

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PLAN 2025-30

**BRITISH
FENCING**



INTRODUCTION

“Our aim is to celebrate and increase diversity in our sport, ensuring fencing represents the wider community across the UK. Our Diversity Inclusion Action Plan aims to encourage more people to get involved, from the boardroom to the clubs to the piste, making fencing a sport where everyone can be welcomed”.

Sara Pantuliano, CMG, Chair of British Fencing

Welcome to British Fencing’s Diversity Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).

As part of BF’s requirements to meet the UK Code of Governance for Sport, in 2024 we engaged in the process of establishing and developing BF’s DIAP. The process, undertaken with the support of Sport England, provided us with the opportunity to reflect and review areas of our sport through the lens of diversity and inclusion, and focus on areas where we want to grow and develop with the aim of improving the experiences of all those involved in fencing.

As we deliver on the DIAP, we will continue to collect and utilise data and insight to increase our understanding of our community and its needs, using this to help us improve and increase access to the sport.

Our DIAP will be continually reviewed and updated.

[For further information, please visit our website here.](#)

DATA AND INSIGHT

Ensure the data that we collect is relevant, appropriate and robust and where reasonable, we are sharing the relevant findings to support the community in increasing diversity within fencing.



OBJECTIVE

Maximise the data collected through surveys such as the Equality and Level Access Surveys, to support us in understanding our membership and continuing to improve the accessibility of the sport.

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	MILESTONES	OWNER
Have a clear understanding of all platforms and points of data collection where demographic data is being collected, and to understand the range of questions being asked and where consistency can be achieved.	Consult with all departments across BF to identify the platforms and systems where data is being collected.	September 2025: Internal review complete	EDI Lead / Department Heads
	Review the demographic data and fields being used to identify gaps and differences in data collection.		
Work with expert partners to standardise the data being collected across BF, whilst being as representative of society as possible.	Gain clarity on which national partners / organisations are best positioned to advise on demographic data collection.	October 2025: Engagement and research completed	EDI Lead
	Connect with partner organisations to clarify the most appropriate data fields to use, that are representative of society and can be compared with national data sets.	October 2025	EDI Lead
	Coordinate the implementation of updating relevant platforms across the organisation.	April 2026	EDI Lead / Department Heads
Where relevant to our community, publish data and insight reports along with any tools to support them, implementing the findings to support clubs in increasing diversity within fencing.	Produce a list of various methods of dissemination and sharing information, e.g. report format, community discussion, video, and voice recordings.	April 2026	EDI Lead
	Use the BF website and social media platforms to provide access to up-to-date information about our progress in reaching a diverse and wide ranging audience.	June 2026	EDI Lead / Head of Comms
	Run training sessions on any toolkits and resources we create to both staff and the wider community.	From July 2026 onwards	EDI Lead / Department Heads

INCLUSIVE COMMS AND BRANDING

What we say, how we say it, and who to.

Ensuring that our commitment to diversity and inclusion is evident in our communications to the fencing community and beyond.



OBJECTIVE

To ensure (within resource capacity) that no one feels left out by the stories we tell or how we tell them.

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	MILESTONES	OWNER
Use community insight to understand our current audience and to identify gaps where our engagement is limited - this includes comms methods, as well as stories we are telling and who they are being told by.	Run EDI consultations / listening events to identify the most relevant Community Working Groups for underrepresented groups, which would benefit those communities and the wider fencing community.	February 2026: Share the dates with the community to join the Listening Events.	EDI Lead
	Set out a clear purpose for Community Working Groups, taking into account BF exec team resources to manage the expectations of members.	March 2026: Working group roles identified and recruitment of community volunteers underway	EDI Lead
	Connect with organisations outside our current community to learn and use tools available from their work so we can improve communications to reach a wider audience.	April 2026	EDI Lead
Through our branding and comms, increase the variety of imagery available that is representative of and accessible to the wider community.	Review our current photo and video media to understand the representation of people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.	December 2025	Head of Comms
	Make sure our website images show a variety of people with protected characteristics, even when not discussing those characteristics directly.	March 2026	Head of Comms
Within the resources available to us, use multiple methods of communication to widen our reach, e.g. VI members, alt text on pictures.	Provide relevant staff members with training and tools to utilise disability inclusive comms methods.	June 2026	Head of Comms
	Use the tools and features available through our website host to improve an inclusive user experience.	June 2026	Head of Comms

Continue to grow the diversity within our staff and workforce structure to ensure that we have good representation of the wider community.



OBJECTIVE

Strengthen our current recruitment practice, starting with recruitment through to onboarding into the organisation and support for transition on exit.

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	MILESTONES	OWNER
Create a checklist for recruitment to support us in reaching a more diverse network. This includes reviewing communications, paperwork and documentation around the hiring processes.	Identify relevant training and access to resources made available through national partners, to learn about recruitment best practice.	Completed by October 2025	EDI Lead / Inclusion Manager
	Review checklist against the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics.	Completed by October 2025	Inclusion Manager
	Knowledge-sharing session with the BF exec team to share best practice and the checklist for recruitment.	November 2025: Session delivered to exec team to share best practice and process	EDI Lead
Produce job descriptions that are inclusive while reflecting needs of the role.	Take into account the Government's Positive Action Guidance.	Completed by October 2025	EDI Lead / Inclusion Manager
	Offer job descriptions in multiple adaptive formats to support those who are neurodiverse, and / or have learning impairments and visual impairments.	Completed by October 2025: Checklist completed for recruitment lead to use	EDI Lead
		Available for recruitment lead by November 2025	Recruitment Lead for role
Increase the platforms and methods we use for advertisement, reaching those with protected characteristics as stated in the Equality Act 2010 where possible.	Use the checklist to identify appropriate partners through which to advertise roles.	Completed by October 2025	EDI Lead / Inclusion Manager
	Review respondent data to ensure that our adverts are reaching all groups.	Completed by October 2025	Inclusion Manager
		April 2026: Session delivered to exec team to share best practice and process	EDI Lead

RECRUITMENT: CONTINUED

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS	MILESTONES	OWNER
Check that the shortlisting process is transparent, easy to understand, and inclusive of those who have protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.	Act as a "disability confident" employer to support anyone with the minimum appropriate skillset, who declares themselves as disabled, ensuring that they are provided an opportunity to interview.	In place by December 2025	EDI Lead / Inclusion Manager
	Build equity of opportunity into the process of applicant review. Build guidance and an internal understanding of what this means within our recruitment processes.	Completed by October 2025: Training and information provided to BF staff involved in recruitment	EDI Lead / Inclusion Manager
Provide an accessible environment to be inclusive of those with protected characteristics, to help us support the recruitment of marginalised individuals.	Ensure any pre-interview task is a reasonable ask and can be done with readily available resources and information.	Process in place by October 2025 for Recruitment Lead to use	Recruitment Lead for role
	Provide both in-person and online interview options, and don't allow any bias about online working to impact decision making.	October 2025 onwards	Recruitment Lead for role
	Where possible, bring in external individuals to sit on an interview panel, who are skilled at the role that the candidate is being hired for.	October 2025 onwards	Recruitment Lead for role
Deliver an onboarding programme that provides them with all the relevant policy information and documents that will support them in achieving their role, whilst taking into account the needs of those with protected characteristics and how they best access information.	Educate BF staff on being aware of the best ways to support their staff during this process.	November 2025 onwards: Provide checklist for onboarding as well as introduce buddy system for new staff	EDI Lead / Recruitment Lead for role
	Check in with the participant on health and caring related challenges to understand what reasonable adjustments can be made to support their needs and ability to undertake their job.	November 2025 onwards: Guidance for Recruitment Lead to understand the process	EDI Lead / Recruitment Lead for role
	Provide important policy information in multiple accessible formats, e.g. provide access to a screen reading system if needed for more lengthy policy documents.	November 2025 onwards	EDI Lead / Recruitment Lead for role
CEO to maintain the working culture and value structure, reinforcing it at the recruitment stage.	Every new member of staff to have an induction time with the CEO.	November 2025 onwards	CEO

DIVERSITY IN LEADERSHIP

Under the Sport England/UK Sport Governance Code, the Board is required to ensure that BF prepares and publishes on its website information (approved by the Board) about its work to foster all aspects of diversity within its leadership and decision making, including an annual update on progress against the actions identified in accordance with Diversity requirements as set out by the Code.

The BF Board is looking to increase other aspects of diversity (age, ethnicity) within its Standing Committee through improved and targeted recruitment to fill vacancies.

The table below shows the target and actual %age of occupied positions by women. (Target = 2025 Gender Diversity Target). Please note we are currently in the process of updating this data.

Leadership	Target	Dec 2018	Dec 2019	Dec 2020	Dec 2021	Dec 2022	Dec 2023	Dec 2024
Board	40%	50%	50%	45%	42%	50%	45%	36%
AGRC	30%	25%*	25%*	25%	25%	25%	25%	25%
NomCom	30%	66%	66%	66%	33%	33%	33%	50%
Rules	30%	44%	44%	44%	44%	44%	44%	44%
Safety	30%	37.50%	43%	43%	38%	38%	38%	44%
International Relations	30%	66%	66%	66%	75%	100%	100%	100%
Exec Leadership	40%	50%	57%	57%	57%	40%	50%	80%

DIVERSITY IN LEADERSHIP: CONTINUED

**AGRC and NomCom are sub-committees of the Board. AGRC has four members, NomCom has three. BF will seek to encourage women with appropriate financial skills and qualifications to stand for election for the Board and subsequent appointment to AGRC.*

BF Board Diversity Statement and 2025 Diversity Objectives - last approved 23rd May 2023

Board Diversity Metrics, and Succession Plan - Current Board (Directors and Observers)

Board Diversity Metrics are published on the Board Directors page and now form part of the Annual Report. This includes a breakdown of Director positions occupied by women and ethnic diversity.



Image: This Girl Can