



An update to members about next season

The Council have categorically stated that we are unable to remain on site during the construction works. This situation will not change and we urge all members to now look forward to our temporary solution. The Committee will be endeavouring to ensure that improvements are made within the Spalding club to obtain some benefit from the period of closure.

The Council have agreed in principle to the proposal from the Club to re-open the former Long Sutton Indoor Bowls Club for the duration of the closure of the Castle Sports Complex site. Discussions are ongoing between the Council, the building owners (Lincolnshire Co-Op) and the Club. No formal agreements have yet been signed but all parties are committed to making swift progress. Any deal will need to be approved by the Lincolnshire Co-Op board. There will be some substantial work on the building required but it is our current intention that we will be able to open in September 2025. It would be a two year lease possibly from May/June 2025 - May 2027 but our intention would be to return to the Castle as soon as possible (even if mid season). The Castle project is currently programmed for completion Oct/Nov 2026, but should it overrun then we will be covered within the lease agreement time period.

For those who know the Long Sutton green you will know it was a 4 rink and a 2 rink green. It will not be possible to make the 2 rink section usable, so we will only have the 4 rink green available. We will also have changing rooms, toilets, seating areas, kitchen, car park and servery area (we may look into some form of bar but this is not currently a priority). The Council will be covering the cost of any building work, decoration and work on the playing surface. The intention is that the club will cover the running costs from rink fees and membership fees. We hope that with the right levels of support from members this can be achieved with a small reduction in rink fees and reduced total overall membership costs. Due to some uncertainty over balancing the finances, we are proposing that all fundraising from April 2025 onwards will be towards the Club. If at the end of the year the Club makes a profit then the Committee will look into making some charitable donations.

There will be a lot to organise over the next month or two and the Committee ask members for their support and understanding. Due to the availability of only 4 rinks we will need to review all leagues (it is unlikely that leagues like double triples and fives are viable due to the rink space). It is likely that leagues will be triples or fours on the whole, although we will be looking at some alternative formats to add some variation. This may require captains to revisit their teams or for teams to split and set up additional teams in the case of fives/double triples. We will need to work out the league offering and sign up teams/players before this current season ends.

The club at Spalding will be open throughout the summer, until mid-August, so indoor summer bowling this year is largely not affected.

The Club will need to be cleared with items being split between Long Sutton, a storage facility and rubbish going into a skip! We will require all members to empty their lockers (a deadline date to be provided in the future) and take your belongings home. It will not be possible to all have lockers at Long Sutton but some may be possible and could be rented out based upon peoples health maybe. The rest would need to use a bowls bag to take their belongings to and from the green, as we do outdoors.

This is a rapidly changing situation and we will organise some in person information sessions in the coming weeks once we have more details. At these meetings we hope to be able to share some more details including costs, leagues and opening times.

Kind regards, The Management Committee SIBC