



Guildford Baseball & Softball Club

Club Development Plan

1. Introduction

a. Background & History

Guildford Baseball Club was formed in 1992 from a merger between the remnants of the Wokingham Millers Baseball Club, and some Guildford based enthusiasts. Since that date, the club has competed in the BBF Adult Baseball leagues, with between 1 and 3 teams being fielded each year.

Since 2013 the club has also run a youth programme, which has grown in size to provide regular activities and games for U9, U11, U13 and U15. As of 2018, players from this programme have begun to progress into the adult teams.

Membership is mostly derived from the SW Surrey and NE Hampshire areas, although some come from farther afield. The club has always been funded by membership fees, as opposed to any sponsorship or funding income, and these fees are used solely to cover the costs of running the club.

b. Club Strategy

The aims of the club are as follows:

- Provide the opportunity to play baseball.
- Ensure it is accessible for all ages, abilities, and genders.
- Introduce and retain new players to the sport.
- Develop the awareness of the sport within the UK, and especially locally.

c. Organisation

The club has a Management Committee, consisting of the following positions:

- General Manager
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Head Coach
- Team Managers
- Umpires Officer
- Facilities Mgr.
- Equipment Mgr.

The Committee members are elected at the Annual General Meeting by the members of the organisation to oversee the running of the club.

2. Audit

d. Financial

The club is on a sound financial footing as the budget is always set to cover all annual costs. Any profit, derived from greater than expected membership or by other fundraising activities, is put back into growing the club to further the activities that support the strategy stated above.



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e. Administration

Club Administration is carried out by the roles of the General Manager, Treasurer and Secretary. Assistance is provided by the Team Managers and other committee members for their respective areas

f. Legal

- The club is bound by a Club Constitution, which is reviewed annually.
- Insurance of all playing members as well as public liability cover is arranged through the National Governing Body (BBF).
- A risk assessment is carried out for all facilities that are used.
- All those working with children are required to have undergone a successful DBS check. As of 2021, this is deemed to cover all Team Managers, Coaches and First Aiders.

g. Playing

In 2022, three teams were entered into the BBF Adult Baseball Leagues, Mavericks and Millers in AA and Gold Cats in A. Squad size is set slightly higher for the AA teams (Approx 18, compared to 16 for A). New players that join, are typically place in the Gold Cats team, depending on previous experience. Since the lock down in 2020, adult numbers have increase, but junior numbers have decreased. This can be attributed to the fact that there was no recruitment allowed in the U11 age group for last 3 years and those in the older age group, progressed into the adult teams

Membership Trends (based on those paying to play)

Membership numbers	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Adult Baseball	60	48	46	41	39	48	43	41	30	41	37	32
Junior Baseball	30	33	27*	51	47	53	59	46	21	13	n/a	n/a
Softball	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10	31	16	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

* Due to lockdown, these numbers are only approximate as no players fees were charged for juniors

Certification

Role	Number
BBF Level 1 Coach	3
BBF Level 2 Coach	3
First Aiders	3
DBS (CRB) Holders	8
'Child Protection in Sport and Active Leisure Level 2'	2

h. Facilities

The club has been using the following facilities for baseball over the last 12 months, although as of 2023, Kings College will come online for all adult baseball, and Christs College will be used as the second field, primarily for the Single-A teams.



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Facility name	Event	Which days	Weekly hours
Christ's College	Adult Baseball, Junior Baseball	Thurs, Sun	9 (in season)
Kings College	Junior Baseball	Sat	3 (in season)
Broadwater School	Indoor Softball, Baseball Training, PE Taster Sessions	Tues, Sun	3 (off season)

3. Analysis

i. Club SWOT Analysis

The following is the current SWOT analysis as of end of 2022.

Strengths:

- Long standing club within British baseball, with 30 years of history
- Good level of coaching knowledge amongst qualified coaches
- Provision of baseball at all ages (adults and juniors)
- Progression path for juniors into adult teams
- 2 adult fields

Weaknesses:

- Club is reliant on a small number of volunteers.
- Unable to offer adult baseball above AA.
- Low profile in local media
- Shortage of publicity and marketing
- No batting practice facilities
- Drop off in youth numbers in last two years due to pandemic / resources.
- Have tried to spread resources too thin, by offering softball in the past.

Opportunities:

- Move to Kings College should be used to promote the club and the sport, alongside the exposure that will be given to the game in 2023, with MLB games in London, and GB participating in the WBC
- Baseball is a mixed gender sport, and with more women beginning to play the game, the club can support this, especially in the areas of junior baseball, which is what is needed to support the women's game
- Focusing on baseball as something different to the traditional sports, can be used as a marketing opportunity.
- Aside from cricket, not too much competition by way of other summer team sports
- Catchment area includes many non-UK nationals.

Threats:

- Perceived as an American sport
- Lack of publicity or visibility
- Clashes with cricket in the summer, for the use of playing fields.
- Divided baseball community within the UK



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- Lack of focus at youth level on British children

Accomplishments in last 5-year period

- New facility at Kings College will come online in 2023
- Increased the numbers playing junior baseball to allow Saturday sessions to be split by age group.
- Teams at U11, U13 and U15 were entered into the YNBC's each season, and frequent, if not regular games were organised against other clubs, although this has been tempered by the lockdown disaster
- Put in place a progression for junior players to learn the game and progress into playing adult baseball.
- Grew to 3 adult teams (from 2021)
- Developed social media presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- Attained Clubmark Accreditation
- Increased the amount of parental help within the junior programme, although again, this has been impacted in last couple of years as a result of lockdown

4. Looking Forward

j. 2023 5-Year Plan

Within 1 year

- Membership
 - Continue to replenish junior membership to replace those moving up to adult baseball, with special focus on the U11 age group and thus primary schools.
- Volunteering
 - Encourage more volunteers at all levels of the club with an aim of not having one person covering multiple roles.
- Facilities
 - Install batting cages at Kings College
 - Improve the Christs College facility to improve the playing surfaces and backstop.
- Other
 - Increase visibility both of the Club and of the sport in the local area.
 - Develop links with the local community to help improve recognition of the Club and the sports.

Within 3 years

- Membership
 - Aim to field teams at 2 teams at each of, AA and A levels in the BBF Leagues i.e. grow membership to approx. 70
- Volunteering
 - Aim for 1 x Level 2 coach per adult team, and 1 x level 1 coach.
- Facilities



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- Establish the Kings College facility as a place to hold tournaments and other non-Guildford specific events in British Baseball e.g. GB Training, Junior tournaments etc
- Other.
 - Become more active within the BBF in order to have a stronger voice to drive baseball in the UK in a direction that helps Guildford grow as a club.

Within 5 years

- Membership
 - Aim to field a team at AAA level.
 - Grow junior programme to be self sufficient at each age group and being able to run internal leagues, thus reducing travelling.
 - Set up a travel team to play against other clubs.
- Volunteering
 - Aim to have a club representative on the BBF board.
- Facilities
 - Ensure both facilities are fully maintained.
 - Develop additional junior facilities at Kings College.
- Other
 - Seek sponsorship and other revenue generation activities to cover 50% of costs.

5. Plan of Activities

Aim	Objective	Responsible	Timeframe	Cost	Status
Facility development	Install Batting Cages	Michael Burdett / Ben Stobart	Mid 2023	£10,000	In progress
Grow numbers in U-11 section by 50%	Target Primary schools for taster sessions in 2023 to align with move to Kings College	Michael Burdett / Richard Williams	2023	£500	Not yet started
Increase visibility both of our Club and of these sports in the local area	Develop relationship with local media. Create and use publicity material. Stage or attend relevant events Increase links with local schools and sports centres Market Softball to local companies	Working Party	tbc	tbc	Not yet started
Fill all voluntary positions at club by increasing number of volunteers / Co-opt parents.	Identify and engage with perspective candidates and put more into positions of responsibility to help ease the change	Club Committee	2023 onward	n/a	In progress
Aim to field teams at AAA, AA and A levels in the BBF Leagues	Increase adult baseball membership Run more Beginners courses Produce easy transition from juniors to adults Increase marketing and publicity	Working Party	Ongoing	n/a	In Progress



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6. Review

This document should be reviewed annually to check on progress, and updated accordingly, so that it can be approved at the AGM

Last update: 21st Jan 2023