

Old Bedfordians Club – Five Year Strategy 2022-2026

Despite the faster pace of the ever-changing world, we currently live in, the role and objectives of the Old Bedfordians Club ('the Club') have stayed remarkably constant since it was founded in 1891, namely:

- 1. To foster and maintain the relationship between alumni and to assist and support members in their careers and lives.*
- 2. To maintain the bond between Bedford School and its alumni so that the development of the school, aims, and objectives are achieved.*

Whilst these objectives have endured the test of time, the current global pandemic, the evolution and use of technology, new communication channels, rapidly changing workplaces and competition from other institutions means that the Club, if it is going to continue to thrive well into the future, will be faced with significant challenges and opportunities. A detailed plan has been produced which explores these challenges and proposes ways of overcoming them.

With our fundamental objectives at heart, we strive to provide Old Bedfordians (OBs) with lifelong support and fellowship as soon as they leave the gates of Bedford and enter the world beyond. With over nine thousand OBs in our ranks, we harbour an unrivalled range of business, professional and personal connections that make up a support network for all our members. The services and opportunities we provide for them aim to inspire members to stand out from the crowd, think on their feet and be creative, so they can make a real impact in life and the world at large.

We feed the knowledge of older generations to young OBs through a varied careers programme and run a fledgling mentoring programme to provide advice and progression for all. The Club has a myriad of sports teams and clubs for members to take part in and we actively encourage new groups to start up. A varied calendar of members' events takes place across the country and the world each year, to allow everyone to meet up or return to Bedford.

By December 2026, we plan to have built on these current services by providing lifelong support to our global community, with a range of activities, facilities, products and services in a mutually beneficial partnership that generates meaningful connections and strengthens ties with the school.

This Plan, which builds upon the strategy has been prepared by the Executive Committee for approval by the Council and for subsequent presentation at the Club AGM on the 9th July 2022. After presentation to the AGM, the Plan will be distributed as necessary and will be published on the Club website. The on-going implementation of the Plan will be the responsibility of the Executive Committee and the staff of the OB Club Office. The plan will have a series of measurable metrics and a detailed implementation plan.

To deliver the plan we have identified ten key areas of focus, which have been prioritised in importance 1 -10:

- 1. Communications:** to seek to engage through traditional and emerging social media channels the greatest number of OBs, ensuring that all content is both interesting and appealing to all age groups in all geographic areas.
- 2. Pupil engagement:** to play a meaningful role in every pupil's time at the school, so that by the time they leave they are fully engaged and understand the goals and objectives of the Club.
- 3. Young OB engagement:** to provide a structured engagement programme for all young OBs (aged 18-35), which results in a long-term relationship with the Club and school.

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4. **Eagle Supporters (Subscribing Membership):** to increase the number of Eagle Supporters by offering new complimentary benefits in addition to the existing benefits.
5. **Commercial:** to maximise the commercial and merchandising opportunities to raise additional income from which we can expand the range of activities/services offered to Club members.
6. **Careers and Networking:** to provide a first-class careers and networking service that differentiates the Club from other providers, such as university careers departments.
7. **Events:** to provide a broad calendar of physical and online/hybrid events that appeal to the widest number in our community.
8. **District Vice Presidents (DVPs):** to have a vibrant and connected global community of DVPs who support members in both an active and passive capacity.
9. **Creating Affinity Groups:** to create sporting, arts, music and drama affinity groups that appeal to a diverse audience that maximises engagement.
10. **Governance:** to ensure the Club has robust governance procedures and processes in place, ensuring we have clear succession paths and a vibrant and willing community of supporters.

To find out more information about the underlying areas of focus please refer to the detailed plan. Once this has been approved by the Council, we will develop a detailed set of actions to support delivery.

This five-year strategy is innovative, dynamic, bold, and wide-ranging in scope. Whilst it is certainly complex and challenging, it is also, with considerable hard work, ultimately achievable. The OB Community, and OB Club Office, will be working collaboratively to make this strategy a reality.

To learn more see the full plan.