



Great Britain Deaf Football (GBDF)

About Us

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Sharon Hirshman-Devlin – Chairperson

Sharon provides overall leadership and strategic direction for the organisation. She ensures the board operates effectively, meetings are well managed, and that decisions align with our vision, values and long-term objectives. Sharon also acts as a key ambassador for GBDF, representing the organisation externally and within the deaf football community.

She established the first ever 11 a side GB Deaf Women's Football team and led the squad at the 2005 Deaflympics in Melbourne. She has continued to contribute to the development of both local deaf and hearing football clubs.

Paul Young – Vice Chairperson

Paul supports the Chairperson and steps in when required to ensure continuity in leadership and decision-making. He often leads on specific projects and development areas, helping to drive progress across the organisation.

Paul is currently the Head of Football for FC Farsley Deaf, a role he has held for nine years. He supports all staff and players within the club and brings significant practical club-level experience to GBDF.

Michael Boyne – Strategy Lead

Michael oversees the strategic direction of GBDF, focusing on the bigger picture and future growth of the organisation. He contributes to long-term planning, identifies development opportunities, and ensures our work remains aligned with our mission and the evolving needs of the deaf football community.

He previously played for several deaf football clubs, including Fulham and Bristol, and was part of the coaching team for GB Deaf Women's Football at the 2013 Deaflympics, 2015 Deaf European Championship and 2016 Deaf World Championship.

Roanna Simmons – Operations

Within GBDF, Roanna oversees operational matters, supporting the effective day-to-day functioning of the board and organisational processes. Her experience spans elite performance and international sport governance.

She previously served as Operations Manager in 2013 for the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (ICSD), holds a degree in Sport Coaching & Development, and represented GB Deaf Women's Football at the 2005 and 2009 Deaflympics.

Susan McKeown – Policy & Governance

Susan specialises in governance and policy development, ensuring the organisation maintains clear, up-to-date policies that promote safeguarding, equality, compliance and best practice standards. She supports the board in maintaining strong governance frameworks and regularly reviews policies to ensure alignment with current requirements.

She has enjoyed an extensive high level playing career across both hearing clubs and Leeds Deaf Women. She captained GB Deaf Women's Football to bronze medal success at the 2005 and 2013 Deaflympics.

Oliver Eadsforth – Finance

Oliver oversees GBDF's finances, ensuring funds are managed responsibly, transparently and in line with good governance standards. He monitors budgets, provides financial reporting to the board, and supports long-term financial planning to strengthen GBDF's sustainability and future growth.

Oliver has been involved in deaf football for over 25 years, holding various roles including 10 years as General Secretary for England Deaf Football. He has also supported international squads with technical and logistical coordination for international deaf football and futsal championships.

Our Volunteers

GBDF is supported by a dedicated and passionate team of volunteers who are crucial to the success of the organisation. From coaching and team management to logistics, events, communications and administrative support, volunteers play an essential role in delivering international programmes and supporting deaf athletes.

Their commitment, expertise and willingness to give their time ensure that GBDF can operate effectively, provide high quality opportunities for players, and continue developing deaf football across Great Britain. Without our volunteers, the work of GBDF would not be possible.