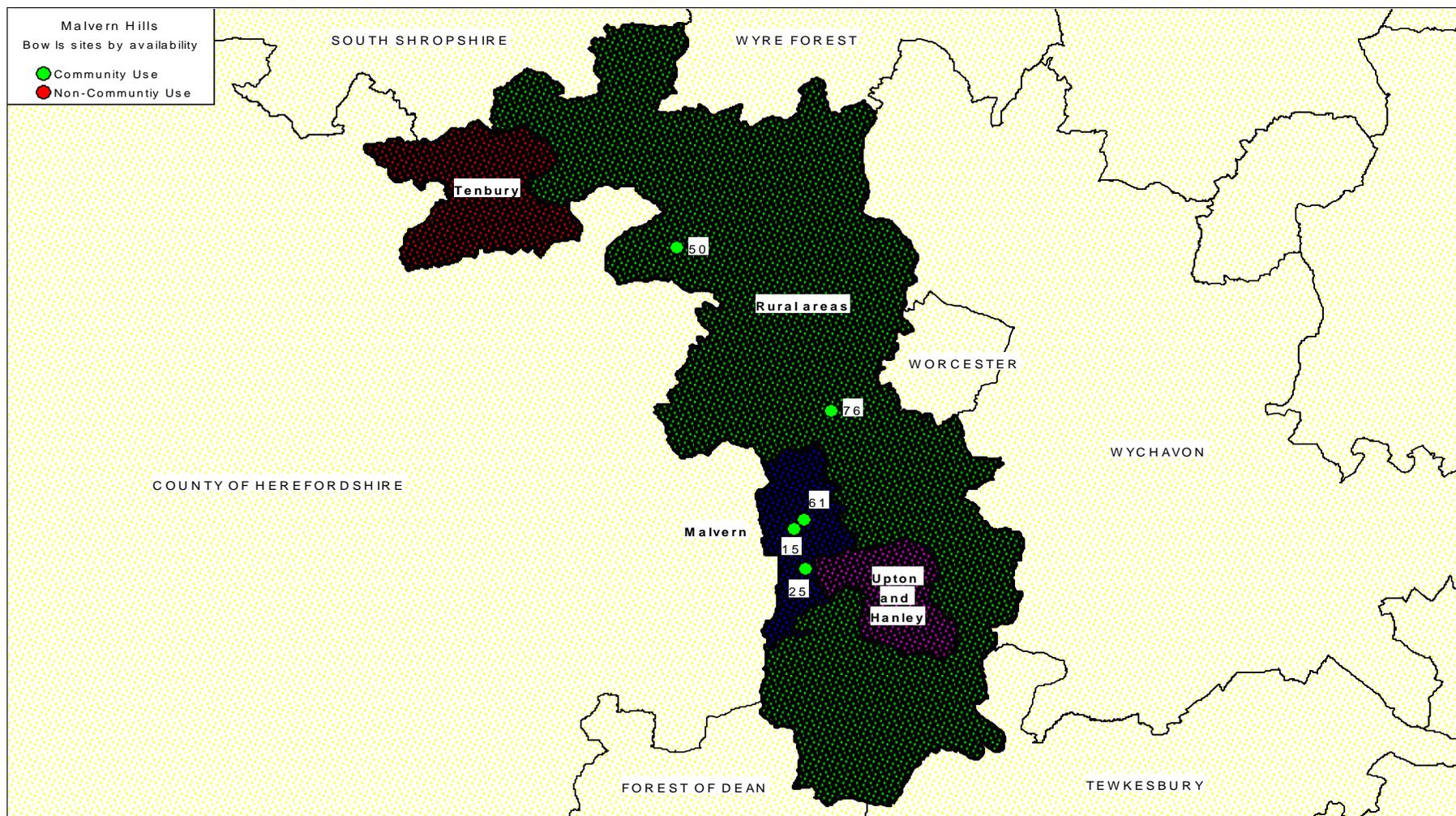
Current bowls provision in Malvern Hills District

Table 18.1: Bowls sites in Malvern Hills District

KKP reference	Site name
61	Manor Park Sports Club
15	Priory Park Malvern
25	Victoria Park
76	Bankhouse Hotel
50	Pound Lane Clifton-on-Teme

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Figure 18.1: Location of bowls facilities in Malvern Hills District



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Key issues for bowls

Summary of bowls clubs in Malvern Hills District

18.2 This table provides a summary of bowls consultation undertaken in Malvern Hills District.

Table 18.2: Summary of bowls questionnaires in Malvern Hills District

	Private clubs	Leased sites	Rented sites
Average membership numbers per club	60	25	43
Catchment area of club (miles)	2 – 5	2-5	2-5
No. clubs where membership has decreased in last 3 years		1	3
No. clubs where membership has increased in the last 3 years	1		
No. clubs with a formal development plan			1
No. clubs where green is available for 'pay and play'	1	1	2
No. sites where green has got slightly or much better since last season	1	1	2
No. clubs who have expressed a need for another green to meet demand			1
No. clubs whose grounds have suffered from vandalism in the last year		1	
Clubs rating facilities (green and ancillaries) as good	1	1	3

Cripplegate Bowling Club

18.3 Cripplegate Bowls Club is located in Worcester but its membership includes players residing in Malvern Hills District. It currently has three greens and consultation with the Club suggests that there is demand at peak times for an additional green. However, it does stagger its start times in order to overcome this issue.

Bransford Bowling Club

18.4 Bransford Bowling Club is located in the ground of the Bankhouse Hotel, Bransford, which is owned and operated by Best Western Hotels. The Hotel funded the re-laying of the green in 1992. Its quality is adequate but in need of upgrading. However, the Hotel is now requesting the re-payment of this expenditure, on top of an annual rent fee of £1,000. The Club is therefore not in a position to provide any match funding to any potential upgrade of the green. It

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does not have security of tenure on the site, as the lease is renewed on an annual basis.

Junior development

- 18.5 An analysis of current levels of membership within clubs in Malvern Hills District shows that no club in Malvern Hills District has a junior membership level exceeding 10. Both Malvern Victoria Bowls Club and Malvern Priory Bowls Club have no junior development at all. This restricts the potential future demand for bowls facilities.
- 18.6 There is a perception amongst clubs that the lack of junior development is indicative of the lack of initiative taken by the governing body to encourage juniors to take up the sport. Clubs are concerned that juniors are not aware of the existence of bowling clubs and there are no links with the SSP to promote the sport in a school environment.

Decline in club membership

- 18.7 The majority of clubs in Malvern Hills District have experienced a decline in membership levels due to the ageing of participants and the lack of junior involvement. The only exception to this is Manor Park Bowling Club, which offers bowling throughout the year and is well used by players during the winter months. It currently has around 380 male members, 210 female members and 12 junior members. However, this is an exception to the trend.

Quality of greens

- 18.8 The two publicly owned bowling greens are located at Priory Park and Victoria Park. They are maintained by the clubs on behalf of Malvern Town Council. This allows members to maintain the greens to a high standard and this is reflected in their good quality. Site assessment and consultation show clubs which have access to an integrated watering system has seen a significant improvement in the grass cover and overall green quality. In order to improve match play and increase the green quality of the green, Malvern Priory want to install a watering system at Priory Park to increase its quality. However, it does not have access to provide match funding to any external funding application.

Vandalism

- 18.9 Vandalism is an issue that particularly affects publicly owned site, mainly due to their poor levels of perimeter security. Malvern Priory BC and Cripplegate Bowling Club both have public open access, resulting in acts of vandalism such as clubhouse break-ins and damage to the green. In particular, acts of vandalism deter the high numbers of female members. This is particularly the case at Victoria Park, where a

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gathering of young people at Victoria Park is a concern is intimidating to bowls players.

Bowls summary and recommended actions

<p>Bowls summary</p> <p>Current provision</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> There are five bowling greens in Malvern Hills District.</p> <p>Future provision</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> There is no need for additional provision in the District</p> <p>Other issues</p> <p>See below.</p>
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Table 18.3: Summary of key issues and recommendations

Key issue	Proposed outcome objective	Recommended action
Bransford Bowling Club	Security of tender of current bowls green.	Work to support Bransford Bowling Club to secure long-term lease on its current site.
Junior development	Increased number of junior players taking up the sport.	Assess the potential for bowls to be incorporated into the SSP to initiate junior development.
Decline in club membership	Halt the decline in membership at clubs.	Establish, within the SSP, coaching sessions in schools with a view to hosting tournaments at clubs.
Quality of greens	Maximise the quality of bowling greens in Malvern Hills District.	Examine the feasibility of installing a watering system at Priory Park.
Vandalism	Minimal levels of vandalism affecting bowling greens.	Consider upgrading perimeter fencing at Malvern Priory Bowling Club and Victoria Park, to guard the safety of players.