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**Dear Friend,**

## **Return To Fencing, what does your 'new normal' look like?**

Following the Government's announcement on 9th July that indoor facilities in England will be allowed to re-open on July 25th, many of our clubs are planning to re-start activity. Here at BF we have been working hard to make that possible.

This is made possible by a series of measures (outlined in full [here](#)) which have been reviewed by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

These include the steps that should be taken by fencers, clubs, officials, volunteers, coaches, and spectators before, during and after all recreational fencing activity as well as specific advice and adaptations relating to clubs, coaches, lessons and sparring.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

## **INDOOR FENCING IN ENGLAND CAN RESTART ON 25TH JULY**

**There is a lot of information to take in around COVID-19 and how it will affect sports clubs in the future.**

**Make sure you keep checking in on the Club page on the website [here](#).**

## COVID-19 OFFICERS

As part of BF and the Home Nation's commitment to ensure that the return to community club activity is as safe as possible, it will be a requirement for all community clubs to nominate a COVID-19 Officer.

The COVID-19 Officer will act as the primary point of contact for BF, Home Nations, facility/venue operators, and club members for matters relating to COVID-19.

It is expected that most club committees will appoint an existing committee member or coach to act in this role.

Resources, sample risk assessments and guidance for clubs and COVID-19 officers can be found [here](#).

Responsibilities of the COVID-19 Officer should include:

### Guidelines

- Keeping up to date with changes in local government guidance and BF/Home Nation guidelines.
- Ensuring that the measures within the published guidelines and any subsequent updates are implemented and communicated to all participants as appropriate.
- Working with facility/venue operators to support the implementation of any additional guidelines specific to the facility/venue.

### Risk Assessments

- Working with the coaches, welfare officer and club committee members to create the "Club Return to Fencing Risk Assessment"
- Signing off the elements of the "Club Return to Fencing Risk Assessment" which relate to COVID-19 measures. (The Club Risk Assessment must, in turn, be approved by the club committee).
- Regularly reviewing the Club Risk Assessment – minimum on a monthly basis and in response to any change in guidelines issued by government/BF.
- Ensuring that there are protocols for signing-off individual session risk assessments and that these are retained for insurance purposes.

### Communications

Be the first point of communication with BF/Home Nations, facility operators and club members in relation to COVID-19 issues and risks.

Club Protocols: establishing, communicating and executing club/session-specific protocols for:

- hygiene
- the use/management of equipment
- the monitoring of social distancing practices in the club – including movement/flow of people and use of changing and toilet facilities

For community clubs, the COVID-19 Officer must:

- Be a member of BF
- Be registered with BF. A separate email will be sent to Club Secretaries asking them to register their COVID-19 Officers.
- Be clearly named on any club website and communicated to all participants.

## WHAT CAN I BE DOING TO PREPARE MY CLUB?

There are a number of steps that can be taken now to support restarting your club (even if that may not be for a while). These include:

- Appoint a Club COVID-19 Officer and register them on the BF Membership platform (see [here](#)).
- Check your club is listed as a BF Club. Clubs that have opted not to be publicly listed should check their club status in the BF membership platform.
- Ensure that your Coaches are on the BF Coaches Register and up to date with all necessary checks and qualifications.
- Ensure that your Welfare Officer is on the BF Welfare Officers Register, fully trained and up to date with all necessary checks and qualifications.
- Update your club risk assessments.
- Contact your venue to discuss when they are opening, their risk assessment and the requirements they have on any clubs using their facilities. We expect that any club or coach using a facility (that they do not themselves operate) will provide a copy of their risk assessment to the facility manager.
- Survey your members and volunteers to find out how they feel about returning to fencing and identifying any barriers or opportunities that restarting club fencing will bring,
- Audit your club kit and review the BF guidance on equipment sharing and disinfecting protocols (see [here](#)).
- Ensure that your club membership records are up to date.
- Review your member communications channels – being able to send up to date information to your members will be extremely important as part of any restart.
- Review your system for managing and storing accurate attendance records for at least 21 days. This will be a vital part of how we will support the NHS Test and Trace.

## MEMBERSHIP

### BF's FREE INTRODUCTION MEMBERSHIP - SIGN UP TO BE INSURED & BE INFORMED!

It is more important than ever that all club activities and individual participants are covered by BF insurance. Part of the requirement of the insurance is making sure that everyone participating in the sport (whether coaching, volunteering as a club official and/or participant) is a member of BF.

It is equally important that during these times we can keep our members up to date. By signing up for membership (and giving us the relevant permissions) we can communicate with members directly around important developments as and when they occur.

To support clubs and fencers at this time we are expanding the free BF Introduction membership to new fencers who have not previously signed up for BF membership. The Introduction membership was originally designed to cover participants on beginner's courses in affiliated clubs. We have now expanded its purpose recognising that at this time our clubs may wish to welcome new members outside the formality of a structured course.

Check out our membership page [here](#) to find out all there is to know and sign up [here](#).

## **SPOTLIGHT ON SOCIAL**



**During this time BF has been hosting several Community Discussion Events inviting members to raise issues, discuss topics and share ideas.**

Thank you to all the BF members who have participated in Community Discussion Events in the series so far. It has been encouraging to have so many members involved and to hear positive feedback about members finding the discussions useful.

The series was designed to facilitate the creation and sharing of best practice during and after lockdown. We want to continue our work going forward to keep these as a regular part of members' experience and to maintain our links with the fencing community.

**CLUBS**

**COACHES**

**WELFARE OFFICERS**

**COMPETITION ORGANISERS**

All information surrounding the discussions can be found [here](#), along with the sign-up forms, and we will publish an official calendar with upcoming discussion events soon.

## NEWS

Please click on the articles below to see the latest from

**BF. Remember to keep up to date on our website.**

### [A MARRIAGE OF SPORT AND ART](#)

The “marriage of sport and art”, one of the great visions of Pierre De Coubertin for the Olympic Games and something which for fencing, is possibly more relevant and meaningful than for any other sport.

Over the last five years of delivering our portfolio of Projects and Programmes, no other project has really encompassed the creative element of the sport more than *Muslim Girls Fence*. Yes, our work with London Youth and...

### [WHEN IS IT OKAY TO GET THE HIT?](#)

Allow me to begin with a quote from Shane Warne, the great Australian spin bowler with over 700 Test Match wickets and the second highest wicket taker in the history of cricket:

“I hate singles. I don’t mind going for runs. I’ve been hit for the most sixes in the history of the game. What I hated was singles.”

When examining our fencing, often we talk...

### [JULY OPERATIONAL UPDATE](#)

*Find out what the executive team at BF has been doing to support our members as we work towards a return to fencing.*

We provided our last Operational Update in May (you can see that update [here](#)) and July’s Update gives us the opportunity to round up what we have been doing over the last two months.

Initially (as lockdown approached and came into force) our focus was on ensuring...

### [UPDATE FROM THE BRITISH FENCING BOARD - JUNE 2020](#)

*Chair of BF Mark Lyttle updated members via email on July 6th, 2020, after the virtual board meeting held in June.*

I know this is an unprecedented time for many members both from a personal viewpoint and in terms of fencing activities, club operations and competitions. British Fencing (BF) has been working hard on your behalf during this period and...

**We will continue to update our COVID-19 advice [here](#).**

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Please Note: The Club Digest is targeted at England based clubs and will focus on England initiatives. Some content may be relevant and useable for other Home Country based clubs. More information is available on the British Fencing website.

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