

# Bowls

- Bowls is the 3<sup>rd</sup> most popular participation sport amongst women aged 55+
- Compared with all sportswomen, bowls players are more satisfied with almost every aspect of their sport
- Half as many women players as men choose to volunteer in their sport

All data are based on those adults (16 and over) who said they had played the bowls at least once in the last four weeks (Active People Survey 2007-08), unless stated otherwise. See Note 1.

## Women who play bowls – overview

### Trends in women's bowls participation

Played at least once a week (moderate intensity)

APS1 (2005-06) 0.65%

APS2 (2007-08) 0.72%

A significant increase in women's bowls participation

Played at least once in the last four weeks

APS1 (2005-06) 0.83%

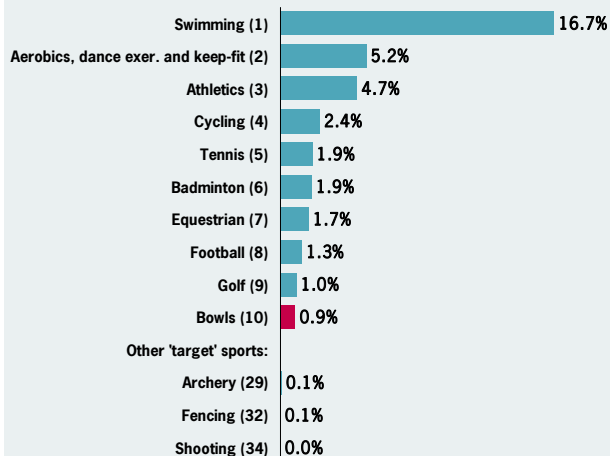
APS2 (2007-08) 0.90%

Base: All female respondents (APS1 = 212,568, APS2 = 113,056)

### Participation overview

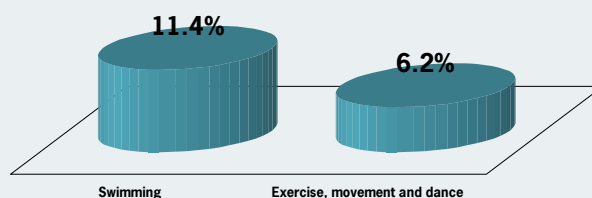
- Bowls is the 10<sup>th</sup> most popular participation sport for women
- The sport experienced a significant increase in female participation between 05-06 and 07-08
- Nearly 200,000 women have played the sport in the last four weeks

### How does bowls fare? Women's participation in all bowls



Base: All female respondents. Figure for cycling is respondents who took part in at least four recreational cycles in the last four weeks at moderate intensity

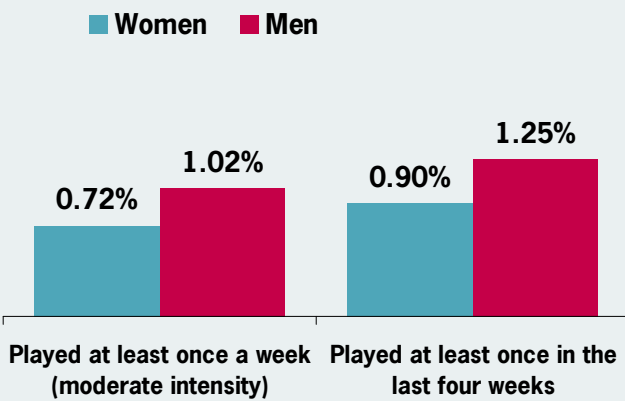
### Other sports popular with female bowls players



Base: All female respondents who played bowls at least once in the last four weeks (885)

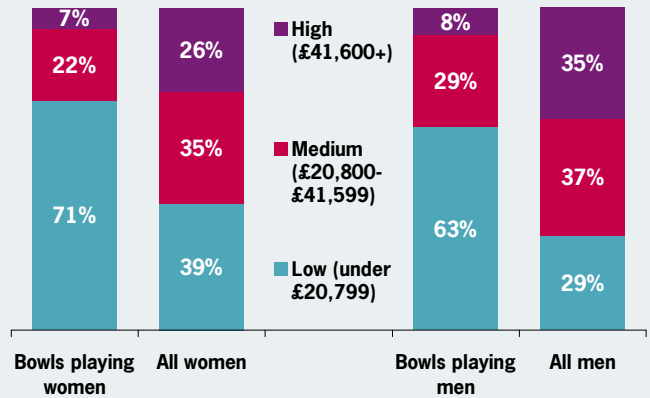
# Demographic profile of bowls players

## Proportion of people who play bowls by gender



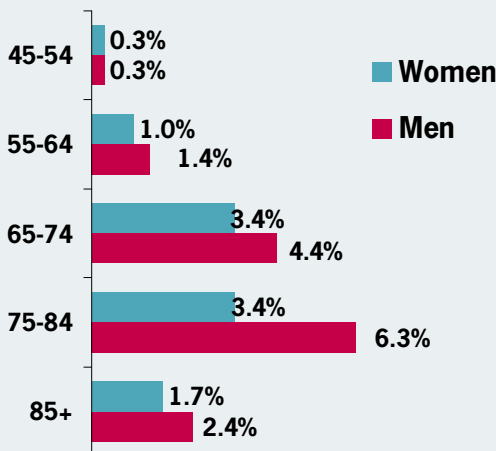
Base: All respondents (women = 113,056, men = 78,269)

## Profile of the general population v. people who play bowls by gender and household income



Base: All respondents

## Proportion of people who play bowls by gender and age

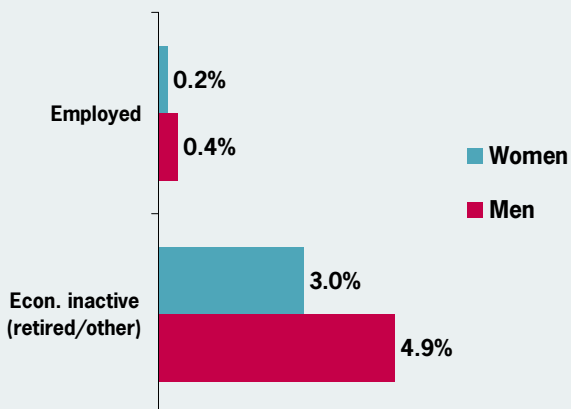


Base: All respondents.

## Participation – demographics

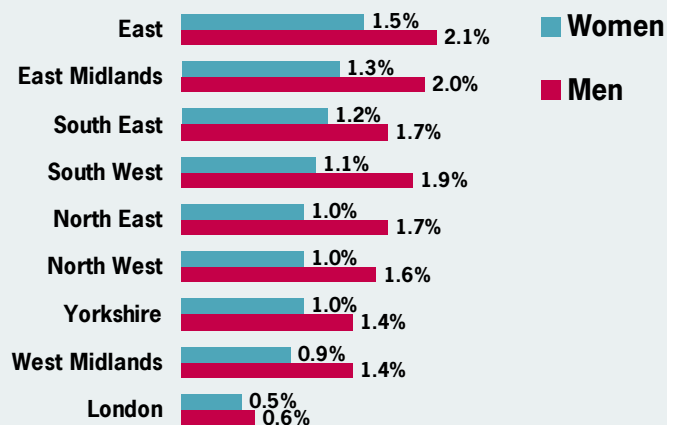
- Bowls has a relatively even gender split – 0.9% of all women have played in the last month compared with 1.25% of men
- The sport is played predominantly by the older generation (91% are aged 55+)
- Almost twice the proportion of men as women are playing bowls aged 75-84
- Just 1% of women who bowl are from a BME group
- Bowls is particularly popular in the East and the East Midlands, but less played by both sexes in London

## Proportion of people who play bowls by gender and working status



Base: All respondents

## Proportion of people who play bowls by gender and Sport England region



Base: All respondents

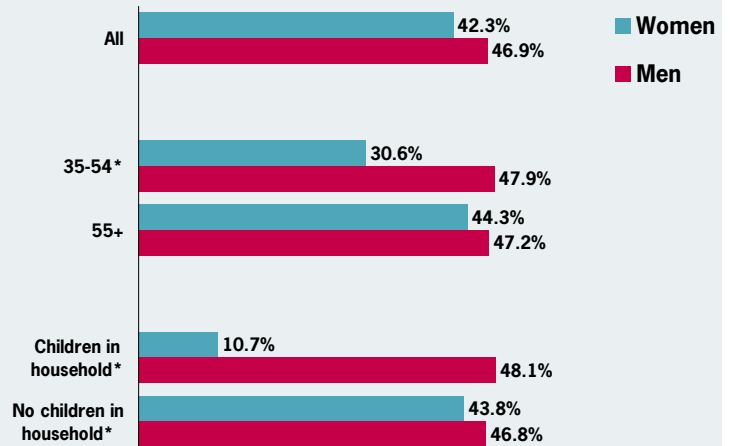
# Organised participation



## Club membership

- Bowls has relatively high numbers of participants who are club based – four in ten women are members
- There is still an opportunity to convert younger female players into clubs earlier – just three in ten of the 35-54 age group have chosen to join

### Who plays bowls as a member of a bowls club?



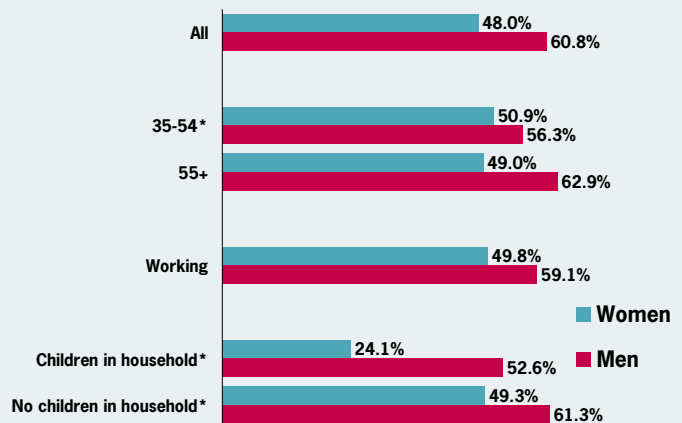
Base: All respondents who played bowls at least once in the last four weeks. See Note 2. \* Read figures for women with caution as cell sizes are small



## Taken part in organised competition

- Whilst the gender profile of club membership is similar, we start to see different preferences amongst men and women in terms of competition
- Almost five in ten women have taken part in organised competition compared to six in ten men

### Who takes part in organised competition?



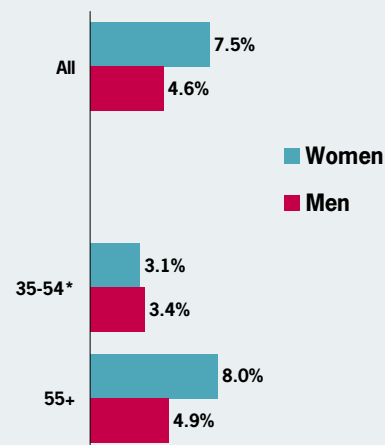
Base: All respondents who played bowls at least once in the last four weeks. See Note 3. Read figures with caution as cell sizes are small



## Received tuition or coaching

- Bowls is unusual in that it attracts a high level of formalised involvement in membership or competition, but very few players choose to receive coaching or tuition
- However, women players are twice as likely to do so, and there is a demand for coaching particularly amongst older women players

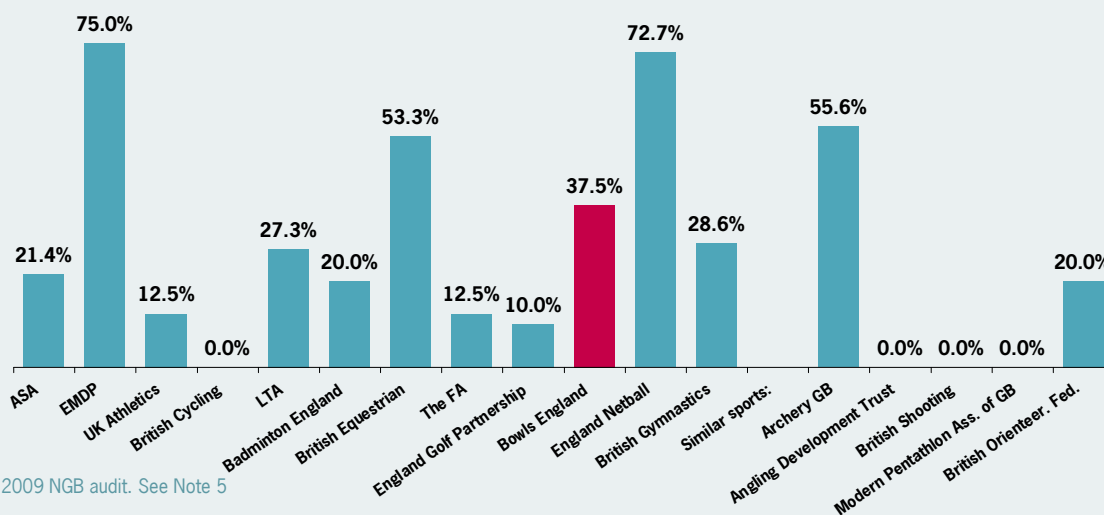
### Who receives tuition in bowls?



Base: All respondents who played bowls at least once in the last four weeks. See Note 4. Read figures with caution as cell sizes are small

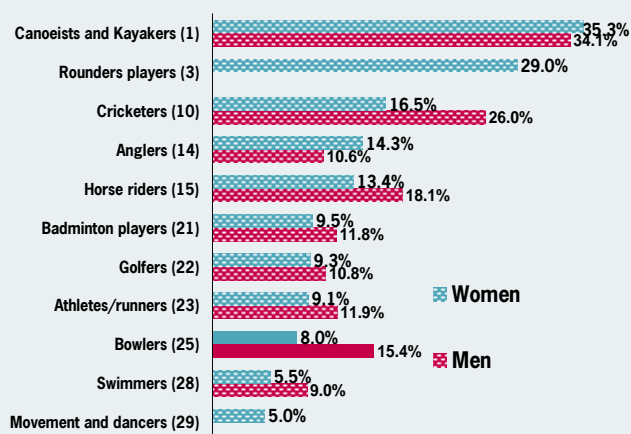
# Women as leaders, coaches and volunteers

## Women as leaders of sport % of NGB Board members who are women



Source: WSFF 2009 NGB audit. See Note 5

## Women and men as volunteers



Base: All respondents who take part in sport at least once a week. Top sports for women. Figure in brackets is the sport's ranking out of 29 sports for volunteering. See Note 6

## Women as leaders, coaches and volunteers

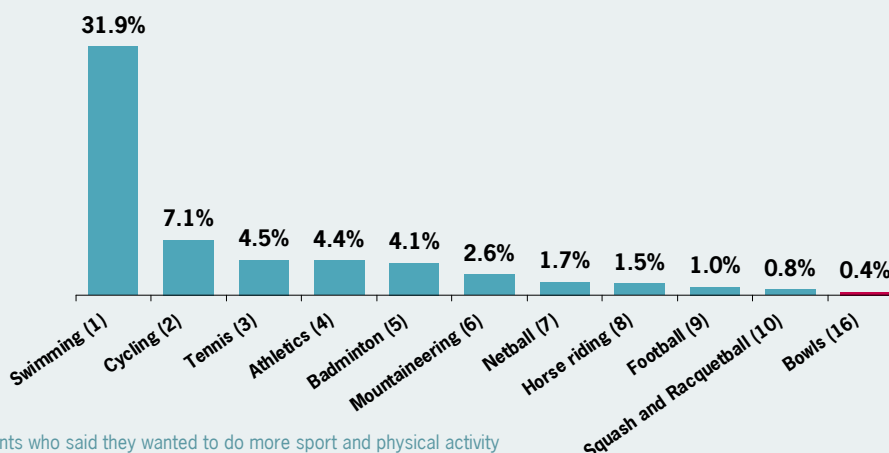
- Bowls England has relatively high levels of female representation – 37.5% of its board are women
- However, bowls players generally don't tend to volunteer. In particular, women are almost half as likely as their male counterparts to work on behalf of sport

## Latent demand

- There exists some latent demand for bowls, particularly among young women and students. This could provide an opportunity to open up the sport to a new generation of women

# Women's demand for sport

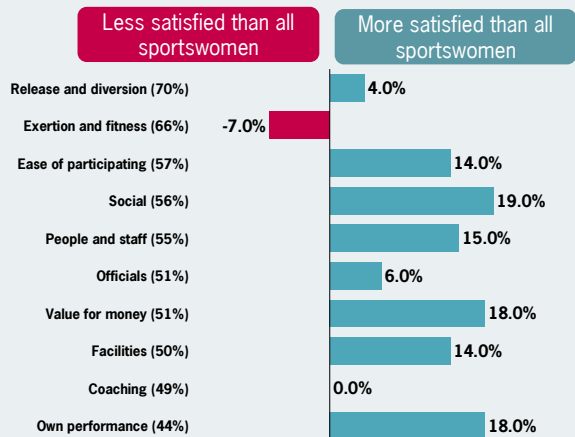
## Sports that women would like to do more of



Base: All female respondents who said they wanted to do more sport and physical activity

# Satisfaction with experience of playing bowls

## Satisfaction of women who bowl compared with average for all women who do sport/activity



Source: Sport England's Satisfaction with the quality of the bowling experience survey (2009).  
 Base: Female respondents (16+) who rated their satisfaction as 8-10 on a 1 to 10 scale. Figures in brackets are satisfaction percentages for all sportswomen. See Note 7

## Satisfaction

- Women bowls players are more satisfied than the average sportswoman with the way they interact with their sport. They are hugely positive about the social aspects, value for money, opportunities to improve their own performance and the facilities available
- The only aspect that they are less satisfied than the average is the exertion and fitness – not surprising for such a sport

## To sum up...

Women bowls players are relatively satisfied with their sport. Unusually for many sports, women also engage formally, with many choosing to join a club. There does still remain opportunities to encourage more women to volunteer in their sport and to improve their game through receiving coaching.

There are also opportunities to focus on increasing the number of BME women who play bowls.

### Notes

- 1 Source for all data is the Active People Survey 2 (2007-08) unless otherwise stated. 16 year olds and over in England only. For some sports, there are no data as sample sizes are too small. Using a gym is not included in this series of factsheets.
- 2 Club membership is based on those who have been a member of a sports club to participate in bowls in the past four weeks. These figures may not correspond with National Governing Body (NGB) affiliation figures.
- 3 Organised competition is defined as 'having taken part in any organised competition in bowls in the last 12 months'.
- 4 Received tuition is defined as 'having received tuition from an instructor or coach to improve your performance in bowls in the last 12 months'.
- 5 In 2009 WSFF undertook an audit of all 46 bowls England funded (NGBs). NGBs were asked to provide demographic data about board members, affiliated coaches and members. Sports chosen for comparison are the top participation sports for women + sports similar to bowls. Data not available for all NGBs.
- 6 Volunteering is defined as 'volunteering to support sport for at least one hour a week'. Sports chosen for comparison are the top participation sports for women + sports similar to bowls.
- 7 Survey respondents were asked to rate their perceived satisfaction for 75 questions across ten themes. Figures in brackets are aggregate satisfaction percentages of the individual theme questions. Domains ranked in order of satisfaction for all women.

To convert overall percentages to numbers use the following figures:

Survey	Male 16+	Female 16+
APS 1	19,756,900	20,954,000
APS 2	20,170,100	21,266,200

Source: Office for National Statistics England Mid-year Population Estimates, 2005 and 2007

WATCH THIS SPACE...

To be updated with bowls specific data from Active People Survey 3...

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