John McGuinness to scope future England Bowls Performance Programme

The proposed merger of Bowls England and English Indoor Bowling Association (EIBA) to form England Bowls presents a significant opportunity to create a more player-centric, impactful and consistent England performance programme. A joined-up, all-year-around approach to talent development, coaching, selection and international player management has clear benefits and the incredible success of Glasgow 2026 has already demonstrated the results of positive and effective collaboration.

To realise this potential, we have commissioned a joint review of their performance programmes. The project will be led by John McGuinness, former Bowls England Performance Director and Indoor International, who will oversee an inclusive consultation and develop recommendations for the future of England's indoor and outdoor performance arrangements as part of one National Governing Body.

The review will assess the current indoor and outdoor performance programmes and scope the development of a unified England Bowls Performance Programme should the merger be agreed by members. It will establish a clear picture of existing structures, personnel, roles and responsibilities, budgets, player pathways, and the primary goals and objectives of both organisations.

The work being scoped will include a position statement on the current programmes; a SWOT analysis; proposed strategic goals and objectives for a unified programme; benchmarking against relevant performance programmes in other sports in England and international bowls governing bodies; and high-level recommendations on future structure and delivery. The recommendations will also consider implementation requirements, timescales and budget implications, while identifying the sensitivities and challenges involved and the opportunities and benefits that closer alignment could bring.

The consultation will seek input from across the sport, including representatives of men's, women's, junior and para performance, together with expertise in coaching, management, administration, operations and governance. The process is expected to include an online questionnaire, informal consultation during the National events, a representative Working Party, a series of online workshops and engagement with Sport England. Final recommendations will be presented to England Bowls Board Designate for feedback and formal ratification.

The review will commence shortly, with recommendations scheduled to be ready for presentation in March 2027.