



BRITISH BLIND SPORT

Strategy 2023 - 2027 Executive Summary



THE VISIBLE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE

Sport and physical activity generate inspiration, passion, and excitement for all types of people regardless of age, gender or background. It challenges participants and brings a sense of purpose. Participating in sport or physical activity can improve health, a sense of wellbeing and increase confidence. In addition, it can help a person with sight loss to develop spatial awareness, improved orientation and higher fitness levels which can, in turn, benefit their everyday life.

Social inclusion and making new friends are key to blind and partially sighted people (BPSP), as is often the very nature of the impairment, he/she can feel 'cut off' or isolated in society. Participation in sport can make the difference between feeling lonely and being part of a group or team.

Along with supporting our community, our work enables coaches, club representatives, teachers and parents/carers to develop a greater understanding of the importance of assisting a BPS person to have a fulfilling and healthier lifestyle. We can equip others to make a visible difference to the lives of many.



OUR VISION

A world where blind and partially sighted people can have fair and equal access to sport and physical activity

OUR MISSION

To use the power of sport and physical activity to positively change the lives of blind and partially sighted people

OUR VALUES

Our values are important to us. They are the ethical code by which we work and that shape our behaviours and actions



OUR VALUES: WE EMPOWER

- We are passionate about ensuring that the voice of blind and partially sighted people is heard and acknowledged in sport and physical activity
 - We provide opportunities for BPSP to grow confidence in their ability to not only participate in sport but to be actively involved in shaping sport both locally and nationally
 - We equip the sporting workforce with skills and knowledge that empowers them to positively work with BPSP
 - We develop young leaders to create future influencers
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WE CONNECT

- We recognise the power of collaboration to achieve greater outcomes for all
 - We join the sight loss and sport sectors to create new and lasting partnerships
 - We value and listen to the knowledge and experiences of our members and partners which helps us to learn and create improved solutions
 - We identify new areas for partnership working to increase opportunities in sport and physical activity
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WE EDUCATE

- We provide programmes to upskill the sporting workforce
- We share best practice to enhance BPSP's sporting journeys
- We research to widen our own knowledge and that of our partners to greater understand the needs of BPSP
- We develop team members to grow organisation stature and create future leaders
- Embed and share inclusive communications, resources and practices with others to enable the wider sport sector to engage more confidently with BPSP

OUR GOALS

Our goals are to:

- Change society perceptions towards BPSP through sport
- Encourage the creation and increase opportunities so that more BPSP can access sport and physical activity
- Drive changes in the system so that BPSP are welcomed and included
- Ensure BPSP are heard so that they can influence the shape of sport
- Embed our organisation as a system partner to influence change across the sport and sight loss sectors.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our strategic priorities give us a clear sense of direction, allowing us to focus our energies in order to achieve our goals.

SP1: REACH THE BPSP PEOPLE WHO NEED US MOST

There are 2 million people with sight loss in the UK, and while they have much in common, they also have specific needs that affect how we best can reach them.



We need to focus on the groups where we can make the biggest difference and, who need us most, especially:

- Older people, who make up 60% of BPSP
- Children and young people, who can be reached early to avoid a lifetime of health inequality
- People whose circumstances and backgrounds further exclude them from sport and healthy activity based on race, gender and sexuality
- People whose socio-economic status can make it difficult for them to access sport and physical activities

SP2: BUILD EFFECTIVE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

By working with well-chosen partners, we can ensure that we have the greatest possible, lasting impact on systems. We will focus on partnerships with national and local organisations who can:

- Increase our reach and amplify our voice
- Make significant, lasting, permanent change at scale
- Help reach people in all levels of activity and sport – from walking groups to elite sporting bodies
- Offer tangible support to our grassroots networks and communities of BPS and sports organisations



SP3: RAISE THE VOICES OF BLIND AND PARTIALLY SIGHTED PEOPLE

BPSP are under-represented in sporting organisations and their needs are often not widely understood. We need to ensure they are heard directly and included in decision-making, particularly when it affects them. We will help the voices and experiences of BPSP be heard, by:

- Providing opportunities to develop leaders
- Helping BPSP into positions of power and influence
- Supporting and promoting role models
- Influencing decisions and make compelling demands for BPSP support through evidence gathering and research
- Increasing our membership and giving it a stronger voice to influence



SP 4: ENGAGE, SUPPORT, AND CONNECT BPSP

BPSP value us as a route into sporting opportunities, and an expert broker between sectors. We act as a catalyst for local community and team activity to ensure sporting opportunities are widely available. We will:

- Connect BPSP to activities where they live, with support tailored to their needs
- Develop opportunities for the local needs of BPSP to be heard
- Function as the expert bridge between sports/ physical activity and BPSP communities
- Encourage grassroots community activity to build mutual support between families, friends and teammates

SP 5: ENSURE QUALITY EXPERIENCES FOR BPSP EVERYWHERE

BPSP often have demoralising experiences of sport and physical activity. We want to ensure that they have happy, memorable experiences that make them feel welcome, valued, and inspired to achieve through sport. We will strive on behalf of BPSP that they have excellent, life changing experiences of sport and activity by:

- Building a workforce that recognises, understands, and meets the needs of BPSP
- Share our knowledge to educate the wider sight loss and sport sectors
- Ensuring sport and leisure venues welcome BPS people – so that we can connect them with confidence to quality, supportive environments



OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS WE WILL

- Reach over 30,000 BPS people through our programmes and platforms
- Engage with over 2000 people through our freely accessible Have A Go Day programme
- Work with over 500 young people and their families to create positive early sporting experiences
- Work with sporting and non-sporting partners (e.g. Age UK) to deliver a cohesion programme to reach over 1500 older people
- Reach more BPS from ethnically diverse communities, including expanding resources into different languages
- Provide tailored support to at least 50 sporting and sight loss organisations to ensure they provide improved sporting and physical activity opportunities and experiences for BPS

KEY PROJECTS

Alongside business as usual, focused on our strategic priorities, there will be key projects we need to undertake to help us further develop our offer to meet the changing needs of BPS, to continuously improve our services, and to ensure we stay sustainable. We will:

- Redevelop and expand our membership offer
- Develop a new programme for older people
- Undertake a diversity and inclusion review
- Undertake a fundraising review to diversify income
- Maximise the opportunity and legacy of the IBSA World Games 2023
- Work with partners representing ethnically diverse communities
- Review our range of activities for children and young people
- Deliver leadership development opportunities

