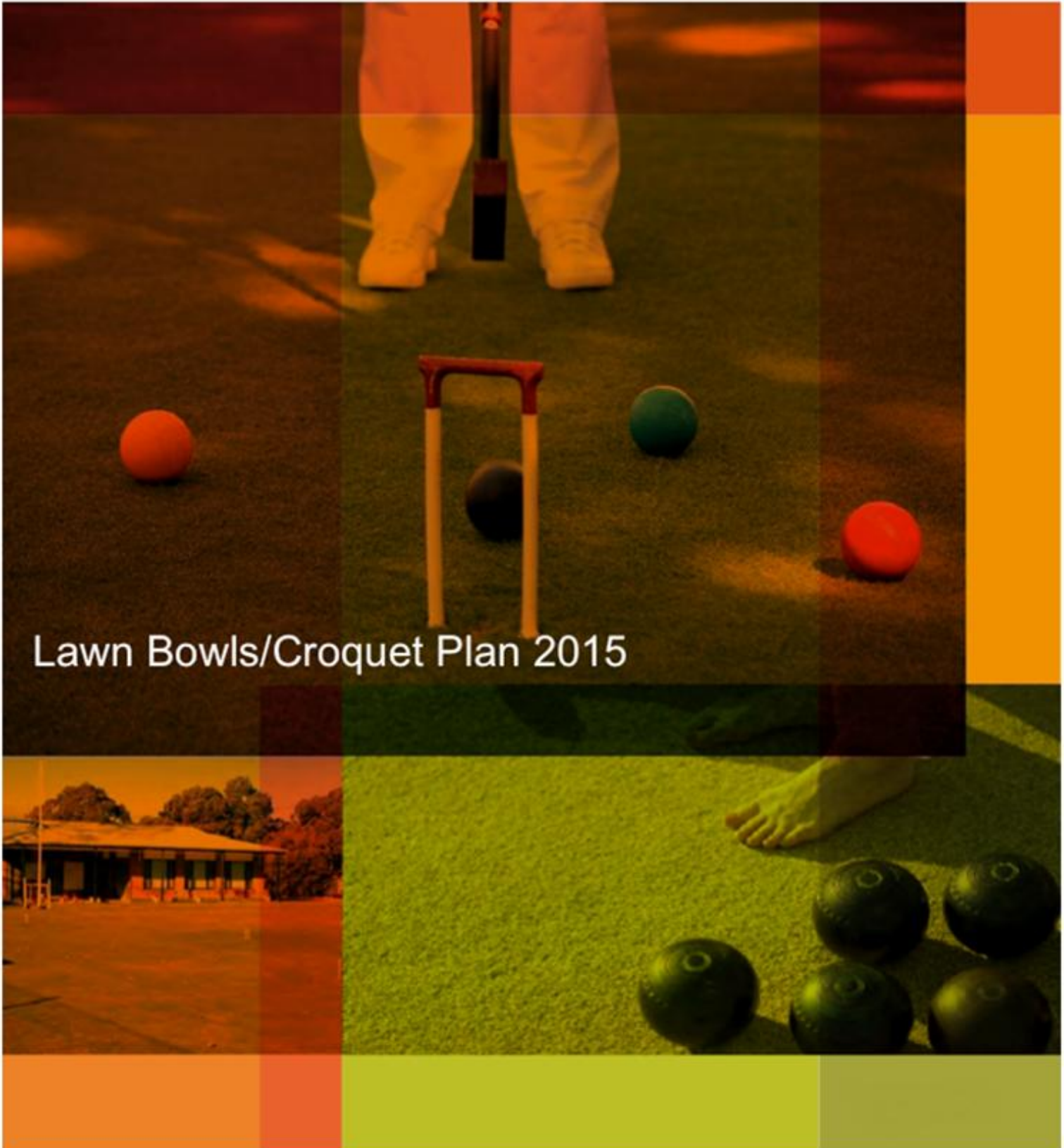




GREATER  
DANDENONG  
*City of Opportunity*



Lawn Bowls/Croquet Plan 2015

## **About this document**

This document is the Lawn Bowls/Croquet Plan 2015 prepared by @leisure Planners for the City of Greater Dandenong.

© All rights reserved.  
No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form, by any means, without the prior written permission of City of Greater Dandenong

## Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. Demand for lawn bowls and croquet</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 Population	7
2.2 Projected demand for bowls and croquet	9
2.3 Current club memberships	10
<b>3. Bowls facilities in the City of Greater Dandenong</b>	<b>11</b>
3.1 Ownership and management	11
3.2 Playing surfaces and floodlighting	12
3.3 Bowls clubs on private land	14
3.4 Indoor bowls	14
3.5 Distribution of lawn bowls facilities within the City of Greater Dandenong	15
<b>4. Croquet facilities in the City of Greater Dandenong</b>	<b>17</b>
4.1 Overview	17
4.2 Condition of croquet facilities	17
4.3 Distribution of croquet facilities	17
<b>5. Key issues</b>	<b>18</b>
5.1 Opportunities for further use of lawn bowls and croquet facilities	18
5.2 Social bowls, tournaments and developmental programs	18
5.3 Club development opportunities and increasing members and participants to clubs	18
5.4 Marketing and promoting the sport and the clubs	20
5.5 Developing sustainable clubs	21
5.6 Partnerships with other community facilities and clubs	21
5.7 What facility improvements are required and how should Council prioritise capital works projects	22
<b>6. Goals</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>7. Implementation plan</b>	<b>25</b>
7.1 Capital works and facility maintenance program and priorities	25
7.2 Club and sporting development priorities	26

## Executive summary

There are considerable benefits of bowls and croquet clubs to the City of Greater Dandenong — these include: social capital, providing young competitive bowlers with a depth of competition, keeping older adults active and socially connected, providing participation opportunities for all abilities, contributing to the diversity of sports available in the City, and providing affordable venues for community use.

Demand for facilities for bowls and croquet is largely affected by quality of facilities, club costs, and the need to offer and market new products to the Greater Dandenong community.

There is some value in reviewing how assets are upgraded, managed and used if the sports are to survive; reviewing the nature and conditions of occupancy agreements and how clubs are charged may assist clubs to better plan for the future.

A focus on building relationships between potential partners could make a considerable difference to these clubs. Strengthening partnerships between Council, clubs and peak bodies to enhance the sense of value, and promote clubs and the sports to the community would be beneficial. The development of champions or ambassadors and coordination between internal partners that service specific population areas should be explored: youth, older adults, children and families, as well as communications, assets, planning and parks.

### Key directions

Key directions in this plan include:

1. Develop bowls and croquet facilities to be attractive to social, school and competition players and juniors.
2. Develop clubs to provide for a minimum membership of 200 players plus social players.
3. Support the redevelopment of two clubs— provide quality greens, lights and clubrooms, a high level of presentation, signage, suitable furniture and fittings for shared use events, meetings, and public hire.
4. Introduce a rolling program of capital works to improve facilities, light greens and allow these facilities to be shared.
5. Priority sites for development should be selected using the following criteria:
  - Have opportunities to co-locate with others
  - Facilities are in a good location, and no major site issues
  - Clubs have a broad membership/player base.
6. Grow participation in the sports of croquet and bowls as sports for people of all ages, abilities and provide benefits at many levels across the community.
7. In conjunction with peak bodies grow juniors and a school program with at least one club and grow social bowls at all venues.
8. Enhance the marketing, promotion and education opportunities about playing bowls and croquet.
9. Develop strong programs and partnerships with other community and cultural groups, peak bodies and clubs to provide community benefit from bowls and croquet.
10. Develop the clubs in the City of Greater Dandenong to become sustainable clubs through new occupancy agreements.
11. Consider reviewing the role of Council and clubs for maintenance of lighting and fencing.
12. Promote the sport to casual, social, corporate, community and school user groups through the web, brochures, club signage and social events.
13. Assist clubs to become as self-sufficient as possible and to plan for the future funding of asset replacement.
14. Assist clubs to recruit volunteers through the volunteer resource service for specific tasks that might relate to, for example, business management, marketing, event management, fundraising, building maintenance and catering.
15. Consider running a marketing campaign such as Learn Live Love a bowls/croquet club, to reacquaint the public with the sports of bowls and croquet.

# 1. Introduction

## The project

In 2015, the City of Greater Dandenong (CGD) engaged consultants to prepare a Lawn Bowls and Croquet Plan for the City. This project aimed to update the 2008 Lawn Bowls/Croquet Plan and assess the longer-term sustainability of lawn bowls and croquet, as well as to provide strategic direction for future facility needs.

The brief for the Lawn Bowls/Croquet Plan 2015 was to consult with clubs and peak bodies, and to provide:

- A snapshot of the existing situation with respect to both lawn bowls and croquet clubs in the City of Greater Dandenong.
- A forward approach as to how Council will manage facilities in the future, to ensure facilities are sustainable in the long term.

## Methodology

Development of the City of Greater Dandenong Lawn Bowls/Croquet Plan involved an analysis of lawn bowls and croquet within the City of Greater Dandenong.

Tasks undertaken included the following:

- Site visits to all Council-owned lawn bowls and croquet clubs and facilities, and a visual walkthrough audit of facilities.
- Face-to-face interviews with lawn bowls and croquet clubs within the City of Greater Dandenong.
- Consultation with key stakeholders within the two sports.
- A lawn bowls and croquet workshop.
- Analysis of membership and demand for the sports of lawn bowls and croquet.
- Analysis of facility distribution.
- Identification of key issues and development of proposed actions.
- Preparation of a draft strategy including an implementation plan.

## Strategic context

The **Council Plan 2013-17** acknowledges sport and recreation as integral to achieving a "healthy, active and safe community".

Similarly, the **Community Wellbeing Plan 2013-17** acknowledges the importance of physical activity, leisure and recreational opportunities in improving health and wellbeing, encouraging social interaction, and creating healthier and more inclusive communities. A strategic action of the Community Wellbeing Plan is to implement the Lawn Bowls/Croquet Plan to increase community awareness of these sports and create greater opportunities for participation.

The City of Greater Dandenong **Activate: Sport and Active Recreation Strategy 2014-19** proposed to review the Lawn Bowls and Croquet Plan 2008 to assess future demand and needs of lawn bowls and croquet in Greater Dandenong.

The recommendations from the **Lawn Bowls/Croquet Plan 2008** were developed following consideration of the key principles of Council's previous overarching Leisure Strategy, and are outlined in Table 1 against actions undertaken since the 2008 Plan. Facility improvement and renewal works have also been completed since.

**Table 1: Actions since the 2008 Lawn Bowls/Croquet Plan**

Leisure Strategy key principles	Actions since 2008
Focusing resources on activities where sustainable demand from the community can be demonstrated.	Continued coordination of indoor bowls, corporate bowls and barefoot bowls during either the off-season or weeknights.
Multipurpose non-exclusive facilities developed.	There has been continued development in allowing facilities to be utilised for activities such as barefoot bowls, indoor bowls, social bowls and larger tournaments involving players from outside of the district, as well as by external groups. Some smaller recreational activities, such as darts, are being formally organised within bowls clubs.
Tailored, flexible and appropriate opportunities are delivered that cater to the needs of Council's diverse community.	Programs such as barefoot, social, school developmental programs, indoor bowls and functions are being specifically tailored to the needs of the community.

## **Bowls Victoria**

### **Strategic Plan 2013-2017**

Bowls is a sport for all ages and abilities. The sport already provides for 3 to 103 year olds and will remain accessible for all segments of the community.

In championing this vision, Bowls Victoria aims to be recognised for their commitment to leading Victoria's most accessible sport.

The strategic plan identifies that Bowls Victoria will centre its activities on five key priority areas:

- Participation
- Communications
- Club support
- Leadership and governance
- Commercial development.

Key external priorities listed are:

1. Investment into detailed market research to better identify all markets for bowls and develop programs and activities to match demand.
2. Support for their clubs and participation activities to achieve growth, increase their junior base and arrest the decline in women and girls participation.
3. Generate a greater understanding and implementation of inclusive practices and associated benefits across their club network.
4. Support for Bowls Australia to reform coaching and coach education and redefine the role of coaches at all levels of the sport.
5. Foster relationships and partnerships with sport, government, community and corporate stakeholders to support all aspects of their strategic direction.

## **Croquet Victoria**

### **Strategic Plan 2013-17**

The 2013 Strategic Plan identified key issues facing croquet as the following:

- Diminishing market share due to a changing social environment
- Lack of adequate social (non-playing or peri-playing) opportunities
- Low community awareness, or victim of misconceptions
- Low participation rate
- Poor communication flow between levels
- Insufficient revenue to cover operational costs, due in part to expenses incurred by ownership of the Victorian Croquet Centre.

Key external objectives include:

1. Grow their membership and develop the capability of the sport, their clubs and their members in order to provide clear pathways for players, coaches, officials and volunteers.
2. Ensure that the physical, financial, social and competitive environments in which mallet sports exist meet the highest standards to continually provide a premium experience for their stakeholders.
3. Improve and promote the perception of mallet sports to the wider Victorian community, ensure members are informed, engaged and active and that their facilities are used appropriately to benefit the communities in which they exist.

## 2. Demand for lawn bowls and croquet

### 2.1 Population

The City of Greater Dandenong is approximately 129 square kilometres. The suburbs of Greater Dandenong are:

Dandenong, Dandenong South, Bangholme, Springvale, Springvale South, Noble Park, Noble Park North and Keysborough. Table 2 details the resident population in the City of Greater Dandenong by suburb (2011).

**Table 2: Resident population (over five years of age) of the City of Greater Dandenong by suburb 2011, and projected for 2026**

Suburb	Pop. 2011	Projected pop. 2026
Bangholme	798	798
Dandenong	18,980	33,731
Dandenong North	21,913	24,679
Dandenong South	5,940	11,463
Keysborough	19,885	27,937
Noble Park	28,377	38,137
Noble Park North	7,392	8,211
Springvale	19,773	25,065
Springvale South	12,186	13,284
<b>Greater Dandenong LGA</b>	<b>135,244</b>	<b>183,305</b>

### Demographic influences on sports participation

Age, gender, income, ethnicity and education are key determinants of participation in sport.

The demographic profile of the City of Greater Dandenong suggests a low propensity to play organised sports based on a number of characteristics:

- 60% of residents are born overseas
- 64% of the residents of Greater Dandenong speak languages other than English
- The City of Greater Dandenong has a relatively high unemployment rate (8.9%)
- The City of Greater Dandenong is the most disadvantaged municipality in Victoria based on the SEIFA index of disadvantage (2011).

The implications of the demographic profile are that there will be significant benefits to the population if sports participation can be increased among residents born overseas of non-English speaking countries, with high unemployment rates and low incomes. However, significant interventions may be required to achieve potential increases in participation in these areas.

### Age profile

The population in the City of Greater Dandenong is forecast to grow in all age groups by 2026 (with the exception of the 20-24 year age group, which is expected to slightly decline).

According to ABS data people aged 65 or over have the highest participation rate in lawn bowls, followed by people aged 55-64.

The current membership data available shows that 80% of members are 65 years or older. Only a moderate amount of growth is expected to occur in this age group.

### Gender

Gender has a strong bearing on participation in sport and physical activity, the demand for specific activities, and participation patterns.

Current membership numbers suggest males comprise approximately 65% of bowls participants. The gender profile of croquet is not clear (although traditionally a “married ladies” sport) however together with bowls there are opportunities to encourage higher participation amongst females if a number of known barriers/attitudes are overcome.

### People with a disability

Whilst the proportion of people with a disability who participate in sports or physical activities is considerably lower than for the population as a whole, bowls is a sport that has made a number of adaptations to include a wider range of people with a disability.

## Education

People who have attained a Bachelor degree or above are much more likely to participate in sport or physical recreation (77%), than those whose highest educational attainment was Year 10 or below (49%).

The percentage of people who hold a Bachelor degree in the City of Greater Dandenong is 21.8%. This compares to the average for metropolitan Melbourne of 23.6%.

Higher education can also lead to higher income and thereby indirectly increase a person's ability to meet the financial costs associated with participating in sport or physical recreation.

It may also provide people with a better understanding of the many health and social benefits that such activities may offer, thereby increasing their willingness to participate.

## Cultural background

The City of Greater Dandenong is the most culturally diverse locality in Victoria and the second most diverse in Australia, with residents from over 156 different birthplaces, 55% of which are from nations where English is not the main spoken language. This compares to 26% of metropolitan Melbourne. Prominent birthplaces include Vietnam, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, India, China, Italy, Greece, Bosnia, Afghanistan, New Zealand and Britain.

The City of Greater Dandenong has a high proportion of residents who were born overseas (60%), compared with metropolitan Melbourne (31.5%).

Approximately 14% of Greater Dandenong residents do not speak English well, or do not speak the language at all.

One issue that may potentially arise with respect to new communities is that sport and leisure may not be a high priority for families resettling in Australia, in relation to other life activities. Families may not stay long in affordable housing and the value of sport may not be recognised in the same way it is in Australian culture. For these reasons families may not have the willingness to pay for sport, nor commit family resources to travel,

volunteering or time for training and competition.

One's cultural background is also a key influence on activity preferences.

Whilst bowls and croquet are international sports, it is not a popular sport among the main non-English speaking countries of origin of Greater Dandenong residents.

## Social disadvantage, income and employment status

Participation in sport and physical activities is highly influenced by social determinants of health. People in areas with the greatest disadvantage are more likely to require interventions and opportunities to participate in physical activity and sport, as a result of the combination of barriers associated with low socio-economic status.

The City of Greater Dandenong is the most disadvantaged municipality in Victoria based on the SEIFA index, with an index of 895. This compares to neighbouring municipalities of Kingston (1038) and Casey (1007).

Access to financial resources increases a person's ability to participate in sport or physical recreation.

People whose equivalised weekly household income was in the highest quintile reported a sport and physical activity participation rate of 80%, whereas the participation rate for people in the lowest quintile was 45%.

The City of Greater Dandenong has relatively low levels of personal and household income, with a median weekly household income of \$953. This compares to the average of \$1331 in metropolitan Melbourne.

In Greater Dandenong, almost 30% of households have an income that is less than \$600 per week compared with 22% in metropolitan Melbourne. The rates of unemployment are higher in the City of Greater Dandenong (8.9%) than across metropolitan Melbourne (5.5%).



## 2.2 Projected demand for bowls and croquet

Based on state participation rates bowls has the potential to attract over 4000 participants, and croquet over 300 participants in the municipality by 2026.

The City of Greater Dandenong Sport and Recreation Participation Study 2011 illustrated a participation rate in bowls of 1% (a 2015 update of this study has shown no change in the participation rate). This is slightly lower than the state participation rate of 2% for people over 15 years of age for the same year. Therefore, the number of players is likely to be somewhere between 1100 and 2500 players. This figure has the potential to grow by 2026, should interventions be put in place.

The City of Greater Dandenong Sport and Recreation Participation Study 2011 did not provide a participation rate for croquet.

The 2011 state participation rate for croquet is estimated at 0.2% for people over 15 years of age. This equates to some 270 theoretical players within the equivalent population of Greater Dandenong.

The following table (Table 3) shows potential numbers of players based on those local and state participation rates above.

### Organised and unorganised opportunities

As with other sports, in recent years there has been a decline in the number of bowlers playing as part of a club, in favour of social participation. Social and barefoot bowls in addition to programs for juniors and school children is going to be critical in increasing the opportunities for residents to play unorganised bowls in the future. This trend is likely to be more evident in the City of Greater Dandenong than in any other place, due to cultural influences.

## Indoor/outdoor

Carpet bowls is a variation of traditional lawn bowls – in Greater Dandenong there is a large organised competition where players play across a number of venues throughout the fixture.

The Victorian participation rate in 2012 was approximately 0.2%. This rate is considerably lower than outdoor bowls, but there appears to have been some growth since the previous year.

**Table 3: Theoretical number of bowls and croquet participants in Greater Dandenong by suburb (based on local and state participation rates)**

Suburb	Pop. 2011 (aged 15+)	Theoretical bowls participants based on ERASS 2011*	Theoretical bowls participants based on CGD participation rate 2011**	Theoretical croquet participants based on ERASS 2011*
Bangholme	798	18	8	2
Dandenong	18,980	418	190	38
Dandenong North	21,913	482	219	44
Dandenong South	5,940	131	59	12
Keysborough	19,885	438	199	40
Noble Park	28,377	624	284	57
Noble Park North	7,392	163	74	15
Springvale	19,773	435	198	40
Springvale South	12,186	268	122	24
<b>Greater Dandenong LGA</b>	<b>135,244</b>	<b>2,975</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>271</b>

\* Based on state participation rates ERASS 2011

\*\*Based on local CGD participation rates 2011

## 2.3 Current club memberships

The current total membership of bowls and croquet clubs within the City of Greater Dandenong is 496 members. This is down from the total membership number in 2006 of 946 (as indicated in the 2008 Plan). This figure is considerably lower than the potential participation in bowls and croquet, however this figure does not account for social, non-member participants.

The closure of several clubs such as the Dandenong Croquet Club and the Dandenong City Bowling Club has impacted on numbers. In addition the Dandenong RSL Recreation Bowls Club no longer has a bowls green of their own, and plays at other clubs.

The current total membership of croquet clubs in the City of Greater Dandenong is five members. This compares to the total in 2006 of 45. The closure of the Dandenong Croquet Club recently has contributed to the decline.

The table following shows the breakdown of membership of bowls and croquet clubs in 2006 and 2015. Note that Dandenong City Bowling Club and the Dandenong Croquet Club no longer operate as clubs.

**Table 4: Bowls and croquet club membership numbers 2006 and 2015**

Club	Facility ownership	2006 members	2015 members
Burden Park Bowling Club	Council	271	153
Burden Park Mallet Sports Club	Council	20	5
Dandenong City Bowling Club	Council	74	Closed
Dandenong Croquet Club	Council	25	Closed
Keysborough Bowls Club	Council	131	104
Noble Park Bowls Club	Council	160	104
DC Bowls Club (Dandenong Club)	Private	130	88
Dandenong RSL Recreation Bowls Club	Private	135	42
<b>Total</b>		<b>946</b>	<b>496</b>

### 3. Bowls facilities in the City of Greater Dandenong

Below is an overview of lawn bowls facilities within the municipality, as well as their associated elements.

#### 3.1 Ownership and management

##### *Occupancy agreements*

The City of Greater Dandenong lease facilities to three bowls clubs within the City. Until recently there were four clubs that held lease agreements with Council. In addition, there are two bowls facilities on private land. These are the DC Bowls Club and the Dandenong RSL Recreation Bowls Club.

The leases to clubs do not have standardised conditions, with some clubs having differing obligations and expectations written into their leases than others. Each of these leases has differing time periods.

Currently bowls clubs arrangements differ compared to other outdoor field sports — they pay the full costs of occupation, rather than a subsidised amount such as a field sport (like football or cricket), and the costs of maintaining greens is the responsibility of clubs. With the current size of clubs, this is not a sustainable situation and is therefore unlikely that clubs in their current form will be able to survive with existing arrangements. The cost of maintaining a green in a quality and playable condition can be \$30,000 or more a year.

The structure of agreements (with clear description of roles and responsibilities and conditions of use) needs to be reviewed and occupancy agreements standardised. Consideration can be given to this once current agreements with clubs expire in 2018. Agreements with clubs should be consistent in the areas of fees, conditions of use, tenure and service delivery outcomes.

Leases may not be the most suitable form of agreement, and occupancy agreements may need to more closely resemble service agreements. The service delivery outcomes should be based around growing participation, increasing access to club facilities for the community and building sustainable clubs. These agreements should consider:

- Responsibility for upgrades and maintenance of each element within bowls facilities i.e. clubhouse, greens and surfaces, fencing, signage, gardens and grounds.
- The need for clubs to promote and operate more development opportunities through programs such as junior membership and competition, social/barefoot/schools involvement, as well as their normal member competitions.
- The requirement for clubs to develop business plans in order to give them direction and to identify the need for them to plan for facility upgrades through a sinking fund.

##### *Council's relationship with clubs*

All bowls and croquet clubs (irrespective of whether they are situated on Council or private land) provide considerable value in terms of social capital and participation benefits for a wide range of residents, particularly those aged over 65 years and with a disability, where participation rates in sport and social connectedness are considerably lower than for the rest of the population.

These sports also add to the variety of sporting and social opportunities, which are required in a diverse population. The facilities themselves also provide community benefits, as these are generally affordable places for community groups to meet and hold social functions.

The consultation found that bowls facilities are rented to other community organisations for a whole manner of activities including bridge groups, dance groups and bingo.

### 3.2 Playing surfaces and floodlighting

The following table illustrates the nature of greens and floodlighting at bowls facilities in CGD.

**Table 5: Lawn bowls greens and floodlighting in the City of Greater Dandenong**

Bowls club	Type of green	No.	No. of lit greens
Burden Park Bowling Club	Natural turf	3	2
Keysborough Bowls Club	Natural turf*	1	1
	Synthetic	1	0
Noble Park Bowls Club	Natural turf	2	1
DC Bowls Club (Dandenong Club)	Natural turf	2	0
Dandenong RSL Recreation Bowls Club	No greens	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>Synthetic</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Natural turf</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>

\*Keysborough Bowls Club is currently converting the remaining natural turf green to synthetic.

#### **Playing surfaces**

The traditional playing surface for lawn bowls is natural turf. Most Victorian and metropolitan Melbourne lawn bowls greens would have once been surfaced with predominantly cool season grasses such as bent grass, however during hot summers and drought conditions it is difficult to maintain the required watering of bent grass greens.

There are still some cool season grasses used within the City of Greater Dandenong for lawn bowls, which provide an excellent bowling surface if maintained well.

In more recent times, many clubs across Victoria have replaced their cool season grass greens with warm season hybrid couch grasses such as Santa Ana Couch and Tifdwarf Couch. These grasses are popular in warmer climates of Australia such as South Australia and Queensland and provide an excellent surface for lawn bowls, whilst using less water and allowing more play during the off-season winter months when the couch grass is dormant.

There has been a move towards synthetic greens in some clubs across the country. Whilst synthetic greens have been a valuable addition for clubs to spread wear and reduce the cost of maintenance they do not have the same appeal as turf, are faster to play, have ongoing maintenance and have high capital and replacement costs. Generally speaking, synthetic greens are best when provided in conjunction with another turf green, and it is important for the sport of lawn bowls to continue to have natural turf greens to play on in each municipality.

Within the City of Greater Dandenong there are three lawn bowls clubs operating on Council-owned land and two privately-operated lawn bowls clubs (although one of the private clubs does not have greens). Within these clubs there are seven greens on Council-owned land and two greens at one of the private lawn bowls clubs.

There is a mixture of playing surfaces across the City with natural turf and synthetic surfaces both represented. Out of the nine greens amongst the lawn bowls clubs, eight of these are natural turf and only one green is synthetic. The Keysborough Bowls Club is in the process of installing a second synthetic green, and Noble Park Bowls Club would like to install a new Tifdwarf couch green in the future.

Essential to a successful natural turf lawn bowls green is a reliable, modern, automated irrigation system and consistent water supplies. The irrigation system at Burden Park Bowling Club is in need of repair, and with three natural turf greens this will be vital in the short term. The cost of green-keeping services is a common issue across lawn bowls clubs with natural turf greens. There is potential that the City of Greater Dandenong has the skills on its staff to assist some of the annual turf management activities as it would for other sports turf areas such as turf wickets and ovals. An investigation is recommended into the possibility of some assistance being provided to contribute to green-keeping services at lawn bowls clubs by Council staff.

### **Floodlighting**

Less than half of the greens in CGD are lit. Floodlighting is an essential element of a fit for purpose bowls club, as they allow access to the playing surfaces during the evening, thus opening up opportunities for new people to experience the sport when they are more likely to be available to play. Many of the existing lights may not be current or energy efficient and therefore may not be cost effective to maintain.

In the future, new style energy efficient and easy to maintain lighting should replace the old style lighting that runs across greens on overhead wires.

Burden Park Bowling Club has lighting on two of their greens, and is the older-style lighting strung across the greens. This lighting is not in keeping with current standards and is difficult and expensive to maintain and repair. During consultation the club expressed their view that lighting of greens is one of the most important elements required to attract new people to the sport of bowls, as it opens up opportunities during times when people are available to play (after work and/or on weeknights).

Keysborough Bowls Club has lights on the older natural turf green, but not on its synthetic green. The club has expressed its desire to not only replace the natural turf green with a synthetic green, but also the need to install lights on the synthetic green to provide playing opportunities outside of daylight hours.

Noble Park Bowls Club has lights on one of their greens. Ideally, so as to attract more user groups and members in the future, lighting would be required on the second green.

### **Clubhouse facilities**

The clubhouses of bowls clubs are in reasonable condition; however clubs need more assistance in keeping facilities fit for purpose and adequately maintaining these in order to be attractive to future players and members.

Each of the bowls clubs on Council-owned land has a clubhouse as part of their facility. Below is an overview of issues and concerns related to the clubrooms at bowls clubs on Council land.

**The Burden Park** clubhouse is large and has accessible ramps to the entrance and from the clubhouse to the greens. There is a large car park at the rear and the club shares the park with two other sporting facilities, croquet and tennis. The facility is constructed on an old tip site, with associated ground movement.

**Noble Park Bowls Club** is part of Club Noble, which contributes to the maintenance of the facility. It has a clubhouse attached to the facility that services the needs of the club membership and visitors reasonably well. However, the club has some concerns with its clubhouse. Issues include general maintenance with the building as well as debris from surrounding trees obstructing gutters. Parts of the roof leak and the club requires a toilet upgrade in the near future.

**The Keysborough Bowls Club** has had planning completed to upgrade the entrance to the clubroom building. This construction will enhance the look and feel of the entrance by providing an element of quality design to the facility.

### 3.3 Bowls clubs on private land

There are two privately-owned lawn bowls clubs within the City of Greater Dandenong, DC Bowls Club (Dandenong Club) and Dandenong RSL Recreation Bowls Club. There is also a new indoor/covered facility being constructed at Willow Lodge Retirement Village for use by village residents.

DC Bowls Club has two natural turf greens located behind the main club at the corner of Stud and Heatherton Roads. These are in a very prominent location, but are not visible from the road.

These greens are reasonably well used by members; however the club generally faces the same issues as clubs located on Council-owned land. Some issues include problems with greens in addition to a lack of floodlighting, causing a loss of playing opportunities and a declining membership.

DC Bowls Club does however receive some financial support from the main club to input into its facilities and services and has the opportunity to promote itself to members within the main club.

The Dandenong RSL is also located in a very prominent location adjacent to the Dandenong Activity Centre. However, it does not currently have a green.

### 3.4 Indoor bowls

Although this document focuses on outdoor lawn bowls facilities within the City of Greater Dandenong, there are numerous facilities where indoor bowls is played within the region. Each of the three clubs on Council land operates indoor bowls both during the winter and at a variety of times throughout the week. There is a large organised competition where players play across a number of venues throughout the fixture.

One of the larger indoor bowls clubs is located at Springers Leisure Centre. This club operates indoor bowls competitions and social bowls, and has teams playing in competitions across the south-eastern

region of Melbourne. Springers Indoor Bias Bowls Club has a usage agreement with Springers Leisure Centre management. The club is finding that the costs of mats and other equipment continue to rise.

There is also a large indoor/covered venue at Willow Lodge retirement village (under construction). Participants who play indoor bowls also play outdoor lawn bowls, although there are many people who prefer to just play indoor bowls.

### 3.5 Distribution of lawn bowls facilities within the City of Greater Dandenong

The location of lawn bowls clubs within the City of Greater Dandenong is shown in Map 1.

**Table 6: Lawn bowls greens by suburb in the City of Greater Dandenong**

Suburb	No. of greens
Springvale South	3 greens
Noble Park	2 greens
Keysborough	2 greens
Dandenong	2 greens (private clubs)

This distribution shows that all of the lawn bowls greens within the City of Greater Dandenong are relatively close to each other, with the distance between Burden Park Bowling Club and Noble Park Bowls Club being only 3km, and the distance between Burden Park Bowling Club and Keysborough Bowls Club being just over 5km away.

Within the same region as the City of Greater Dandenong bowls clubs, there are numerous other lawn bowls clubs within close proximity of the three clubs on Council land and the two private clubs.

The following clubs are likely to provide lawn bowls opportunities to residents of the City of Greater Dandenong:

**Table 7: Potential lawn bowls greens that could be provided to CGD residents**

Club	No. of greens
Clayton Bowls Club	3 greens
Glen Waverley Bowls Club	4 greens
Cheltenham Bowls Club	2 greens
Mentone Bowling Club	2 greens
Parkdale Bowling and Social Club	1 green
Mordialloc Bowls Club	2 greens

### *Financial viability of clubs*

For the existing number of players the five clubs in the City are not currently sustainable. There is likely to be less than a quarter of the potential players actually playing bowls in the City at present.

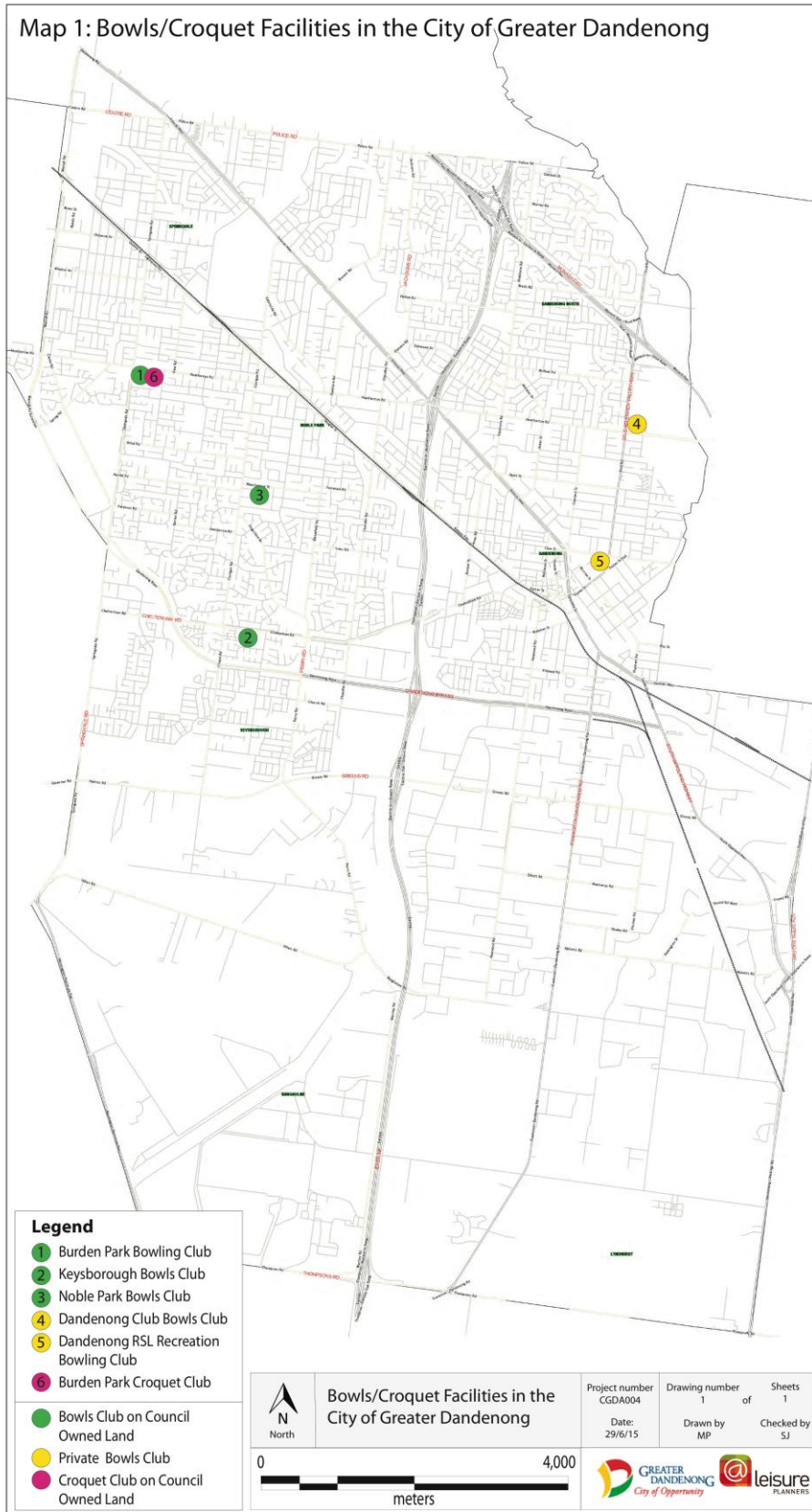
Before any club considers closing, substantial effort should be made to grow the sport and the clubs and increase the use of the facilities.

A club of some 400 members with multiple lit greens is considered an appropriate size to be able to maintain a sustainable club and provide a strong depth of competition, a pathway for players and contribute to the growth of the sport. No club in the City has more than 200 members.

Many clubs experience periods of growth and decline. One notable example is that of St Kilda Bowling Club. One of the older bowls clubs in Victoria, it was once close to folding however was able to renew itself through merging with other sporting codes and becoming a strong social club, offering social opportunities, entertainment and barefoot bowls. They utilised funds from social activities to rebuild the club and its strength in pennant competition. St Kilda Bowling Club has enjoyed considerable success in pennant bowls recently.

Council should consider developing one or two quality facilities and clubs with strong memberships, sustainable facilities and the ability to offer more programs and services to residents in the municipality.

Map 1: Bowls/croquet facilities in the City of Greater Dandenong





## 4. Croquet facilities in the City of Greater Dandenong

### 4.1 Overview

Currently there are no active croquet clubs operating within the City of Greater Dandenong. A croquet facility exists at Burden Park, and has three full sized courts and a small clubroom facility. The playing surfaces have fallen into disrepair after several years of declining membership, volunteers and limited demand for the playing surfaces. The facility however sits within the popular Burden Park, adjacent to a lawn bowls club and a tennis club. This park is very popular on the weekends with families having picnics, playing ball sports and enjoying the playground and barbecue facilities.

Due to declining numbers at the Burden Park Mallet Sports Club, the South East Metropolitan Croquet Association recently endorsed a 12-18 month timeframe for establishing a nucleus of croquet members regularly playing at Burden Park, with the aim of re-establishing an ongoing club. They suggested the Burden Park site has excellent facilities and is a suitable location for a 'Regional Croquet' facility.

### 4.2 Condition of croquet facilities

The playing surfaces at Burden Park (three full sized courts) have deteriorated over the last few years; nevertheless with some investment these courts could be brought back into a suitable condition. The clubhouse at Burden Park is in a reasonable condition and has been well looked after. The kitchen is small and could be upgraded. Accessibility is appropriate from the car park through the clubhouse and onto the playing surface. There are numerous shelters around the playing area but the facility has no lighting of the playing areas.

### 4.3 Distribution of croquet facilities

There is only one croquet facility in the City of Greater Dandenong (Burden Park) but a number of others within the eastern and south-eastern suburbs of metropolitan Melbourne. Clubs are located in Sandringham, Brighton, Elwood, Frankston, Ashwood, Kew, Mornington, Rosebud West and Sorrento.

Some of these clubs could provide croquet and other mallet sport opportunities for residents from the City of Greater Dandenong.

**Table 8: Croquet facilities within the City of Greater Dandenong**

Croquet Facility	Court no. and surface type
Burden Park	3 Natural turf

## 5. Key issues

### 5.1 Opportunities for further use of lawn bowls and croquet facilities

All of the lawn bowls clubs and previously the croquet club (on Council land) in the City of Greater Dandenong allow other hirers to utilise clubhouses and facilities. Some of the activities that clubhouses are used for other than lawn bowls related activities include:

- Indoor bowls (social and competition)
- Darts
- Dances, dinners and parties
- Bookings for meetings of other community groups.

Hiring out facilities such as clubhouses is a good opportunity to seek additional revenue while making use of elements frequently found in such facilities, including: quality kitchens, bars, toilets and larger social spaces. It is also a way of promoting the facility to those not aware of the sports or the clubs or what they offer.

The South East Metropolitan Croquet Association at its AGM on 30 May 2015 decided to work towards the establishment of an ongoing club at Burden Park, and aims to prepare a business plan to guide its development. Burden Park Mallet Sports Club had an arrangement to hire their building to a community group to hold meetings; however this is the only current and alternative use of the facility.

Few clubs undertake any marketing or promotion to encourage the use of bowls clubs for sport or community use.

There are a number of social clubs and cultural groups without facilities in the City that may be encouraged to use a bowls club, or be invited to a one-off social bowls activity. Key opportunities include corporate bowls at lunch times, targeting businesses in the City, school activities, retiree groups, Probus (there are two clubs in CGD), U3A and other sports clubs.

### 5.2 Social bowls, tournaments and developmental programs

All of the lawn bowls clubs offer opportunities to be involved in corporate bowls, barefoot bowls, regular social bowls and coaching programs.

Keysborough Bowls Club coordinates a successful schools program with the aim of introducing the sport to as many local schools as possible. Although this program does not necessarily result in more members to the club it should be a program that continues to be sustained, potentially through funding and Council support into the future.

### 5.3 Club development opportunities and increasing members and participants to clubs

With declining member numbers, ageing membership and continued costs of turf management, building management and lease fees, lawn bowls clubs will continue to find the task of operating their clubs more and more difficult.

It will be important for clubs, Council, the peak bodies and the community to fully engage in the need to regrow these sports, and maximise use of each facility. This additional use must include social and casual use, not only competition activities. Clubs need to encourage an increase in use from:

- Casual/social bowls
- Clubhouse hire groups
- Partnerships with other sports, clubs, corporate organisations and community groups
- Cultural and community organisations
- School activities including development programs, coaching and partnerships with school holiday program providers
- Attracting more people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities and people with disabilities.

Bowls Australia promotes and supports numerous programs to aid in the development of participation in the sport.

For those who are time-poor, there are several versions of social bowls that are a much shorter and sharper version of the game. There are also many social formats that can be played which are ideal for social, corporate and come and try days.

With memberships at clubs being comprised of many older adults, it is essential that a range of programs that promote juniors, and encourage young and new people to the sport of lawn bowls are embraced to ensure that the clubs thrive in the future.

Junior participation is low in lawn bowls clubs. During consultation, most clubs commented that when a junior or even a middle-aged person comes along, as soon as that person shows any promise in the sport they are drawn to other clubs in the region where a higher level of competition or coaching is available.

With such a large percentage of people born overseas in the City of Greater Dandenong, it is essential that Council, clubs and the state and national sporting bodies work together to engage these communities and try and make the sport of bowls appeal to the broader population.

Bowls offers a number of programs and participation streams to provide opportunities to people of all abilities. Partnerships between clubs, Council, Bowls Victoria and disability support organisations should be encouraged to increase participation amongst people of all abilities and to ensure sporting clubs and facilities are offering welcoming, accessible and inclusive environments to the community.

Some clubs already coordinate school programs, although this does not always mean that younger people are becoming members or social bowlers. Although membership gains have not always transpired in the past, it is important that these programs in which school participation is coordinated continue, so as to attempt to change the attitudes of younger members of the population about the sport of bowls. There are also opportunities to build partnerships with school holiday program

facilitators to offer lawn bowls as a possible activity.

Some of the clubs identified the following issues and barriers to lawn bowls and croquet participation:

- Local residents are too busy working to play traditional sport.
- People think it is only an older person's sport.
- Club volunteers are running out of energy and ideas to try and build membership.
- There is difficulty in maintaining quality facilities, especially greens, fencing and lighting, that are essential to attract players.
- There is little opportunity to raise money to cover costs, and hence to attract new players.

Clubs had ideas to increase participation and membership that included:

- Targeting multicultural communities, possibly with the help of Council.
- Linking more effectively with local schools.
- Clubs working together to promote the sport rather than individual clubs.
- Improve facilities to make clubs more appealing to new participants.

There are a number of well-maintained and adequate lawn bowls facilities within the City of Greater Dandenong. To increase participants and members, the following improvements need to be actioned:

- Continue to improve facilities, particularly reducing the cost to clubs for the ongoing maintenance of essential elements especially greens, lighting and fencing.
- Significantly promote the sport to casual, social, corporate, community and school user groups through the web, brochures, club signage and social events.
- Continue to engage with Bowls Victoria and Bowls Australia to develop the sport for sections of the community not already participating in the sport.
- Council to assist clubs to become as self sufficient as possible and to plan for the future funding of asset replacement.

## 5.4 Marketing and promoting the sport and the clubs

Lawn bowls clubs in the City of Greater Dandenong have previously been involved in letter box drops, shopping centre showcases, come and try days, Council sport days and other promotions. These activities are becoming increasingly difficult to implement as they require a significant commitment from volunteers, and resulting increases in membership and use have not proven successful on most occasions.

Each of the lawn bowls clubs in City of Greater Dandenong has a website that promotes the club, what they offer and where they are. Clubs should continue to keep these websites updated and relevant, and promote the sites at every available opportunity. Council support for clubs with the regular promotion of the clubs' activities through Council publications, open days and events is recommended.

Clubs will need to review in conjunction with Council their facility signage and wayfinding to improve the community's awareness of the clubs and the opportunities that each club has available. At the same time Council should consider supporting the refurbishment of clubs and furniture and fittings to enable clubs to run functions and appeal to a broader family market.

The highest priority is to promote clubs and specific activities to other community and cultural groups within the City, and encourage the community into coming and trying these sports, either socially or as a club member.

It is vital that clubs advertise social lawn bowls opportunities broadly through signage and online and local publications to ensure these opportunities are reaching potential new participants. Clubs need to continue to work with Bowls Australia to promote the sport and the club through their promotional sources.

Council could partner with these sports to run a campaign to reacquaint the public and educate new residents about these sports. Like small village shopping centres have found, the community may always expect these facilities to be available but if they don't support them they may be lost forever. Such a campaign could include the following elements:

- Learn Live Love a bowls/croquet club – promote members telling their stories, profiling their history, and explaining the game and how to play.
- Media involvement.
- Peak body programs targeting juniors and schools to be linked in with the Australian Sports Commission's Sporting Schools program.
- Family days e.g. every Sunday.
- Encouraging community organisations as partners or buddies, involving cultural groups and service groups – Probus, service clubs and other sports.
- Involvement of a range of Council departments as partners: youth, older adults, children and families, communications, assets, planning, and parks.
- Seeking grants to support and implement programs at clubs.

## 5.5 Developing sustainable clubs

Croquet and bowls clubs are disadvantaged by having to pay full costs of playing surfaces and clubrooms unlike other field sports, which are heavily subsidised. When bowls clubs were at their peak participation they might have been able to sustain these costs, however with aging facilities, increasing costs of operating a club and reduced player numbers this model is no longer viable with low club members.

Council, through the volunteer resource service could also assist clubs to seek to recruit volunteers for specific tasks that might relate to, for example, business management, marketing, event management, fundraising as well as building maintenance and catering.

There have previously been suggestions and recommendations that Burden Park Bowling Club and Keysborough Bowls Club consider merging. A number of potential issues at Burden Park Bowling Club (such as the club's location on an old tip site combined with the current state of the irrigation system, lighting and one of its greens along with the difficulty it has attracting new members and participants) support this recommendation. If a merger of these two clubs took place, there is an opportunity to construct a new green adjacent to the Keysborough Bowls Club in order to cater for the additional membership at this club facility. Bowls Australia, Bowls Victoria and Council should work with the clubs and investigate this further and provide guidance and advice as to ongoing agreements between these two clubs to initiate further discussion regarding mergers.

If deemed to be the most appropriate use of the Burden Park croquet facility, the involvement of the South East Metropolitan Croquet Association may assist the Burden Park Mallet Sports Club to grow to become a viable club at this venue. There may also be opportunities for other sport and recreational activities to utilise the facility at Burden Park. Council should investigate any suitable opportunities that may arise in the future.

The two bowls clubs on private land may have greater opportunities to remain viable because of their relationship with licensed facilities.

## 5.6 Partnerships with other community facilities and clubs

There are a number of opportunities for lawn bowls clubs to engage and partner with groups, organisations and other clubs within their communities. These partnerships have the potential to open up opportunities to grow memberships, gain sponsorship and to provide lawn bowls to those within the community that have not or would not normally get this opportunity.

Many bowls clubs are co-located within close proximity of other sporting clubs and facilities such as tennis, football, netball, golf and soccer clubs. Rather than wait for the people at these other clubs to choose to contact the club, there is a good opportunity to develop specific come and try days, competitions and social events targeted to these club environments. Some clubs discussed the fact that traditionally people who were involved in football clubs in the municipality came to join bowls clubs when they retired from playing, coaching or administrating. This transition is not occurring as much as in the past, with those people either continuing to stay involved in their previous sport or moving away from sport club environments altogether. Lawn bowls clubs need to re-engage with these sports clubs and offer opportunities for the members to come and try lawn bowls on regular occasions.

Clubhouses also offer opportunities to attract new people to the bowls club even if it is for an event unrelated to the sport of bowls. Getting new people into the bowls environment in any way offers the opportunity to promote the sport and the club to them.

Opening up clubhouses for hire and spending some time developing targeted marketing strategies for the hire of clubhouses has the potential to benefit clubs not only financially, but also in terms of making the public aware of what lawn bowls clubs offer the community. It is essential that new user agreements allow clubs to hire facilities to the public.

## 5.7 What facility improvements are required and how should Council prioritise capital works projects

Capital works items identified within this project include improvements in the provision of the following facility elements:

- Green replacements and ongoing maintenance support
- Floodlighting
- Fencing
- Clubhouse usability and maintenance
- Upkeep of surrounds and grounds at facilities.

Through consultation with lawn bowls clubs and other local government areas (such as Kingston City Council, City of Casey and City of Monash), it is clear that the essential elements of a bowling club facility are primarily the sport-related elements, such as:

- Greens
- Irrigation
- Clubhouses
- Floodlighting
- Fencing.

Other important elements include:

- Outside social and viewing spaces.
- Signage and promotion (at facility and in surrounding areas).
- Accessibility to clubhouses and playing areas.
- Presentation and image of a club and the prominence of the facility — people being able to see activity is critical to attracting participants.

Supporting clubs to achieve the redevelopment and upkeep of the above elements of the club environment is considered the best way to support them at this stage.

Of most importance is the need to make facilities look and feel inviting and welcoming to the broader public. Ensuring that unstructured opportunities are available within lawn bowling clubs rather than exclusive use, member-only environments will be important into the future.

Through the consultation with clubs as well as the site visits, the following facility projects have been identified as critical to the operation of lawn bowls clubs within the City of Greater Dandenong.

### Lighting of greens

Floodlighting is considered an essential part of a lawn bowling facility, allowing members and the general public to play competitions and social bowls at night and for clubs to offer programs and developmental opportunities throughout the whole year.

Council should seek to ensure that lawn bowling facilities have quality, energy efficient and easy to maintain lighting on at least some greens.

### Green surfaces

There is a range of different surfaces across clubs in the City of Greater Dandenong including cool season grass, warm season grass and synthetic surfaces. It is imperative to always consider that lawn bowls is traditionally played on natural turf greens, and therefore it is important to continue to maintain some natural turf surfaces in each municipality to provide players with access to the main surface of the sport.

The biggest demand that lawn bowling clubs have in the area of their greens is the ability to maintain them to the highest possible standard. This includes having access to quality irrigation systems, and to be financial enough to cover the cost of turf management, contractors and greenkeepers, as well as other essential elements such as fertiliser, chemicals and equipment. Council should consider the possibility that it could potentially undertake aspects of turf management by utilising their skills and equipment that they already have within their organisation.

This support might not be in terms of services such as regular mowing, but perhaps in areas such as turf renovations, topdressing and equipment sharing. Support from Council in this area would enable clubs to spend more of its funds on its primary responsibility of promotion and coordination of sporting opportunities.

Below is a list of green replacement projects that have been highlighted by lawn bowling clubs as future needs:

- Keysborough Bowls Club is replacing their existing natural turf green with a second synthetic green.
- Burden Park Bowling Club would like to investigate either the replacement of its number 2 green with synthetic or drought tolerant grass, or the closure of the green due to issues with the playing surface.
- Noble Park Bowls Club is planning to replace one of its greens with a Tifdwarf couch green.

If further discussion between Burden Park Bowling Club and Keysborough Bowls Club regarding consolidation opportunities were to continue, it would be recommended that consideration be given to constructing a new green at Keysborough Bowling Club, potentially with Tifdwarf couch so as to provide a variety of surfaces at the facility.

### **Other capital works projects**

Other projects that have been highlighted include building maintenance and clubhouse improvement projects, fencing maintenance and repair, tree issues and improvements in areas such as social and viewing areas of the facilities. Below is a list of projects that have been highlighted by lawn bowls clubs and areas where improvements are needed or required:

- Keysborough Bowls Club require an upgraded barbecue area adjacent to its synthetic green, and are moving towards the development of its new clubhouse entry project.
- Burden Park Bowling Club have concerns with the fencing on the croquet club side of the facility, which causes issues with facility security.
- The club's irrigation system is likely to fail shortly and has been 'patched up' many times and will require a full replacement.
- The club also has ongoing concerns that another sinkhole will develop within the facility, causing costly damage to repair. If this happens on a green or under the

building, the costs will be very significant to the club.

- Noble Park Bowls Club has ongoing issues with building maintenance and the trees surrounding the clubhouse. They also have concerns with a leaking roof, gutters and the toilets need upgrading in the near future.

### **Signage and wayfinding**

Signage and wayfinding is an essential element in increasing usage of lawn bowling facilities and memberships of clubs. Well designed and located signage and wayfinding offers:

- The potential for the general public to know that the clubs are there.
- That the lawn bowls clubs are community facilities available for use through club membership, social bowling or other opportunities.
- Who to contact regarding lawn bowls opportunities.
- What programs and services the lawn bowls club offers.

There should be a review of all lawn bowls facility signage, both at the club sites and in the reserves near the club, directing people to the club/facility. This signage needs to ensure that clubs and facilities are easy to find, signage provides good quality, accurate information regarding what services are offered at the club or facility and contact details for the club/facility.

A summary of goals and actions by key issue follows. This includes recommended capital works, as well as club development activities and some significant maintenance actions for the three Council-owned lawn bowls facilities in the City of Greater Dandenong.

## 6. Goals

The goals of this plan are:

- 1. Intervene so as to retain the sports of croquet and bowls as value sports for future generations in the City of Greater Dandenong.**
- 2. Develop bowls and croquet facilities to be attractive to social, school and competition players at all levels of the game.**
  - a. Develop at least two clubs – that have opportunities to co-locate with others and have a broader membership and player base.
  - b. Consider providing at least one non-club facility for each sport in Greater Dandenong should all clubs close.
- 3. Grow participation in the sports of croquet and bowls as sports for people of all ages and abilities, and provide benefits at many levels across the community.**
  - a. Grow juniors and a school program in conjunction with at least one club and grow social bowls at all venues.
  - b. Enhance the marketing, promotion and education opportunities about playing lawn bowls and croquet.
  - c. Develop strong programs and partnerships with other community and cultural groups, peak bodies and clubs to provide community benefit from bowls and croquet.
- 4. Support clubs in CGD to become sustainable clubs through assistance with: asset management, marketing initiatives and promoting participation.**
- 5. Market the sports to all residents and reacquaint the community with the value and history of the sports of bowls and croquet, and how and where to play them.**



## 7. Action and implementation plan

### 7.1 Capital works and facility maintenance program and priorities

The following table outlines the identified and recommended capital works projects as well as significant maintenance works required at facilities in the City of Greater Dandenong and the priority of each.

**Table 9: Capital works and facility maintenance**

Club/facility	Proposed works	Detail (if applicable)	Priority
<b>All venues</b>	Signage	Investigate opportunities to upgrade all lawn bowls club and facility signage, both at the club sites, on the street and in the reserves near the club, directing people to the club/facility. This signage needs to ensure that clubs and facilities are easy to find, signage provides quality, accurate information regarding what services are offered at the club or facility and contact details for the club/facility.	High
	Playing surfaces	Continue to support clubs that choose to keep natural turf greens, especially those with couch varieties.	High
		Review maintenance responsibilities assigned to clubs and Council.	Medium
		If further discussion between Burden Park Bowling Club and Keysborough Bowls Club regarding consolidation opportunities were to continue, consider constructing a new Tifdwarf Couch green adjacent to the current Keysborough greens.	Medium
	Lighting	Council to work in conjunction with clubs to identify priorities for lighting upgrades. Lighting upgrades should consider the ease and cost of ongoing maintenance as well as the energy efficiency of lighting.	High
	Asset renewal	Investigate including replacement and renewal of greens, buildings and lights in an asset management plan.	High
Progressively roll out capital works and maintenance improvements as listed including green improvements and replacements, fencing projects, clubhouse improvements and signage.		High	
<b>Burden Park Bowling Club</b>	Playing surface	Investigate either the replacement of Burden Park Bowling Club's number 2 green with synthetic or drought tolerant grass, or closure of the green.	High
	Fencing	Address fencing on croquet club side of facility, which causes issues with facility security.	Medium
	Irrigation	Burden Park Bowling Club to consider replacement of irrigation system.	High
	Site subsurface	Monitor ground movement associated with Club's location on former tip site.	Medium
<b>Keysborough Bowls Club</b>	Barbecue area	Upgrade to barbecue area adjacent to the synthetic green.	Medium
<b>Noble Park Bowls Club</b>	Playing surface	Noble Park Bowls Club to investigate opportunities to replace one green with a Tifdwarf couch green.	High
	Building maintenance	Address leaking roof, gutters and tree issues. Upgrade to toilet amenities.	High

## 7.2 Club and sporting development priorities

The following table lists recommended actions that are not capital works.

**Table 10: Club and sporting development actions proposed for lawn bowls and croquet**

Key direction area	Actions
<b>Support clubs in club development, marketing initiatives and promotion.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clubs to work in tandem with Council in the areas of marketing, communications, promotions and community development and volunteer recruitment.</li> <li>2. Extend the same marketing and promotion assistance to clubs on private land as those on Council land.</li> <li>3. Increase the promotion of the sports of lawn bowls and croquet, as well as individual clubs within the City. This should be initiated through a marketing campaign to reacquaint residents with the sports. This will need to include signage, media coverage, promotions in local newspapers, brochures, newsletters, website and communications to other community groups, especially culturally and linguistically diverse communities.</li> <li>4. Facilitate the connection of clubs with community and cultural groups within the City.</li> <li>5. Assist clubs through the volunteer resource service to recruit volunteers – especially for marketing and business planning tasks.</li> <li>6. Develop and support partnerships between clubs, state sporting associations and disability support organisations to increase participation and improve access to the sports and sporting facilities by people of all abilities.</li> </ol>
<b>Review management and occupancy agreements.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Once current agreements expire, consider preparing standardised, service-based occupancy agreements that are linked to achievements. These agreements will define clearly the responsibilities of Council and clubs in areas of asset maintenance, replacement and community access levels.</li> </ol>
<b>Facility location/distribution.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Assist Burden Park Bowling Club and Keysborough Bowls Club to discuss options, opportunities, challenges and practical arrangements for merging at the Keysborough site.</li> <li>9. If deemed to be the most appropriate use of the site, support the South East Metropolitan Croquet Association to develop a viable croquet club at Burden Park.</li> <li>10. Seek to retain a bowls club in a central location close to public transport.</li> </ol>
<b>Increase sporting and community use of facilities and club rooms.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Consider options for clubs to provide opportunities for community groups and other organisations to hire facilities.</li> <li>12. Work with Bowls Australia, Bowls Victoria, Croquet Victoria and the clubs to identify and promote the structured and unstructured use of lawn bowling and croquet facilities by other user groups, not just sporting groups.</li> </ol>
<b>Partnerships between clubs and other organisations.</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. Strengthen links between lawn bowling clubs, cultural and community groups and City of Greater Dandenong’s culturally and linguistically diverse communities to improve awareness of the sports, run social days and build partnerships either for lawn bowls participation or other uses such as facility hire.</li> <li>14. Build links between local lawn bowling clubs and the region’s disability service providers so as to coordinate either all abilities lawn bowls participation programs or building hire.</li> <li>15. Lawn bowls clubs to create links with schools and school holiday program providers to coordinate participation programs for young people.</li> </ol>