

British Fencing and The Scouts Association

Delivering new fencing experiences to young people.



Background

In 2014, British Fencing undertook a successful pilot with several Scout Groups in the North East of England. Adopting an insight led approach, British Fencing set out to introduce fencing to a number of Scout groups, based on the Crowd DNA insight piece, which analysed fencer's relationships with sport and fencing. Based on insight gathered, British Fencing could understand **what** market to target, **when** and **where** to target them, **who** we should work with and **how** we deliver. This document aims to provide you with an overview of our work with the Scouts Association, including how you can support our long-term partnership.

Why, The Scouts Association?

The Scout Association is the biggest co-educational youth movement, with nearly half a million-people taking part in Scouting activities each week. Based on the decision making process discussed above, it was evident that the Scout Association and those that Scout, are an ideal target audience to introduce the sport to.

British Fencing's vision of creating national partnerships to offer community fencing programmes that deliver positive impact on society through inclusion and empowerment, has led to a National partnership between British Fencing and The Scouts Association. The purpose: to offer young people in England the exciting opportunity to experience the sport of fencing for the very first time.

<h3>Who</h3> <p>British Fencing have developed a 1 day Core Coach course for Scout leaders. This provides delegates with the skills and knowledge to deliver one off taster sessions as well as blocks of activity to allow them to work towards their Master at Arms Badge and British Fencing Bronze Award.</p>	<p>Scout Leaders have been delivering 6 week programmes to their Scout groups that enable them to achieve the Master of Arms Badge. Sessions include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• On guard• The target• Fencing Etiquette• The Grip, the hit and blade manipulation• Steps forward and backward• The conventions of fighting with the foil• The attack - thrust and lunge• The defence - parry and riposte• Counter-riposte
<h3>How</h3> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. National partnership with The Scout Association.2. Bespoke Core Coach training of Scout Leaders.3. Support through BF Development Team.4. Support with resources.5. Continuous request and review of participation statistics.	<h3>What</h3> <h4>Statistics</h4> <p>200+ trained Scout Leaders.</p> <p>Delivery across 13 different Scout Districts in England.</p>

Case Study: Durham

Context

In County Durham, in North East England, Paul Sutherland Fencing Coach and Scout Leader, has been working with Scout groups across the county to deliver training for Scout leaders and Scouts in Fencing. As county Fencing advisor, he has been working with the local regional lead from England Fencing and The Participation Programme Manager from British Fencing to support Fencing delivery through Scout groups across the region. In addition, Paul has provided coaching support at Scout Headquarters in Gilwell Park in Essex. Paul provides Fencing sessions at local Scout Groups over six weeks introducing the Scouts to the basic techniques and skills around attack and defence.

Impact

The Scouts have highlighted how much they enjoyed the sessions, identifying how much they had learnt, explaining that this was something new and different that they hadn't experienced before. 2-3 expressed a wish to join a local Fencing club, whilst one young leader has already joined a club and was usually there to help Paul deliver training sessions keeping score in competitions that run at the end of sessions.

Testimonials

Paul Sutherland - Fencing coach and Scout Leader

Fencing engages the minds and bodies of youngsters in an age where the computer and games console is king.

The activity fits in well with Scout groups program planning when groups are constantly on the look-out for new, exciting activities to run in their HQ's, especially over the winter months.

The symbiosis of the Scout Association and British Fencing is a perfect fit and can be summed up with the feedback from one of the leaders who attended one of the core coach courses ran in Durham in January this year:

"I just wanted to extend my thanks to you and Beth for today's fencing course. It was totally inspirational and informative. It's a sport I have always fancied trying but had the preconception that it was elitist and the kind of thing if you'd not done at a private school you had no chance of getting into. Today blew those misconceptions out of the water and I am going to look to join a club for my own enjoyment as well as Scouts."

This is one of the reasons why i.Scout, i.Fence and i.Coach!

Beth Davidson - North East Regional Fencing Development Officer

'From the Region's perspective, we have found working with the Scout Association a valuable way of engaging with young people in a structured way in partnership with British Fencing. Regional Fencing can connect a National programme with clubs and support the ongoing development with those fencing scouts with access to competitions, more training and qualifications such as refereeing.'

Scout Leader, Avon

'I would like to add the delivery and organisation by your team was fantastic and I am looking forward to giving my first taster lessons to the scouts in my troop and other units in the Wotton under edge group ASAP and hopefully I can take the sport of fencing to a wider number of scouts in the cotswold vale district'

Scout Leader, Chippenham

'Really enjoyed the session... thanks for the help in setting us up with this fantastic opportunity!'

Next Steps for Clubs

Working in partnership with the Scout Association is a useful route to young people, particularly in target groups highlighted by the insight work British Fencing has already undertaken. However, Scout groups face many pressures on the time they can set aside for different activities and therefore 'short, sharp' forms of delivery are best suited. To ensure sustainability, we need to support our Scout groups with links to local clubs to continue with the participants fencing journey.

Clubs play a crucial role in providing a formal, structured and continued opportunity for these Scouts to progress within the sport. If you are a Club looking to grow your membership, support this project and take advantage of the interest spurred in young people please get in touch with [Josef Thomas](#), Regional Liaison Officer at British Fencing who will be able to link the club and scout together to ensure a continued fencing journey.

