

British Blind Sport

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A VISIBLE DIFFERENCE THROUGH SPORT



Our purpose

British Blind Sport (BBS) provides visually impaired people with the opportunity to participate in sport.

As a charity we pride ourselves on 'making a visible difference through sport' as we know that taking the first step into participating in a sporting or recreational activity can change lives for the better.

Sport and recreational activities can enhance the lives of people with visual impairments by improving their health, developing confidence and increasing social interaction. We encourage adults and children to participate in activities at all levels from grassroots to the Paralympic Games.

Who we represent

BBS is a membership organisation with a number of volunteer led Specialist Sports Sections. These sections provide a national programme of opportunities for adults over the age of 16 in archery, cricket, football, acoustic shooting and ten-pin-bowling.

Alongside the Sport Sections' league and cup events programme, BBS hosts a number of 'have a go days/come and try sessions' for VI children and adults to try sport for the first time or be re-introduced back into the sport of their choice.

In addition to the adult programme, BBS also hosts a number of national youth sports events for children and young people under the age of 18.

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Registered Charity No. 1168093

Blind and partially sighted people

There are almost two million people in the UK living with sight loss. There are varying types of visual impairments and the levels of sight loss ranges from total blindness to those with an impairment that also affects their everyday life.

This figure includes those that have irreversible uncorrected refractive error or a cataract that may be reversed. It also includes around 360,000 people registered as blind or partially sighted in the UK who have severe and irreversible sight loss.

There are almost 25,000 blind and partially sighted children in Britain. That is equal to 2 in every 1,000 children.

There is a link between sight loss and reduced wellbeing. Over one-third of older people with sight loss are also living with depression. Two-thirds of registered blind and partially sighted people of working age are not in paid employment.

Our support

BBS offers a national events programme for both children and adults with visual impairments and a number of 'have a go' days in a range of sports. In addition to this we also offer the following support:

- A series of 'VI friendly' sport specific educational resources to assist mainstream sports coaches and leisure providers to support people with a visual impairment within their chosen sport
- A 'First Steps' programme for VI children aged 7-12 years to encourage their first steps into sport and recreation
- Advice to clubs and coaches to enable more people with visual impairments to participate in sport
- A nationally recognised sight classification service that enables those participating in grass roots sport to compete on an equal level
- An insight and information service available to National Governing Bodies of sport and key stakeholders to develop their understanding of the sporting landscape in relation to visually impaired people across the UK
- BBS undertake research related to VI people and sport, and disseminate findings to key stakeholders to assist their understanding of the VI sporting landscape

Participation pathways for impairment group

BBS provides support to National Governing Bodies of sport (NGBs) to ensure all sports provision is inclusive and accessible to the VI community through structured events and appropriate coach development. We work with archery, acoustic shooting, athletics, boccia, bowls, cricket, cycling, football, goalball, golf, judo, sailing, swimming, tennis and ten-pin bowling.

Working in partnership

BBS works in partnership with a number of Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) such as Guide Dogs and Action for Blind People on programmes to enhance mobility and well-being, and support new opportunities in sport for blind and partially sighted children and adults.