



Boccia Epsom and Ewell, known as The BEEs, is a thriving inclusive free club for physically disabled athletes, aged 8 and over who play the Paralympic sport of Boccia. Players attend from across the South East and learn the game, develop their skills, practice regularly, play competitively in the Boccia England elite competitions and pan disability league and are offered a route into elite Boccia, with several now climbing the ladder and player improvements observed on-going.

All the volunteer coaches have Boccia England awards in Coaching and Refereeing. Within the club there are 2 national classifiers and 2 national referees (one previously an England player). The Club Manager is Head Coach for Boccia England Talent Squad. All players are offered the opportunity to undertake referee and coach training, improving their knowledge and developing strategic awareness, around 40% have participated. The Club emphasis is on playing serious Boccia in a fun and friendly environment.

Established in 2005 by parents, the management board includes a player and volunteer coach. The club organisers raise around £5000 pa for an accessible venue 27 days pa (from September 2012 additional monthly club day), equipment, training costs, NGB affiliation, insurances and refreshments.

Playing Boccia improves self-esteem/worth and confidence, often players succeed for the first time ever in sport. They improve their physical and mental health and their communication skills. Attending club reduces social isolation and for many attending mainstream school it is the first time they make friends with others who have similar disabilities. These friendships extend outside of club with players arranging other social activities 2-3 times a year. Players attend with an assistant so The BEEs provide opportunities for carers to network.

<http://www.bocciaepsomandewell.org.uk/>