

Executive Summary

This revised strategic plan outlines the British Drilling Association's (BDA) priorities and objectives for 2025 and beyond. It builds upon the 2024 framework with enhanced clarity, measurable outcomes, and a stronger focus on sustainability, member engagement, and industry leadership.

Mission Statement

Committed to Excellence in Health & Safety, Quality of Workmanship and Technical Standards for the Benefit of the Drilling Industry and its Clients.

Aims of the British Drilling Association

The British Drilling Association is committed to advancing excellence in health & safety, technical standards, and professional development across the drilling industry. Over the next five years, the Association will pursue the following strategic aims:

1. Health, Safety & Wellbeing

- Promote continuous improvement in health and safety awareness across all member companies.
- Regularly update safety guidance, manuals, and best practice resources.
- Develop and distribute safety-related training materials and videos.

2. Technical Standards & Best Practice

- Establish, maintain, and improve industry standards, codes of practice, and technical guidance.
- Collaborate with government bodies, institutions, and trade associations to influence policy and standards.
- Ensure BDA representation in national and international technical forums.

3. Audit & Accreditation

- Develop and promote the BDA Audit as a benchmark for industry excellence.
- Maintain independent third-party accreditation (e.g., MPQC) and explore tiered audit models.
- Achieve and maintain 100% compliance with membership criteria, including audit participation.
- Expand audit scope to include emerging sectors such as geothermal, water wells, and blasting.

4. Sustainability & Carbon Reduction

- Develop sustainability policies and carbon reduction targets aligned with client and industry expectations.
- Promote carbon calculation tools and data capture frameworks for contractors.
- Publish guidance and case studies to support members in achieving sustainability goals.

5. Training, Education & Career Development

- Support training and education for all personnel in the drilling industry, including apprentices, operatives, and supervisors.
- Promote VQ qualifications and Trailblazer-compliant apprenticeships.
- Develop clear career pathways and CPD frameworks for operatives and specialists.

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6. Membership Value & Growth

- Provide tangible value to members through training, networking, technical support, and recognition.
- Expand membership across contractors, suppliers, consultants, and individual professionals.
- Target 5% annual growth in corporate membership.
- Consider the needs of members operating outside traditional ground investigation sectors.

7. Industry Influence & Collaboration

- Engage with clients, designers, engineers, and specifiers to promote BDA standards and audit requirements.
- Collaborate with UK and international trade associations (e.g., AGS, FPS, GSHPA, IoM3).
- Influence suppliers and manufacturers to align with BDA best practice obligations.

8. Communication & Engagement

- Enhance communication through digital platforms, newsletters, webinars, and social media.
- Provide regular updates on BDA activities, guidance, and industry developments.
- Create opportunities for member interaction and feedback.

9. Financial Resilience

- Increase financial reserves to cover six months of operational turnover.
- Identify new revenue streams to support strategic initiatives and member services.

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MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Management Committee is responsible for overseeing the strategic direction, governance, and operational priorities of the British Drilling Association (BDA). Meeting five times annually (including the AGM), the Committee ensures alignment across all sub-committees and working groups.

Core Responsibilities

- Review and guide sub-committee activities, responding to industry developments and member needs.
- Ensure sub-committees meet regularly and maintain momentum between Management Committee meetings.
- Encourage specialist contributions to sub-committee work.
- Oversee the update process for BDA publications and guidance documents.
- Strengthen ties with complementary trade associations (e.g., AGS, FPS, Ground Forum).
- Promote the BDA Audit as a standard requirement in client specifications.
- Direct the General Manager on strategic priorities and operational matters.
- Manage public relations and external communications.
- Review the BDA Mission Statement annually.
- Ensure timely communication of sub-committee activity to members (e.g., publish meeting notes within one week).

Membership

The Management Committee and General Manager will ensure that BDA membership is reserved for companies that fully comply with documented criteria, while also growing and diversifying the membership base.

Strategic Actions

- Maintain current membership levels by delivering added value.
- Increase membership diversity across contractors, consultants, suppliers, and individual professionals.
- Ensure membership fee income meets or exceeds budget targets.
- Expand membership categories to include drillers (owner-operators, small businesses).
- Develop a UK-wide database of drilling personnel.
- Offer discounted access to BDA and industry events for members.
- Launch targeted marketing campaigns to attract new members from across the supply chain.
- Regularly publish and reinforce membership benefits via all communication channels.
- Explore new engagement methods to connect with members.
- Maintain strong relationships with industry partners and trade press.
- Allocate time for the General Manager to engage with potential and withdrawing members.
- Improve communication with members through updates on:
 - Meeting agendas and outcomes.
 - Technical notes, safety alerts, and articles.
 - Newsletter content and digital outreach.

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BDA Audit Steering Group

The Audit Steering Group plays a critical role in monitoring and verifying the implementation of BDA's audit-related strategic objectives. Comprising sub-committee chairs, audit team members, and the BDA Chair, the group ensures independent oversight and continuous improvement.

Strategic Actions

- Collaborate with H&S, Training & Education, and Technical Standards sub-committees to enhance audit criteria.
- Conduct ongoing reviews of the Ground Investigation (GI) Audit.
- Assess demand for audits in specialist areas (e.g., anchoring, blasting, geothermal).
- Maintain robust audit policies and procedures.
- Ensure continued third-party certification of the audit scheme.
- Integrate quality and technical standards into the audit framework.
- Develop and publish audit statistics and performance insights.

Sustainability & Carbon Reduction Working Group

The BDA is committed to supporting members in achieving sustainability and carbon reduction goals. This working group is developing a dynamic guidance manual that will evolve alongside industry advancements and regulatory expectations.

Strategic Actions

- Develop or promote carbon calculation tools tailored for drilling contractors.
- Support data capture initiatives to enable accurate emissions reporting.
- Promote carbon reduction strategies and sustainability initiatives across the sector.
- Ensure the guidance manual is regularly updated to reflect emerging best practices and client expectations, particularly around Scope 3 emissions.

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FINANCE AND STRATEGY SUB-COMMITTEE

Purpose:

To ensure the financial sustainability of the BDA and to lead the development, implementation, and review of the Association's strategic direction and membership standards.

Primary Objectives:

- Maintain robust financial management and ensure the BDA's ongoing viability.
- Develop, recommend, and monitor the Association's medium- and long-term strategy.
- Set and review membership criteria to drive continuous improvement in standards and compliance.

Strategic Actions:

1. Financial Management

- Agree annual budgets and monitor performance against targets.
- Advise sub-committees on budgetary matters and resource allocation.
- Direct the General Manager on all financial matters.
- Assess and manage the financial impact of changes to membership criteria, including risk review.
- Develop and maintain income and cost models based on current and forecast membership.
- Ensure sufficient financial reserves to meet commitments and support growth.
- Determine annual renewal fees and review as necessary.
- Identify and develop new revenue streams, such as:
 - Membership growth
 - Website advertising
 - Grants (e.g., CITB) linked to training, upskilling, and e-learning

2. Strategic Planning

- Develop and maintain the BDA Strategic Plan, outlining short-, medium-, and long-term objectives.
- Gather input from the Association Chair, directors, Management Committee, and sub-committee chairs.
- Publish an updated Strategic Plan annually, with clear action plans for sub-committees.
- Monitor, review, and provide feedback on the implementation of strategic actions.

3. Membership Criteria & Compliance

- Develop and issue enhanced membership criteria for all categories, reviewed annually.
- Require members to commit to the Association's aims and continuous improvement in health & safety, competence, and technical standards.
- Define compliance measures, including:
 - Statements on trading ethos and QEHS standards
 - Provision of annual turnover and staff numbers
 - Minimum numbers of VQ-qualified and BDA-audited staff

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- Details of in-house and sub-contracted services
 - Increase compliance expectations year-on-year, providing at least six months' notice of changes.
 - Consider and propose new categories or requirements for contractor members, including:
 - Legislative compliance (e.g., H&S, PUWER, LOLER, road transport)
 - Percentage of staff with first aid, service avoidance, and manual handling training
- 4. Governance & Communication**
- Ensure sub-committee activity is discussed at each Management Committee meeting.
 - Communicate changes in strategy, finance, and membership criteria clearly to all members.

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HEALTH & SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

Purpose:

To drive continuous improvement in health, safety, and wellbeing across the drilling industry, supporting members in achieving and exceeding compliance with best practice and legislative requirements.

Primary Objectives:

- Collaborate with government agencies and members to develop, publish, and promote best practice, standards, and guidance.
- Identify and respond to industry trends and emerging safety topics.
- Proactively challenge the industry on key safety issues, including:
 - Innovation
 - Transport
 - Manual handling
 - Environmental protection
 - Occupational health
 - Buried services
- Foster an open and transparent safety culture, sharing incident, accident, and near-miss information to promote learning and prevent recurrence.
- Remain responsive and accountable to member feedback and suggestions.

Strategic Actions:

1. Guidance & Publications

- Regularly review and update BDA safety publications to ensure relevance and compliance with current legislation.
- Publish timely Safety Alerts and guidance documents in response to industry needs.

2. Data & Insights

- Obtain, analyse, and distribute annual industry accident statistics to inform members and drive improvement.
- Set and update safety expectations for the BDA Audit, ensuring alignment with best practice.

3. Compliance & Advocacy

- Promote compliance of all plant and equipment used within the sector.
- Liaise with and lobby manufacturers to ensure safety standards are met and improved where necessary.

4. Communication & Engagement

- Publish executive summaries of sub-committee activities within one week of meetings on the BDA website.
- Ensure regular discussion of safety matters at Management Committee meetings.
- Encourage ongoing member input to keep the sub-committee relevant and accountable.

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TECHNICAL AND STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE

Purpose:

To lead on all technical matters and standards, ensuring BDA members benefit from up-to-date guidance, best practice, and industry representation.

Primary Objectives:

- Publish concise technical guidance and bulletins on key topics (e.g., sample quality, drilling technology).
- Develop and maintain best practice documents for the sector.
- Keep members informed of changes to technical standards and regulations.
- Ensure BDA representation at all relevant technical committees and working groups.
- Foster collaboration with other trade associations (e.g., Ground Forum, AGS, FPS) on technical issues.

Strategic Actions:

1. Technical Guidance & Best Practice

- Regularly review and update technical standards and guidance documents.
- Prepare and publish technical best practice articles for industry press and the BDA website.
- Respond proactively to industry issues from a technical perspective.

2. Audit & Quality Assurance

- Review and update BDA Audit criteria to ensure high standards of skill, knowledge, and compliance.
- Expand audit content to cover specialist areas such as anchoring, drilling and blasting, and ground source heat drilling.
- Enhance the audit process by integrating quality and technical standard expectations.

3. Industry Engagement

- Engage with consultant members to identify and address key technical challenges.
- Represent BDA interests in external technical forums and working groups.
- Collaborate with other trade bodies to align and advance technical standards across the sector.

4. Communication & Transparency

- Publish executive summaries of sub-committee activities within one week of meetings on the BDA website.
- Ensure regular reporting and discussion of technical matters at Management Committee meetings.

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TRAINING AND EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE

Purpose:

Support our members with guidance, training and educational content and support.

Primary Objectives:

- Advance the skills, knowledge, and professional development of all personnel in the drilling sector.
- Ensure training and qualifications remain relevant, accessible, and aligned with industry needs.
- Promote a culture of lifelong learning and continuous improvement.

Strategic Actions:

1. Qualifications & Standards

- Encourage industry-wide adoption of the NVQ Level 3 Advanced Drilling Qualification.
- Promote the new NVQ Level 3 to clients and stakeholders.
- Collaborate with trade bodies to scope and develop a new NVQ for Geotechnical Technicians.

2. Audit & Competency

- Regularly review and update BDA audit criteria to reflect evolving skill, knowledge, and compliance standards.
- Expand audit content to cover anchoring, drilling and blasting, ground source heat drilling, and other specialist disciplines.
- Define and communicate additional training requirements linked to audit participation.

3. Apprenticeships & Early Careers

- Review and enhance the content of the BDA Apprenticeship Scheme.
- Support recruitment and onboarding of new apprentices.
- Administer the scheme in partnership with industry specialists and training providers.
- Review and update the Driller's Logbook to reflect current best practice.
- Explore alternative funding and development opportunities for apprenticeships.

4. Training Matrix & Recognition

- Develop and maintain a BDA-approved Training Matrix for the sector.
- Seek endorsement of the Training Matrix from other relevant trade bodies.

5. Technical Publications & Resources

- Oversee the regular update of technical publications and training materials to ensure relevance and accuracy.

6. Communication & Engagement

- Publish executive summaries of sub-committee activities within one week of meetings on the BDA website.
- Ensure regular discussion and feedback at Management Committee meetings.

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MARKETING SUB-COMMITTEE

Purpose:

The Marketing Sub-Committee plays a vital role in promoting the British Drilling Association (BDA), expanding its reach, and supporting its financial sustainability. Its strategic aims are to:

Primary Objectives:

- Raise the industry profile of the BDA among members, prospective members, clients, and relevant institutions.
- Support long-term financial viability by growing membership and promoting BDA events.
- Facilitate networking opportunities across the drilling and geotechnical sectors.

Strategic Actions:

1. Brand & Media Presence

- Maintain a relationship with a professional marketing specialist to enhance BDA's visibility across all media channels.
- Publish regular updates on BDA activities, including sub-committee work, general manager initiatives, and member contributions.
- Increase frequency and diversity of articles in trade press and industry publications.

2. Membership Growth

- Recruit new members through direct outreach to suppliers, contractors, consultants, and owner-operators.
- Develop and promote the Client and Consultant corporate membership category, targeting key clients (specific target to be defined).
- Launch targeted campaigns to highlight the benefits of BDA membership.

3. Event Promotion

- Organise 3–4 seminars or webinars annually, tailored to both technical and drilling audiences.
- Support industry events with BDA representation, discounts for members, and promotional backing.
- Enhance the annual dinner dance with improved programming and a formal awards ceremony.

4. Audit Promotion

- Promote the BDA Audit as a standard requirement in client specifications and ensure enforcement by Investigation Supervisors.
- Run campaigns to increase audit uptake, aligning with SISG UK Specification, BS Standards, and best practice guidance.

5. Digital Engagement

- Maintain and refresh the BDA website regularly; expand advertising opportunities for corporate and non-member companies.
- Develop LinkedIn presence with automated RSS updates and weekly content scheduling.

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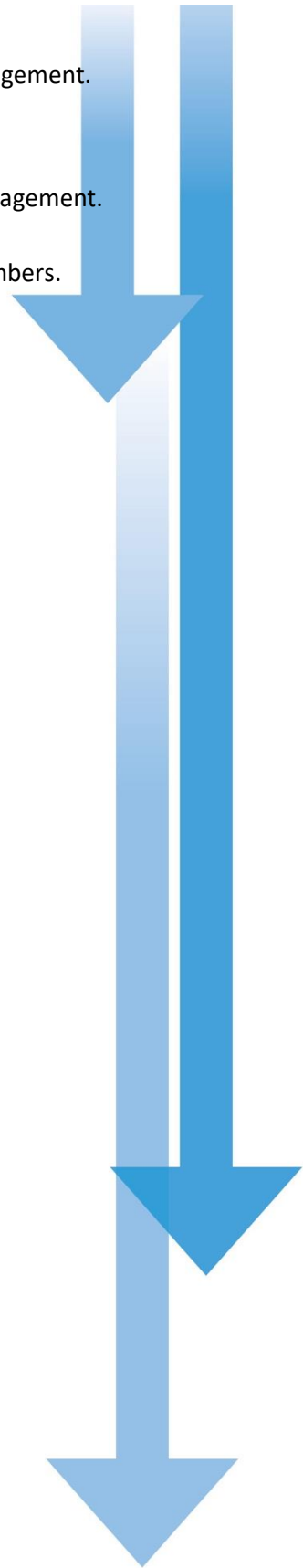


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- Use X to amplify member activity and industry news through retweets and engagement.
- Continue monthly branded newsletters via MailChimp or similar platforms.

6. Member Interaction

- Invite member contributions (questions, comments, observations) to foster engagement.
- Publish summary notes (“snippets”) from all meetings promptly on the website.
- Ensure sub-committee activity is communicated clearly and consistently to members.



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