

BVF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



held at

**The Harvey Hadden Sports Village,
Wigman Road, Bilborough, Nottingham, NG8 4PB
on Saturday 22 March 2025 at 5.45pm**

Committee members present: Carl Morris (CM) President, Paul Baillache (PB) Treasurer, Luce Wright (LW) Secretary, Gillian Aghajan, Beth Cranston-Selby, Jane Hutchison, Graham Paul.

Attendees: 22 members of BVF

Apologies: Peter Eames, Mike Robinson, Moya McNamara and John Crouch.

Approval of the minutes of the AGM held on 20 April 2024

On a proposal by Sue Brookes seconded by Ev Van Gemeren the minutes were unanimously accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the President.

President's Report (appended)

CM delivered his report outlining BVF's activities in 2024.

Secretary's Report (appended)

The report had been distributed and there were no questions.

Treasurer's Report (appended)

PB had published the accounts and his report on the BVF website. He thanked Joanne Yeates for her audit.

PB noted that a profit was made on Guildford, but there was a loss on the Age Groups due to experimenting with holding some weapons over three days, which will probably not happen again. Going forward, the costs of venues and competition expenses are rising, but BVF is endeavouring to keep competition fees the same. There might be a case for increasing the subscription.

On a proposal by Davis Sweeney seconded by Steven Bateman, the accounts for 2024 were unanimously approved.

Membership report (appended).

JH delivered the membership report and was asked whether many new members were from the 40-50 age group. JH reported that this was not the case but this may change once Cat 1 is established as a World Championship category.

Elections

Carl Morris was elected unopposed as President and Gillian Aghajan and Jane Hutchison were elected unopposed as ordinary members. All will serve a three-year term.

CM thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting was closed at 6.20pm.

Luce Wright

BVF Secretary

APPENDICES

President's Report

British Veteran Fencing (BVF) AGM 2025

Introduction

What a year 2024 turned out to be! With our three qualifying events, the enjoyable Bard's Bash, and the fiercely contested Winton Cup, we certainly kept ourselves busy. Add to that our international presence at the European Teams in Ciney, Belgium, and the World Championships in Dubai, and it's safe to say BVF has had another action-packed year.

AGM & Committee Elections

As I mentioned in last year's report, to ensure continuity and maintain a wealth of experience within the committee, only three positions—including one officer role—will be up for election at this AGM. This structure allows us to keep a steady hand on the tiller while still making room for fresh ideas.

Committee Activity

- Newsletter – A huge thank you to Gillian and the editorial team for producing the BVF newsletters. These publications were bursting with updates, anecdotes, and tales of veteran fencing exploits. I hope you've all enjoyed reading them.
- Selection – Our method for GB selection is constantly reviewed to ensure fairness and effectiveness. This year, beyond our usual discussions, we held another review meeting in Swindon. After thorough consideration, we concluded that the current system continues to be the fairest and most efficient way to select our teams. Special thanks to our Chair of Selectors, Graham Paul, and his diligent team:
 - o Epee: Neal Mallett, Marg Oniye
 - o Foil: Gillian Worman, Nick Mort
 - o Sabre: Jane Hutchison, Chris Prevett

Key Events of 2024

- Guildford International (6th–7th January 2024)

Kicking off the year with our first qualifying event for the World Championships, Guildford once again proved why it holds a special place in the calendar. As the only three-weapon event on the EVF circuit, it was a fantastic start to the season.

- National Championships – Manchester (22nd–24th March 2024)

Held in Manchester, this event was expertly run by Mike and Lyn Robinson, ensuring a smooth and competitive championship.

- Age Groups – Nottingham (19th–21st April 2024)

Hosted at Harvey Hadden Sports Village and skilfully managed by Naomi Donaldson, this event experimented with an additional sabre competition on Friday afternoon to accommodate multi-weapon fencers. Whilst a noble effort, the extra costs means it probably won't be repeated. This tournament was our final qualifying event, finalising our ranking lists for the World Championship selection.

- Home Nations Veteran Quadrangular – Edinburgh (13th April 2024)

A fiercely contested tournament held at Edinburgh Napier University, with England once again emerging victorious. The celebratory dinner that followed was, by all accounts, just as competitive! Many thanks to Scottish Fencing for hosting a fantastic event.

- Veterans European Team Championships – Ciney, Belgium (9th–12th May 2024)

Our GBR squad brought home four hard-earned medals, including one gold and two bronzes. A well-organized and highly enjoyable event for all involved.

- o Gold: WS (GV) – Brown, Frith, Hutchison, Narey, Williams
- o Bronze: WF (GV) – Anderson, Clayton, Morris, Uff, Worman
- o Bronze: WE (GV) – Clayton, Grant, Haldane, Morris, Turnbull

- The Bard's Bash – Stratford-upon-Avon (1st–2nd June 2024)

Following its successful debut last year, Chris Buxton and his team at King Edward VI's School hosted another fantastic weekend of fencing. The individual and mixed handicap team events were followed by a splendid BBQ in Graham Paul and Janet's extensive garden. Thankfully, the weather held out, and a great time was had by all.

- Veterans Winton Cup (21st–22nd September 2024)

Always a highlight on the BVF calendar, this year's event saw 10 sections competing. The dominant South East secured victory in every weapon except Men's Foil, which was claimed by the South. The gala dinner, orchestrated by Marcia and Gillian, was a roaring success. Special thanks to:

- o Marcia for overall event organization
- o John Crouch and Phil for DT
- o Peter and Janet Huggins for their invaluable support
- o Everyone who contributed to making this event a triumph!

- Veteran World Championships – Dubai (11th–16th October 2024)

The highlight of the season, hosted superbly in Dubai, saw 13 countries competing. Team GBR brought home 10 medals, including golds for Georgina Usher and Sheila Anderson with a special

mention to Jane Clayton getting a remarkable silver in WE. A fantastic result and a thoroughly enjoyable experience for all involved.

- Royal Navy Match – London (24th November 2024)

This year's Vets vs. Navy match took place aboard HMS President on the Thames, right next to the Tower of London. A spirited contest was followed by well-earned camaraderie. Special thanks to our very own Lt Cdr Rubin Nash for organising this event.

- Fencing Museum Visits

Jane Hutchison led several BVF members on visits to Malcolm Fare's fascinating Fencing Museum in the Cotswolds. A treasure trove of memorabilia, each visit concluded with a well-earned lunch at a local pub—surely the perfect way to end a day of fencing history! Many thanks to Jane for coordinating these trips and Malcolm, of course, for hosting and entertaining us with knowledge and anecdotes. With his permission we will be offering this fascinating experience again during 2025.

Final Acknowledgments

As you can see, 2024 was another busy year, and none of it would have been possible without the dedication and hard work of our incredible team. While I've mentioned many names throughout this report, I must also extend my gratitude to:

- Gillian for coordinating international events
- Pete and Janet Huggins for their tireless work in armoury and DT
- Mike and Lyn Robinson for their seamless event management
- Graham Paul for his role as Chair of Selectors
- Marcia for organizing the Winton Cup
- Lucy Wright for keeping everyone informed throughout the year

I feel incredibly fortunate to work with such an experienced and committed team.

Finally, on behalf of the entire committee, a heartfelt thank you to our members for your continued support, participation, and enthusiasm. Here's to another fantastic year ahead!

Carl Morris

President, BVF

February 2025

Secretary's Report

Five full committee meetings have been held since the last AGM, predominantly via Zoom, but we also held one physical meeting at Copthorne which proved very productive. As well as full committee meetings there have been various meetings to further organisations of events. Using Zoom has the advantage of a reduced carbon footprint and reduced expenses, but physical meetings give a better forum to debate complex topics and develop relationships within the committee.

General updates were sent throughout the year using Mailchimp and Gillian has produced the newsletter which is widely appreciated by members. Surveys were sent out after competitions using Survey Monkey. Feedback from the surveys has been discussed by the committee and this year the Winton Cup will be held at Lilleshall again following feedback about the floor of the venue at Billesley.

Competition rules have been updated and this year 50 additional points will be added to the totals of reigning World Champions on the ranking tables to facilitate the defence of their titles.

Special thanks go to John Mason who continues to help with the website, the entry system and database training, despite being unwell recently.

Thank you for all your support over the last year and I look forward to communicating with you all over the next 12 months.

Lucy Wright

2025

Membership Report

Membership Summary for 2024

	Men	Women	Total
This year	448	179	627
New Members	48	17	65
Not Renewed	46	27	73

By Category

	Men	Women	Total	%
Cat 1 (40-49)	70	38	108	17
Cat 2 (50-59)	146	56	202	32
Cat 3 (60-69)	141	55	196	31
Cat 4 (70-74)	30	13	43	7
Cat 4A (75-79)	29	11	40	6
Cat 5 (80+)	28	6	34	5

By Home Country

	Total	%
	1	0
ENG	482	77
WAL	43	7
SCO	51	8
NI	11	2
CI	12	2
None	27	4

How does this compare with 2023?

We finished the year with 599 members which is an increase in membership of 28 over 2023.

New members 62 which is pretty much the same as 2023 with a few more men joining than women.

Cat 4 has grown a little in the 70-79 age group this year with 5 more members.

Members who are 80+ are 5% of the membership but do not have a separate category to fence in so continue to fence with the 70+ fencers.

England is still the largest Home Country with 482 members which is an increase of 29 members making up 77% of the membership . The other Home Countries have the same % of memberships.

Jane Hutchison

2025

Treasurer's Report

This report covers the accounts for the year 2024, and comments on the ongoing finances of BVF. It is assumed the reader has read the accounts and supporting notes. I would like to thank Joanne Yeates who is performing an independent examination of the accounts.

Headline result Reserves have increased by £2685, £6508 from the excess of subscriptions over administration costs and losses of £3642 from the various events that have been run or supported.

2024 Accounts

Because in any one year the P&L includes cash flows (income and expenses) for the Guildford event in January, and similar cashflows in advance of the Guildford event the following January, the P&L account does not show the change in BVF funds in a meaningful way. The Balance Sheet allows for all the assets and liabilities arising from the Guildford events, and the closing balances are the true BVF reserves. I have included a table showing the movement in reserves from one year to the next, showing the contribution from each event and activity which is of much more use to members.

(a) Subscriptions and Administration

Subscription income has held up in 2024. We hope to see an increase in new 40+ members now that the World Championships will be open to them from 2025. General administration costs have risen in 2024, due to a number of one-off costs – for example BVF paid to send a representative to Henry da Silva's funeral, and made a donation to the BF charity in favour of the visits to Malcolm Fare's fencing museum. The committee has met by Zoom in 2024 apart from one physical meeting. Virtual meetings allow the committee to meet more often and at short notice to discuss specific issues. Directors & Officers insurance was renewed for 2024/25. Licences for web services such as Survey Monkey, MailChimp, and Zoom were renewed, and these amount to a material cost of running BVF.

(b) Events

EVF Guildford made a surplus of £1297. This is less than the previous year as we had to pay for all the equipment used, we hired the second hall, and refereeing and hotel costs were higher. We also ensured that all officials and helpers were fully recompensed. Guildford is the most complex and expensive event we organise – there is significant cost of referees, accommodation for officials, and good quality equipment. As comparison, we anticipate a similar level of surplus for 2025. The Age Groups event was run over 3 days at Nottingham. This was a trial and will not be repeated – the additional running costs (venue, referees, accommodation) were not matched by entries, and the event made a significant loss. The event will be run over 2 days this year, but we again expect it to make a loss. The BVF Nationals were held at the Manchester Fencing Centre and made a small loss of £337. This loss is acceptable and in line with previous years. The Winton Cup made a profit of £801. We had full attendance by all teams, and the much lower venue cost was offset by additional cost such as first aid. Thanks are due to Marcia Stretch for carefully managing the costs of this event. We are returning to Lilleshall in 2025, and venue costs will be higher, so we anticipate a loss unless entry fees increase, or savings can be found. The European Team Championships made a loss of £2439. This is because BVF heavily subsidise the fees and team manager costs, which exceed participant levies. There was a small surplus from the World Championships of £282. Despite the event being in Dubai, costs were surprisingly lower this year compared to Florida the previous year. A donation was received in respect of Team Manager costs – this was not required, so has been transferred to reserves and will be used to cover the higher expected costs for Bahrain. The Bards Bash, was run by Shakespeare Swords, however BVF collected the entry fees on their behalf, so the event is shown in our accounts. The small surplus arises from the social BBQ that was held by BVF.

(c) Ad-hoc use of reserves in 2024

We had some one-off expenses in 2025 covered under administration costs, no other one off costs were incurred.

(d) Other

No disbursements were made from the Dennis Hunt Fund established in 2021 to facilitate support of sabre related causes. A separate donation was received for £500. BVF agreed in 2022 to establish a 'hardship fund' to support members in difficulty by covering entry fees. Whilst no specific sum has been put aside, requests will be considered as they arise, and a couple of free entries were granted in 2024.

The future

(i) Subscriptions

The subscription rate of £15 has been unchanged for many years and should probably have been increased long ago by now. However, BVF finances remain in good health, and administration costs are well below the subscriptions received, enabling surplus to be used to subsidise loss

making events such as the Age Groups in 2024. We have no immediate plans to increase subscriptions, but it remains a possibility if finances deteriorate, or if we want to maintain entry fees in face of rising running costs.

(ii) Entry fees

We maintained fees at £45 in 2024 (and 2025) across all events. We will try and avoid increases; however, we will have to react to significant increases in competition running costs. It is evident that entry fees have not covered the costs for both the Nationals and Age Groups, and these have been subsidised from subscriptions in excess of administration costs. Entry fees for EVF Guildford are set in line with EVF rules.

(iii) Medals stock

We order medals on demand and only hold supplies sufficient to cover the next few events, hence the increase in medal stock in 2024. The remaining 'old' medal stock (value c£500) from the previous supplier will be run down where possible, and eventually be written off if not usable.

(iv) Future Events

The most significant costs of events are venue, refereeing, and equipment hire. We have been fortunate Kent Fencing have loaned us equipment for little cost. BVF is immensely grateful for this, and wishes to thank Kent Fencing, through Peter Huggins, for this support. This arrangement cannot be relied on in future of course and equipment hire costs may increase. We have seen all competition costs rise in the current economic climate, and we have seen rapid increases in venue and hotel costs. It is highly likely that we will make losses again on some events this year and we will have to subsidise them from reserves. In 2025 the World Championships will be in Bahrain where BVF costs are expected to be much higher than usual, for example team entry fees will double, because of new Vets/Grand Vets events, and travel and accommodation costs will be higher than in previous years as the event will be longer.

(v) Level of BVF Reserves

The level of reserves is very healthy, at £62,202. BVF will continue to aim to maintain reserves by trying to break even on events, whilst covering any losses from the excess of subscriptions over administration costs. BVF may also subsidise non-ranking social fencing events, or other initiatives. Members may question what such reserves are then needed for. BVF last hosted a major international event at Medway in 2016 for the European Team Championships, and the World Championships in Bath in 2006. Whilst there are no immediate plans to host events like these, should BVF do so, the financial commitment would be material, and it is therefore prudent to build up our finances beforehand. Conclusion BVF remains in good financial health, but is not immune to rising costs, and it is expected that it will become increasingly more challenging to run events cost effectively.

Paul Baillache,

Treasurer BVF

1st March 2025