

**Governing bodies bring communities together with Sunnah sports**

**26 September** **2024** – Archery GB is one of five national governing bodies who have all come together for the first time to support Greensville Trust, a grass roots educational charity that provides a range of sport, education and community development activities to faith-based communities across the UK.

To mark National Inclusivity Week (23-29 September), Swim England, England Athletics, British Equestrian Federation, British Wrestling and Archery GB have announced a collaboration which will see them come together as ‘Sunnah Sports.’ It will raise awareness of their respective sports and empower Greensville Trust alumni, working with them and their communities to generate impact on both a local and national level.

Sunnah sports refer to those sports that are intrinsically part of the Muslim faith and named throughout prophetic texts, according to the Muslim Sports Foundation. They include archery, horse riding, wrestling, swimming and running.

To kickstart the partnership, representatives from each organisation joined forces for a pilot weekend retreat at the charity’s hub at Mustafa Mount in Bradford. The two-day event provided an opportunity to share insight, knowledge and experience in tackling inequalities and barriers to participating in their sports for Muslim communities.

Amer Siddiq, Chairman of Greensville Trust, explains why the partnership is so important: “We were thrilled to host the weekend taster sessions for Sunnah sports in collaboration with the national governing bodies. This initiative is an important step towards ensuring sport is more accessible and inclusive for all, particularly for underrepresented groups. By introducing these sports to communities, we aim to inspire a new generation of athletes and instructors who will help establish grassroots clubs in communities where physical activity is limited.

“Our goal is not only to promote physical wellbeing but also to provide an opportunity for participants to explore pathways into coaching, club management, and other career opportunities in sports. This weekend was about building connections between local communities and national governing bodies, ensuring that these sporting activities become more inclusive, especially for Muslim communities.

“We believe that sports have the power to unite people, foster healthy habits, and create lasting change in neighbourhoods that need it the most. Together, we can cultivate a culture of participation and inclusivity, which reflects the rich diversity of our society.”

While the partnership aims to tackle inequalities as a whole, each governing body, under the Sunnah Sports umbrella, have set out sport-specific aspirations to guide their involvement that will contribute towards a common goal of adding value to existing activities and organisations, as well as identifying new opportunities for participation growth.

Across the weekend all delivered a range of activities to connect Greensville Trust alumni and their communities, and encouraged engagement through a series of sessions enabling participants to experience each sport first-hand.

From an Archery GB perspective there were a number of have-a-go sessions where participants tried their hand at shooting a bow under the guidance of experienced coaches, including Jehad Shamis, Nalette Tucker (Sunnah Sports Community CIC) and Jamila Bi from Project Rimaya - developed by Archery GB, in association with funding from Sports Aid, to engage with Muslim communities and increase participation in archery.

Swim England ran four sessions for individuals to find out more about how to get involved in swimming, with topics including water safety, swimming as a teaching career and a session on how to specifically get involved in aquatics in the local area.

British Wrestling put on a number of freestyle wrestling taster sessions offering a fun and engaging introduction alongside the basic concepts of the sport. England Athletics hosted ‘funetics’ which involved an athletic activation zone, run, jump and throw, plus Run Together, a small running circuit. In partnership with The Pony Club, British Equestrian ran an activity zone where participants learnt about horses and horse riding through a range of interactive activities.

The retreat marked the first in a series of collaborative activities, initially over a 12-month period, between Sunnah Sports and the charity to establish Sunnah sports clubs in underserved communities and increase the national governing bodies’ knowledge, insight and expertise in working with diverse communities, helping sports to become more inclusive and accessible.

Over the coming months there will also be opportunities for people development as part of the partnership through community engagement roles, coaching, mentors and volunteers. There will also be development opportunities from a facilities perspective, with each governing body providing guidance and advice on practical factors, including safety requirements and practical help setting up equipment.

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**About Archery GB**

Archery GB is the British body for all forms of archery in the UK, an inclusive sport which lends itself to all spectrums of the population - regardless of age, disability, or gender. With over 800 clubs and more than 38,300 members, Archery GB is affiliated to World Archery, the British Olympic Association, and the British Paralympic Association. More information: [www.archerygb.org](http://www.archerygb.org) Beginners can visit [www.startarchery.co.uk](http://www.startarchery.co.uk) to find beginners’ courses and clubs near them and to learn more about the sport.