

---

## THOMAS NIPPRESS

---

### Occupation and position held:\*

Solicitor

---

### Please describe your Fencing Experience & BF Service\*

With 17 years of experience of training, competing in and coaching fencing at multiple levels, I have most recently delivered in the role of treasurer of the club for 8 years. I successfully secured the captain spot, motivating/driving/encouraging fencers to exceed at competition for two years. My leadership of the club has resulted in fencers across all weapons and ages regularly competing, including at the national youth championships. I have completed ITCF1 and am working towards level 2 foil and to join the BF coaching register. The fencers that I work with have competed successfully in the British Youth Championships and made it into British Fencing's Athlete Development Programme. I have helped to design programmes to develop athletes and produce an effective coaching culture within the club. Club captain in Hull and vice captain in Leeds, encouraging fencers to participate in competitions, setting competitive strategies for the clubs and creating situations to allow them to gain more experience. I have encouraged fencers to take control and charge of their own development and progression, working with them to think about their aims and setting appropriate goals. I am also a Level 2 foil referee, regularly refereeing in Yorkshire. I have supported others to start to work towards refereeing qualifications within and around Hull. Within the club I have put in place a referee development programme, with the aim of giving fencers the confidence and knowledge to referee in a club level and am now working towards arranging a course so that the fencers receive their own qualifications.

---

### Please describe your Governance/Company Director/Board level Experience: (This can be in private or public sector, sport or non-sporting capacity.)\*

Hull club committee member for 10+ years, treasurer for 8+ years and club captain for 2+ years. This has included financial management, the designing of budgets, helping to manage committee processes and contributing to the active development of fencing in the region. I have also been a committee member and vice-captain of Leeds fencing club for the last 2 years, undertaking a similar role as above.

---

### How would you support the strategic objectives of British Fencing? (1. A performance pathway to international success 2. A stronger, empowered diverse and inclusive community of 30,000 fencers, volunteers, coaches and supporters 3. Accessible inclusive swordplay opportunities delivered via partnership programmes 4. A sustainable future supported by high quality governance and infrastructure that is financially resilient 5. Maximise the wider benefits of fencing and the positive impact it can have on people's lives) if elected to the Board:\*

I have worked with and supported two of our cadet womens fencers to enter an international competition. Working with them to prepare for the competition, assess any hesitations/concerns, sourced kit to meet the international requirements, exploring what their aim for the competition was and desired outcome. I've put in place an open door policy in the club, adapting to the needs

---

---

and requirements of those who want to join the sport. Working with parents/ guardians and coaches to increase accessibility of the club to cater for the widest range of needs. I have sought independent medical opinion to assist with assessing whether a child with an abdominal feeding device would safely be able to fence. I have liaised with other coaches in the Yorkshire area to give fencers access to a wider range of coaching opportunities. We have adapted how we assess for any additional needs prior to a fencer joining the club and now invite anyone with concerns to come and speak with a coach before booking. We now also ask for feedback at the end of any courses delivered, so that we can see if there are further improvements that need to be made. I'm always looking for ways we can increase our outreach of the sport, I'm in the process of arranging for our attendance at a college open day and in the past have arranged for run taster sessions at community events.

---

#### **Fundraising/Accessing funds - in the public and not for profit, health and education sector\***

Active fencer under 35. Competing across Yorkshire and the North for 10+ years. Supporting and encouraging others to do so. Taking the club from one with no active competitive fencers to one with regular competitors from junior and cadet through to senior and veteran fencers. Sourcing funds and grants for the club and fencers. Obtained a club grant to buy new kit, a new box and a stock of breeches to support those wanting to start to compete. Also assisting several junior fencers to obtain grants of £500 towards buying their own competition kit.

---

#### **Commercial/Procurement - in the education sector\***

While treasurer I sought to maintain the club session price at £5, no annual membership fees, to encourage anyone to join. This involved undertaking an assessment of the average weekly taking of the club and preparing a forecast for the next year. During this it became apparent that the current venue would not be sustainable due to cost, and so we then undertook to relocate to a more appropriate venue. Some of the club were initially resistant to the change but with sharing the information, risks and benefits we successfully moved the club to the new venue, which is much more accessible and we have seen our numbers steadily increase since. I have worked on successful grant applications for the club that have resulted in expansions of the club's capacity to deliver support to the community, with successful applications to the Ellie Penrose Fund and Sport England recently.

---

#### **Sport Programme Delivery – in community/performance/disability sport \***

Hull club - organising and assisting to deliver multiple beginners courses. We run 4 beginners courses throughout the year. In preparation of each course I will advertise the details, using our social media accounts and local media, register participants, assess any additional needs/ requirements and arrange payment. I have endeavoured to engage with the wider community as much as possible, appearing on the local radio station to promote the sport and course, liaising with other sports clubs and facilities in the Hull and East Yorkshire, to open the sport up and to engage with as many people as possible. As a club we then adapt the course to the needs of the beginners, I have sought medical advice where needed to assess whether any particular conditions can be accommodated in how the course is delivered, to ensure this is done in a safe and accessible way. Once a fencer has completed the beginners course I have then worked hard to guide and encourage the junior and novice fencers to train and develop their skills, supporting in

---

---

competitions, including Yorkshire Championships, British Youth Championships and England Youth Championships. Managing the club account while treasurer for 8+ years, navigating covid, so that we can continue to offer fencing at an accessible, local and affordable level. By undertaking a review of what each role on the committee does I have been able to re-allocate the workload, I was then able to encourage new members to join, as they were stepping into a defined role and able to shadow to understand what is involved. See further application in relation to organising summer camp. Leeds - committee member, encouraging and supporting the junior and novice fencers. Helping with identifying suitable competitions, training and preparation, competition day support. Mentored fencers through to the British Youth Championships and Athlete Development Programme.

---

**Legal\***

I am a qualified solicitor, working in the legal industry in a variety of roles for the past 10 years and have been a qualified clinical negligence solicitor. I act for a wide range of clients, including children and vulnerable adults. My work involves risk assessment, tactical decisions, strategic planning, building a team of experts to succeed in the case. I also work with a number of charities, to assist with fundraising, campaigning and service signposting. My leadership, communication and analytical skills have been honed through my years of practice, this allows me to collaborate effectively.

---

**Please describe any additional skills and attributes that you believe you would bring to the Board if elected. Please study the job description for a Board Director on the British Fencing website\***

As outlined above.

---