

# **Pétanque club realise French boule dream**

**Just eight months after being founded Dalkeith Pétanque Club have realised a dream to visit a heartland of the sport in South West France and consolidate links with the Midlothian town's Jarnac "twin".**

A group from the club, who operate adjacent to Dalkeith Bowling Club, will travel to the Burgundy region on 31 May and take part in matches and competitions with the Jarnac club which has an astonishing 70 pistes and 240 players as well as Angouleme.

While the Dalkeith club is much smaller by comparison they have moved quickly to become established thanks largely to chair-person, Sandy Howden.

When Sandy got the bug for pétanque, also known as French boule, he successfully petitioned local councillors to release funding from a local Environment Fund with the help of an eight page brochure he compiled as a first step towards creating a £14,000 piste.



Members of Dalkeith Pétanque Club at their opening league match of the season in April against Rosslyn Rhinos  
Also, he is the architect of a nine team Lothian and Borders League which got underway recently.

The Edinburgh Reporter noted in December it was a dream of club members to visit Jarnac but things have happened quickly.

Sandy said: "Out-of-the-blue a formal invitation to visit arrived which was too good to turn down even at short notice.

"We are also hoping to return in August when the formal twinning arrangement involving Dalkeith and Jarnac is celebrated.

"Our club is going from strength to strength with 49 members including 19 women and there are military veterans that play three times each week.

"We are grateful to the bowling club for their support and take pride in contributing to local charities including

Dalkeith Museum which recently lost funding.

“In addition to playing pétanque our hosts have arranged a bus tour of the region and barbecues for us while visiting.”