

CYMDEITHAS BOWLIO MAT BYR CYMRU

WELSH SHORT MAT BOWLS ASSOCIATION

The Governing Body for the Sport in Wales

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Minutes of the WSMBA Executive Committee meeting at the Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells on Sunday 26th July 2026 at 12.10 pm

Present: Gerald Hands (GH) Chairman, Peter Kempster (PK) Vice-Chairman, Wyn Jones (WJ) President, Jac Edwards (JE) co-Secretary, Chris McWhinnie (CMc) co-Secretary and Montgomery, Craig Evans (CE) Welsh Team Manager, Arwel Morgan (AM) West Glam, Stephen Williams (SW) Swansea/Chair of Selectors, Sioned Ann Owen Braniff (SAOB) and Alan Braniff (AB) Gwynedd, Martyn Jarvis (MJ) Wrexham, Mary Jane Rogers (MJR) B&R, Gethin Edwards (GE) Carmarthen, Darren Davies (DD) Cardigan, Paul Hudson (PH) and Rhydian Rees (RR) Pembrokeshire, John Matthews (JM), Richard Palmer (RP)

1. GH welcomed everyone to the meeting which kicks off the 2026/27 season and the meeting accepted apologies from Debs Matthews and Sam Davies.

2. It was noted that RP was initially part of the planning committee for the World Bowls Championships in 2030 but he had withdrawn his name from the minutes as he has stepped back from the Secretary role. Subject to this amendment, the minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed SW and seconded CE.

3. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. Correspondence

RP had received an e-mail from the secretary of the South Pembrokeshire Association (see Appendix A)

Option 2, regarding the affiliation of an individual club to the WSMBA, was immediately ruled out.

PH and RR informed the committee that this had been raised regularly by the South

Pembs Association (SPA) over the years and several working parties had been set up to try to resolve the situation. The SPA clubs will not play in a whole of Pembrokeshire league as their players do not want to travel outside of their area and the current affiliated Pembrokeshire Short Mat Bowls Association (PSMBA) has member clubs within South Pembrokeshire so any attempt to fracture the County will negatively impact PSMBA. Several delegates also commented that this could affect other counties as well where disaffected 'factions' may, for whatever reason, try to dis-associate themselves from their current county set-up and label themselves something else. PH expressed frustration with this request from SPA as he had personally been involved in most of these working parties over the years and the PSMBA had, on several occasions, agreed that the SPA league could still run within the PSMBA but that the SPA would have to be affiliated within the governance of PSMBA, and not be a distinct association, in order to become affiliated to the WSMBA. PH also informed delegates that several individual members of clubs in the SPA have been allowed, as a goodwill gesture by PSMBA, to join clubs in PSMBA (so they belong to two clubs) to take advantage of the benefits of affiliation to WSMBA.

There was a long discussion regarding this request with several delegates expressing concern that allowing there to be a 'county within a county' would set a precedent that could open up all sorts of issues and the committee unanimously resolved that:

Option 1 – SPA could only become affiliated to the WSMBA by first becoming fully affiliated to PSMBA

Option 2 – There is no mechanism for an individual club to become affiliated to the WSMBA.

JE to reply on behalf of WSMBA.

5. Criteria for trials

A paper had been circulated prior to the meeting.

SW explained the background and rationale for the paper which was to set out the criteria for being invited to trial for the international teams. The selectors regularly have to field questions from players as to why they weren't selected and why others were. For example, some players felt that gaining points at SMPT events should entitle them to a trial. SW felt that this introduces clarity and transparency to the process.

Committee members raised several questions and received responses and the Committee resolved to accept the criteria which should be uploaded to the website.

6. Sponsorship update

JE has approached a number of companies regarding sponsorship and is awaiting replies. If anyone has any contacts that could be approached, please liaise with JE.

There has been activity of the Facebook page but it is early days yet and not a lot of feedback and information on the sponsorship opportunities has been posted on the WSMBA website.

7. Meeting arrangements

RP explained that, as our meetings at the Radnorshire Bowls Hall always ran into the Sunday lunch sessions with the unavoidable interruptions and we had the two meetings today (AGM and Exec meeting), it was decided to move to the Metropole which would give us our own private space. It was generally accepted that this was a good idea but some delegates questioned the relative costs (Metropole £100.00, Bowls Hall free) in light of the very small surplus reported in the accounts at the AGM. The relative costs of other venues e.g. Carmarthen were discussed but MJ stated that Wrexham, for one, would feel excluded if meetings were held much further south than Llandrindod Wells. It was mooted that other hotels in the town might be cheaper (e.g. Commodore) but RP suggested that the Llandrindod Media Centre may be more cost-effective, has several meeting rooms and it appears that it is open on Sundays. JE agreed to investigate alternative venues and report back.

It was agreed that the lack of a Treasurer was a priority for the Association and delegates were asked to go back to their counties and try to identify/cajole any potential nominees and there would be a follow up online meeting (Teams/Zoom) on Sunday 9th August at 6.00/7.00 pm to review the situation.

Future meetings had been suggested on the agenda with September mooted to carry out the draws for the National finals and County championships. However, PH reminded delegates that in a previous meeting, it was decided that doing the draw at this stage was not important, but what counties needed to know was how many entries they had in the national finals and this depended on how many places would be taken up by Gwynedd, and in which disciplines. RP reminded delegates that this could be further complicated by Monmouth potentially asking for some entries and the number of places available to each county being held in abeyance until a later date. Gwynedd confirmed that they would be unlikely to take up any places at the national finals and they would be able to confirm after their AGM on Tuesday (28th July). PH reminded delegates that it was recorded in the minutes [December 2025] that the number of places available to each county would be established before the start of each season.

Provisional dates for future meetings were set as:

Sunday September 6th (national finals/county comp)

Sunday December 13th (selectors main international squads)

Sunday January 3rd (selectors ladies' international squad)

8. AOB

JM advised the meeting that the first payment for the Crowne Plaza hotel in Belfast was due on 21st August, which would have to be priority for the new treasurer, but he had not yet been told how many rooms were actually needed. CE confirmed that he had reserved 40 rooms but JM asked how many would actually be needed and we run the risk of paying for rooms which are subsequently cancelled for which the WSMBA would have to cover the cost: he informed the meeting that no payments had yet been received from players, supporters or officials. PH thought that it was agreed at a previous meeting that full payment from anyone attending would be expected prior to the date of the first deposit being paid to the hotel. JM confirmed this but was frustrated that this has not happened. Following a long discussion of actual costs and likely subsidy for players and officials from Bowls Wales, it was decided that SW would message players today to pay the full accommodation price of £245.00 pp (twin room) and £430.00 single room asap. The new treasurer will need to arrange to pay the subsidy to players at a later date. CE would need to confirm position of supporters and actual number of rooms required.

JM distributed several documents:

- a handout confirming bank transactions and balances as at 26th July;
- spreadsheet showing Bowls Wales funding allocation and breakdown for 2026/27;
- spreadsheet accounting for the ladies BI Championships in January 2027

The meeting closed at 1.55 pm

Appendix A

Dear WSMBA Secretary,

I have 2 options I would like your committee to consider.

Option 1

I am writing on behalf of the **South Pembrokeshire Short Mat Bowls Association [SPSMBA]** to enquire about affiliating our County Association to the Welsh Short Mat Bowls Association.

We have a number of new younger members who are keen to improve their standard, by playing in more competitions etc. Which will help to maintain the future of short mat bowls. I understand in the past when asked to affiliate, the response was that there can only be one association in Pembrokeshire.

Maybe this can be looked at differently as there is an opportunity to increase membership and potentially grow the sport by coming under the WSMBA umbrella.

An example I can give is - when I ran a squash club in Mid Glamorgan, we were affiliated to the Welsh Squash Rackets Association, along with South Glamorgan and West Glamorgan.

Please could you advise on:

The process and requirements for a county association to affiliate to WSMBA

Current affiliation fees and what they cover

The forms/documentation needed to complete the application

The benefits, obligations, and timescales involved

Option 2

To ask about the process for an individual club to affiliate directly to the Welsh Short Mat Bowls Association.

Could you please let us know:

Whether an individual club can affiliate directly, or if affiliation must be through a county association

The requirements, fees, and forms needed for club affiliation

The benefits and obligations of being an affiliated WSMBA club

Any deadlines for affiliation to be eligible for the upcoming season

Our aim is to ensure all our clubs and players are playing under WSMBA rules and are eligible for county red card, national and international WSMBA events.

We look forward to your reply on next steps.

Kind regards,

Hugh

Hugh Lewis

Secretary SPSMBA