

THE BRITISH POLIO FELLOWSHIP

3-YEAR STRATEGY 2025-2028

Vision statement

A world where anyone affected by polio gets the help they need.

Foreword

Message from Chair, Vice Chair & Chief Executive

It has been an exciting time over the last three years as we have worked towards the implementation of the strategic plan for 2022- 2025. We hope to build on this momentum and this document provides a framework for this to happen.

The ongoing challenges/opportunities presented by the shifting demographics of the polio community and the dynamic macro-economic landscape means we need to continue to be flexible in what we do.

Through all our work we try to embed the core principles of the Fellowship by ensuring we focus on our charitable objectives, and the polio community remains at the heart of this document. We have been and will continue to engage with all stakeholders to ensure they inform our decision making.

This strategy continues to be focused on what is needed immediately and more urgently, but with one eye firmly on the longer-term ambitions.

This remains a living, breathing document and the Trustees and staff team will continue to monitor progress and adapt as needed.

We are keen to ensure we have a sustainable model for the British Polio Fellowship (BPF) so we can continue to be there for the polio community for as long as we are needed.



Chair
Gordon Richardson



Vice Chair
Jerry Hutchinson



Chief Executive
Kripen Dhrona

Introduction

The British Polio Fellowship is a charity set up over 85 years ago (29 January 1939), primarily to provide fellowship and support to polio survivors in the UK.

This document builds on the three-year strategic plan for 2022-2025 and was developed post a Trustee and Senior Management team away day which took place in January 2024.

The following vision statement was agreed upon at the away day.

“A world where anyone affected by polio gets the help they need.”

This overall statement sits alongside our charitable objectives as stated in the BPF’s governing document, as follows,

The relief of persons who have or may yet have polio and Post-Polio Syndrome or associated ailments, in particular but not exclusively by:

- *representing the needs of people who have had or may yet have polio and Post-Polio Syndrome or associated ailments.*
- *assisting them to take their full integrated part in the life of the community.*
- *offering help, advice, information, accommodation, and support (financial or otherwise) to such people resident in the UK; and*
- *liaising with similar groups worldwide to receive and disseminate information and expertise.*

During the implementation of the strategy (2022-2025) the Board and staff team have continued to engage proactively with our key stakeholders including other polio groups in the UK and abroad. We used a number of ways to achieve this including at member meetings (in person and online), Annual General Meetings (AGMs) and other national events, zoom cafés, The Bulletin and Member Updates.

In 2023 we carried out a Big Survey of membership which saw nearly 1,300 members provide information. The plan is to carry out a Big Survey over a two-year cycle to provide comparative information.

The information from the away day, stakeholder engagement and the Big Survey has helped define the BPF strategy for 2025- 2028.

Achievements

We have made some big strides whilst implementing the 2022-2025 strategy and some of the highlights include: -

- A five-year budget has been developed which informs both our strategic planning and awareness of future funding requirements.
- Engaging with branch officers to get agreement towards a more flexible use of designated funds.
- Our wealthier branches have agreed to more flexible use of funds for specific projects, and this has been used to transfer funds from the wealthier branches to those less well-off to enable them to put on more events and meetings, and to offer financial assistance to a number of members particularly affected by the cost-of-living crisis.
- Developing and publishing The Optimal Clinical Pathway (OCP)¹ for Polio Survivors and the commencement of the distribution of the document.
- Developing the new Clinical Advisory Network(CAN) ²
- The appointment of a Community Engagement and Wellbeing Officer.
- Engaging with members via zoom, at monthly zoom cafes or specific topic meetings with volunteers.
- Appointment of two new Patrons and two new Ambassadors and reengagement with 1 existing Ambassador.
- Modelling of polio survivor numbers in the UK
- Continuing to forge new and develop existing partnerships, such as Neurological Alliance, European Polio Union, Play Badminton Club.
- Appointment of a Communications and Information Manager to reinvigorate all our communications.
- Bulletin reviewed and revitalised.
- National events such as the soft launch of the OCP at the Welsh Assembly.
- Explored co-opting Board members, to widen the skills range on the Board.

¹ The Optimal Clinical Pathway for polio survivors is a document that show what good care should like for people affected by polio. For more information on our website www.britishpolio.org.uk

² The Clinical Advisory Network was born from the BPF's Optimal Clinical Pathway for polio survivors (see references below). The Pathway recommended the BPF develop and implement a UK-wide clinical network for polio, late effects of polio (LEoP) and post-polio syndrome (PPS) to improve the treatment, care and support of polio survivors and their families and carers.

Strategic Goal for 2028

We had set the following strategic goal for 2025.

By 2025 the British Polio Fellowship will be a modern proactive charity that is in touch with and understands the needs of the entire diverse UK Polio Community and has the resources and expertise to provide tailored specialist advice and support to that Community. In particular it will have worked tirelessly to have raised the awareness and understanding of polio and post polio conditions across the UK and especially within the health and social care system.

Although much has been done to meet this goal, we still have more to do and as such the goal remains the same for 2028.

In 2022 when we began this process, we identified the following key themes

- 1) Improving communications
- 2) People
- 3) Finance
- 4) OHWB – Outreach, Health and Wellbeing

Separate working groups were established to work on these themes and the away day highlighted that these themes are still valid.

Two further focused cross-cutting groups have also been established: -

The Optimal Clinical Pathway Group - tasked with the production of the pathway and now working on how to promote the document as widely as possible.

Membership working group – looking at how best to recruit new members and retain current members.

Key Challenges

Key challenges include.

- Sustainable funding model.
- Reaching polio survivors across the UK.
- Promoting the Optimal Clinical Pathway and advocating for its adoption.
- Campaigning and making our voice heard.
- Maintaining a thriving branch and regional network.

Key Strategic Themes

This section details the new and/or revised objectives for each of the themes

Theme 1: Improving Communications

‘To communicate with and provide high quality, relevant and meaningful help and advice to all UK Polio Survivors.’

Key Objectives
Communicate key messages to all stakeholders in a timely and cost-effective manner.
Launch a new BPF website to meet the needs of the polio community and stakeholders.
Deliver a communications campaign that promotes the work of The British Polio Fellowship.
Raise awareness and understanding of Late Effects of Polio (LEoP) and Post-Polio Syndrome across the Healthcare community.

Theme 2: People

‘To identify and support all individuals and groups associated with the Fellowship including staff, volunteers, members, trustees, branch officers, patrons and other stakeholders and partners, with a view to maximising the effectiveness of the Fellowship delivering its objectives.’

Key Objectives
Regularly review the status of the BPF Regions and Branches, and finding new ways in which they can continue to operate effectively and inclusively.
Keep the staffing structure under review to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.
To build on our relationships with our current Patrons and Ambassadors and work more closely with them to further the aims of The Fellowship.
Continue to seek out new Patrons and Ambassadors to help support our work.
Review systems including succession planning to ensure a strong, diverse and robust board that is fit for purpose.
Engage with all relevant stakeholders.
Enhance current partnerships and forge new partnerships that support our ongoing work.

Theme 3: Financial Resources

‘To keep the Fellowship’s financial position under review, specifically, creating new financial resources and making effective use of existing ones.’

Key Objectives
Maximise opportunities for securing sustained sources of income, with the aim of ensuring financial resilience.
Maintain a 5-year budget, monitor and review annually and adapt as needed.
Identify key projects as targets for fundraising.
Identify ways to maximise flexibility in using resources to meet Charitable objectives including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) negotiating with Branches regarding using designated funds for wider benefit; and b) reviewing use of restricted funds

Theme 4: Outreach, Health and Wellbeing

‘To make the Fellowship’s approach, offer and focus more all-embracing to all existing and potential stakeholders, including determining our approach to diversity.’ and To review the Fellowship’s approach to taking action to assist its stakeholders with health and wellbeing including: providing health and wellbeing advice; looking at the future of the National event; and at ways of introducing health and wellbeing into other new and existing events.’

Key Objectives
Further develop the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) action plan to embed it in the work of the BPF.
Agree a plan for providing Health and Wellbeing advice on polio related issues.
Widely discuss and agree the future direction of national events.
Address the impact of changing demographics of polio survivors over the coming years.

Cross Cutting Theme 1 - Membership group

‘To work closely with all other groups to explore all ways to continue to retain current members and recruit new members to ensure the Fellowship is reflective as possible of the polio community in the UK’

Key Objectives
Grow the BPF member base.
Retain and engage existing members.
Enhance membership processes to be fit for purpose and accessible to all.
To keep the membership policy under review.

Cross Cutting Theme 2 - The Optimal Clinical Pathway* (OCP) Group

* *Optimal clinical pathway for polio survivors (including the late effects of polio and post-polio syndrome)*

‘Following the publication of the pathway in 2024, to explore all ways the OCP can be promoted and widely used to help towards polio survivors to receive better health and social care’

Key Objectives
To promote the pathway to key stakeholders, such as clinicians, health and social care decision makers and relevant people in government.
To implement the recommendations outlined in the pathway document.

Beyond 2028

What the service for the polio community looks like post 2028 will largely depend on the BPF getting a better understanding on the shifting nature of the demographic for polio survivors. The ongoing work in relation to the implementation of the 2025-2028 strategy, should give us the tools needed to plan for the Fellowship and the polio community in the future.

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