

Great Britain Deaf Football (GBDF)



Constitution

Version: **1.7 - FINAL**

Date Issued: April 2025

1 Name

The organisation's name is GREAT BRITAIN DEAF FOOTBALL (hereafter referred to as GBDF)

2 Aims

The purposes of the organisation are to: -

- 2.1 Facilitate the smooth transition of deaf footballers to elite football from club to international level and provide leadership, support and advice on all aspects, including but not limited to deaf eligibility, competition entry, selection of players, managers and coaches in partnership with the National Associations.
- 2.2 Promote the ethos of deaf football and ensure fair play, respect and integrity while adhering to the rules and regulations of each Home Nations parent body, England FA, Northern Ireland FA, Scotland FA, and Wales FA in partnership.
- 2.3 Monitor and follow the Service Level Agreement with each Football Association for the management and delivery of the World Class Pathway Plan for deaf football at Home Nations or Great Britain level, including other organisations such as GBDF and UKDS.
- 2.4 Safeguard the assets of GBDF, namely its reputation, brand and other associated intellectual properties.

3 Powers

The organisation shall have the power to:

- a) raise funds, receive grants and donations for the purposes of the organisation
- b) apply funds to carry out the work furthering the purposes of the organisation
- c) co-operate with and support other charities with similar purposes
- d) implement agreed plans in ways which are lawful and necessary to achieve the organisation's purposes

4 Membership

4.1 Representative members

Each Home Nation Deaf football organisation (EDF, SDFA, WDFFA, NIDF) will have the option to opt in or opt out as a representative member of GBDF. To be eligible, they must

- a) Be in agreement with the recommendations of Deaf Football report produced by UKDS
- b) Have signed a partnership agreement with UKDS
- c) Have met the UKDS Tier 1 Compliance criteria

Representative Members are required to nominate an individual of good standing within their organisation who has the skills and means to serve on the committee.

4.2 Individual members

- a) GBDF shall have at least six members, at least three of whom shall be independent¹, meaning free from any close connection with GBDF, or any affiliated Home Nation Deaf football organisation.
- b) Recruitment of new members must always be through an open and fair recruitment process through which GBDF actively encourages and seeks out membership that includes all parts of the deaf footballing community.
- c) Anyone who supports the work of GBDF and who is aged 18 or over, may apply to the Committee to become a member.
- d) Following the initial nomination of members, the Committee shall review the applications, but may only refuse membership if, in fulfilling their duty to act reasonably and properly, they consider refusal to be in the best interests of GBDF.
- e) The Committee may remove a person's membership if they believe it is in the best interests of GBDF. Any member whose removal is to be considered has the right to be heard by the Committee before a decision is made and can be accompanied by a friend.

4.3 All members may attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting

5 General Meetings

5.1 Annual General Meeting – AGM

- a) An AGM must be held once a year. This shall not be held more than fifteen months after the holding of the preceding AGM.
- b) At least 14 days' notice must be given to all members and GBDF committee along with an agenda. Minutes must be kept of the AGM.
- c) Any member may stand for election to the committee.
- d) Each member has one vote.
- e) There must be at least 3 members present at the AGM, and those present must represent, in person or by proxy, a minimum of one third of the membership.
- f) The business to be transacted should be as indicated on in giving notice of the meeting, and should include:
 - i) Receipt of the annual report and accounts.
 - ii) Election of Officers and Committee
 - iii) Consideration of motions submitted by the membership

¹ 'Independent' - a person is independent if they are free from any close connection to the organisation and if, from the perspective of an objective outsider, they would be viewed as independent. A person may still be deemed to be 'independent' even if they are a member of the organisation and/or play the sport. Examples of a 'close connection' include:

- a) They are or have within the last four years been actively involved in the organisation's affairs, e.g. as a representative of a specific interest group within the organisation such as a sporting discipline, a region or a home country;
- b) They are or have within the last four years been an employee of the organisation; or
- c) They have close family ties with any of the organisation's directors or senior employees

5.2 Special General Meeting - SGM

Special General Meetings may be called by:

- a) the Committee,
- b) at least ten members. The Committee must call such a meeting if requested to do so in writing by at least ten members or one tenth of the membership, whichever is the greater. Any request from members must state the nature of the business that is to be discussed. If the committee fails to hold the meeting within twenty-eight days of the request, the members may proceed to call a special general meeting but in doing so they must comply with the provisions of this constitution.

In all cases, members will be given 14 days' notice along with details of the business to be discussed unless eighty percent of those with voting rights agree to alternative arrangements.

6 Committee members

6.1 GBDF shall be managed by a committee of individuals (the "Committee") who are appointed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the organisation, and among whom, at least three are neither related to, nor cohabiting with, other committee members.

6.2 The committee shall have a maximum of twelve members, including up to four who are directly elected, up to five representatives from associated member organisations, and up to three independent members recruited by the Committee.

6.3 The committee shall select and appoint, from among themselves, a maximum of five officers (a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and 2 other officers), who will carry out the day-to-day operations of the organisation.

6.4 Each of the following member organisations shall be entitled to nominate one representative for ratification at the GBDF AGM:

- EDF
- SDFA
- W DFA
- NIDF
- GBDF Deaf Women

6.5 Committee Members will initially serve for four years from the date of the annual general meeting at which their appointment was ratified and will be eligible for re-appointment for a further term of four years, but after completing the maximum of two consecutive terms, a Committee Member shall not be eligible for re-appointment for the next four years.

6.6 Officers must be nominated by a member organisation.

7 Committee Meetings

- a) Meetings shall take place as often as is required to conduct the business of the GBDF Committee and will usually be staged a minimum of three times a year unless extenuating circumstances require more meetings.
- b) In extenuating circumstances, an 80% majority of serving Committee Members shall be able to call a meeting at short notice. The shortened notice period must reflect the urgency of resolution, and must, where practicable, allow reasonable accommodation of all Committee Members.
- c) Outside of extenuating circumstances as outlined in 7b, a draft agenda and supporting information shall be circulated for receipt no later than ten working days in advance of each meeting. The final agenda shall be agreed between the Chair and the Committee within 48 hours of the meeting, and make clear the purpose of each item, e.g., for discussion, decision or information.
- d) The quorum without which Committee meetings should not take place shall be set at the level of the majority, or 50 per cent of current Committee members, whichever is the lower – for example, if there are six Committee members in total, a quorum shall be three.
- e) In the absence of the Chair, another Committee Member shall assume the role of Chair upon being nominated and agreed by the remaining Committee Members. This temporary arrangement shall pertain only for the duration of the meeting.
- f) Committee Members shall be entitled to access Committee meetings remotely, for example, through video conferencing, and shall be considered to be in attendance if accessing Committee meetings through this method.
- g) Committee Members must declare the nature and extent of any interest, direct or indirect, which they may have in a proposed transaction or arrangement with GBDF or in any transaction or arrangement entered into by GBDF which has not been previously declared and must not participate in any associated Committee discussions or voting, or in consideration of a quorum for any associated decision.
- h) Decision-making within the Committee shall be by a simple majority of votes cast by those in attendance, although the preferences of absent Committee Members shall also be considered whenever they have expressed their views in advance of the meeting. Each Committee Member shall have one vote, with the Chair holding the casting vote in the event of a tied issue.
- i) Draft minutes shall be circulated within five working days following the meeting, to allow for scrutiny by fresh memories and for actions to be implemented. Any changes to these shall be discussed and agreed by the Committee at its next meeting.
- j) The Committee may, if all Committee members agree, be considered to have staged a meeting if a resolution or resolutions are considered by each Committee Member individually and separately and approved in writing by a majority.

8 Funds and Finance

- a) All funds and property must only be used for the GBDF's purposes.
- b) A bank account or bank accounts shall be opened in the name of GBDF. Money must be held in these bank account(s).
- c) All cheques shall be signed by at least 2 signatories who are also officers of GBDF
- d) All online payment processes shall be authorised by the at least 2 signatories
- e) The financial Year shall run from 1st September to 31st August
- f) Committee Members cannot receive any money or property from the GBDF, except to refund reasonable out of pocket expenses.

9 Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to the constitution may be made only by a resolution passed by 75% majority of the members at a Special General meeting or at an Annual General meeting of which due notice has been given together with wording of the proposed amendment.

10 Dissolution

9.1 GBDF may be dissolved by resolution of its members. Any decision by the members to wind up or dissolve GBDF must be passed at a Special General meeting or by a special resolution at an Annual General meeting

9.2 The decision must be made by a resolution: -

- a) passed by a 75% majority of those voting, **or**
- b) passed by decision taken without a vote and without any expression of dissent in response to the question put to the general meeting; **or**
- c) agreed in writing by all members of GBDF.

9.3 If confirmed the committee shall distribute any assets remaining after the payment of all bills to other organisation(s) having aims that are similar to GBDF or some other charitable purpose(s) as the committee may decide.

This constitution was adopted at a General Meeting of GBDF on 12 Nov 2025 and shall remain in force on an interim basis until it is formally reviewed and, if required, amended at the Annual General Meeting in November/December 2026.

		Signed by	Date
Chair	Sharon Hirshman	(originals in file)	25 April 2026
Vice Chair	Paul Young	(originals in file)	25 April 2026