

FLOOD-AFFECTED BOWLS CLUB SCAMMED OUT OF MORE THAN \$100K, SUGGEST VIGILANCE FOR OTHER CLUBS

BY [BOWLS AUSTRALIA](#) ON JULY 10, 2023

The Upwey-Tecoma Bowls Club has urged clubs to be vigilant when paying large amounts of money for invoices after the club was scammed out of more than \$120,000 earlier this year.

It hopes that by publicising its predicament that other clubs will enhance their procedures and be spared from suffering a similar fate.

The club has fallen victim to an elaborate scam when paying the final instalment for a replacement green they had lost due to floods in November 2022. Although located in The Dandenong Ranges, the club didn't escape the floods when a nearby footbridge became a dam, blocked with debris and consequently flooding and lifting the club's main green leaving them with the 2 rinks they could recover and their back green for the summer. This event alone significantly impacted the club's revenue and events last summer. The green was covered by insurance and replaced in April 2023.

The club in taking caution with the large and final payment to the contractor, visited their local bank branch to make the payment with details from an email which showed no signs of being a scam. Concern was raised not long after when the club was contacted seeking the final payment.

In similar circumstances to an [article Bowls Australia posted in December 2020](#), the club had fallen victim to a Business Email Compromise scam. The scam works with a hacker infiltrating an email account, searching out an invoice then masquerading as the legitimate business from which the original invoice came. The invoice that the club paid was sent from the hacker looking the same as previous with just the bank details changed.

The club has since worked with the bank and the contractor, reported the scam to the appropriate bodies, has Commissioned IT forensic specialists and sought legal advice adding further cost to the club, but the money itself has gone.

To date there is no chance of recovery or reimbursement from any party and no insurance policy held by the club covers these types of scam or falsification of invoices.

The Upwey-Tecoma Bowls Club, while extremely disappointed with the situation, has tackled the issue head on, briefed its members and is prepared to go public with its story as a warning to others.

Through excellent management of the club over a long period it will weather the loss and has plans in place to rebuild its cash assets.

You can contact the club by email at upweytecomaBC@gmail.com or via their website <http://upweybc.com/>

It is important for clubs, when paying invoices of a considerable amount, to first contact the provider of the invoice and verify the bank details to ensure future similar situations are avoided. Bowls Australia also suggests reviewing the guides made available by the ACCC – <https://www.accc.gov.au/consumers/protecting-yourself/scams>