



Annual Review

2022-23

About BaseballSoftballUK

BaseballSoftballUK (BSUK) is the national development agency for British Baseball and Softball, formed in 2000 to help the sports to take gain popularity by securing government investment, establishing cross-sport partnerships and achieving operational efficiencies.

BSUK's job – getting the nation active through baseball and softball – is defined by the objective to increase the number of people playing our sports and to improve the quality of their experience. To achieve this, BSUK has set a work programme to increase regular participation in the sports. BSUK believes that the most important measure of the health of the sports in the UK is the number of people who play them regularly, on fully formed teams or in a well-organised group. These key measures determine where to focus resources, time and effort.

BSUK employs 14 full and part time staff, working remotely and at the National Baseball & Softball Complex at Farnham Park, along with hot desking at the Houser of Sport in Borough, London.

The organisation provides several development initiatives tailored to increasing participation, improving the level of play, educating and supporting the workforce, improving the standard of playing facilities and developing the standard of club operations.

In addition to BSUK's long-standing partnership with Sport England, BSUK has been in receipt of investment from UK Sport since 2019 for both GB Baseball and GB Fastpitch Softball, pursuing their hopes of qualifying for LA 2028; and funds to implement a joint International Relations strategy. In 2022-23, BSUK also received investment from the Greater London Authority towards the implementation of an MLB London Series Legacy programme.

BSUK provides several development initiatives, tailoring solutions to getting people playing (such as our Hit the Pitch programme), improving the level of play (through our Academy and High-Performance Academy), educating and supporting the workforce (through our Coach Education Programme and Coach Summit event), improving the standard of playing facilities and developing the standard of club and league operations.

At the start of our participation drive, just 10,000 people played baseball and softball in the UK. Prior to the pandemic, the number of people playing regularly had more than doubled to 26,500.

Behind the scenes, BSUK's administration services continue to offer professional support to the British Baseball Federation and British Softball Federation, particularly providing appropriate safeguards for young and vulnerable people.



Message from the Chair



Phil Veasey
Chair

As Chair of BaseballSoftballUK, it is with great pleasure that I present our Annual Review on behalf of the Board of Directors for the busy and productive year of 2022-23.

This was the second year of operating under the umbrella of British University and College Sport (BUCS), and what a journey it has been. Standard of play and number of teams taking part continues to climb.

Our unwavering dedication to grassroots development has continued, increasing our investment into grassroots club and league facilities to £32,000 over the past three years. With local matched funding, this has resulted in an impressive £85,000 worth of local improvements.

The pinnacle of our year was the exceptional Coach Summit held at the prestigious National Sports Centre at Bisham Abbey—a testament to our commitment to excellence.

We also forged powerful collaborations in the implementation of the MLB London Series Legacy Programme, working closely with Consortium Partners: the Greater London Authority, the London Stadium, CSM, Major League Baseball, the British Baseball Federation (BBF) and British Softball Federation (BSF).

Our website refresh, event support for the BSF on the National Softball League events, and the introduction of innovative event formats at the National Baseball and Softball Complex at

Farnham Park showcased our commitment to making continuous improvements.

Our multifaceted efforts also extended to the crucial work of the Development Charter, offering vital support and safeguarding services to grassroots clubs and leagues. Additionally, our LGBTQ+ events and initiatives flourished, reflecting our commitment to inclusivity and diversity.

The establishment of a new Performance Department marked a significant milestone, providing expert guidance to Olympic programmes in men's baseball and women's fastpitch softball. The hard work Hs began to pay off with the Women's team clinching European silver in Spain, and the men's GB Baseball team securing an exhilarating victory in the World Baseball Classic in Regensburg, Germany, and earning qualification for the main event. At the time of writing, we remain with our fingers tightly crossed for the outcome of the funding bid to UK Sport for support through to LA28!

As we reflect on the past year, our baseball and softball community has grown, our facilities have improved, and our commitment to performance has been ongoing. I extend my gratitude to our professional team, the NGBs of the sports – the BBF and BSF – our Partners, and the entire British baseball and softball community for their passion and hard work.

But there is more work to be done. I am optimistic that 2024 will be a year of major change as we look to work in partnership and harmony with our partners in securing transformational change in so many areas of our work – in coaching, club development, building digital capacity, our approach to children and young people, and how we accelerate efforts around diversity and inclusion for example.

I look forwards to working with you all in a productive 2024 that will set the tone for years to come as we build a successful future together!

Development

Participation

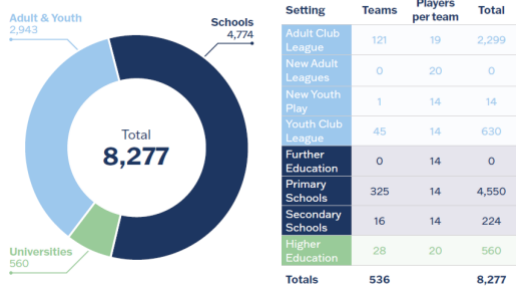
With play resuming fully following the Covid-19 pandemic, BSUK, the BBF and BSF updated and aligned baseball and softball participation reporting. With the involvement of all three organisations led by BSUK's Development team, a Participation Report was created and agreed by all parties.

2022

Setting	Teams	Players per team	Total
Adult Club League	500	19	9,500
Further Education	9	14	126
New Adult Leagues	54	20	1,080
New Youth Play	2	14	28
Primary Schools	375	14	5,250
Secondary Schools	145	14	2,030
Higher Education	49	20	980
Youth Club League	55	14	770
Totals	1,189		19,764

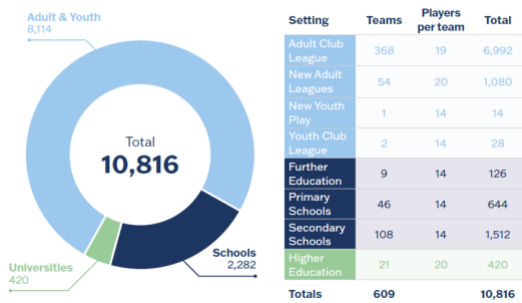
Baseball

2022



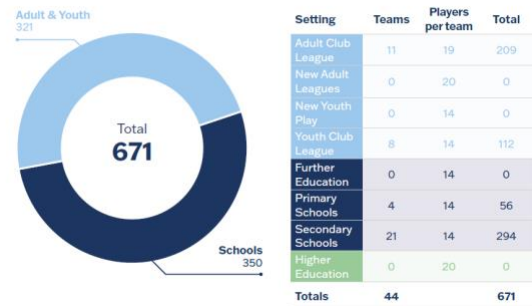
Slowpitch Softball

2022



Fastpitch Softball

2022



The Participation Report is part of a commitment from BSUK, the BBF and BSF to do the following:

- Improved communication on participation metrics between the three organisations.
- Improved promotion and understanding of the participation levels and metrics across the baseball, slowpitch and fastpitch communities.
- Improved understanding of the health of the sports in the country and to track the engagement, transition and retention of players across our playing community.
- Improved coordination and advocacy of the playing base and impact to wider system partners such as Sport England and UK Sport.

Schools

Fastpitch Development Manager Alyson Spinass-Valainis led the Secondary Schools Fastpitch programme that took shape with the creation of a structure, resources and content. The programme was piloted in 2022, and further work will be done to expand the audience.

With MLB London Series Legacy Manager Jon Rye joining the company at the end of the year, work around primary schools has focused on the Legacy programme, with the First Pitch Festivals.

Clubs and Leagues

Based on eight pillars of support, the Development Charter was launched in August 2020 as a free service to our clubs and leagues. It provides a structured mechanism to access development and safeguarding services from BSUK. Most support has been provided through a dedicated relationship manager, enhanced by a series of workshops and webinars.

The eight pillars of support are relationship building and connectivity with local networks; club and league management; recruitment of players; facility and field development; coach education; youth development; fundraising and grant applications; and safeguarding – including a DBS checks.

BSUK's support for clubs and leagues through the Development Charter continued to be a priority. It focused on retaining members, accessing facilities and facility development, club and league management, financial management and coaching.

Engagement levels with the Development Charter increased and now >98% of clubs and leagues across the country are enrolled in its membership.

The Development Charter is free of charge and clubs affiliated to the British Softball Federation and British Baseball Federation are enrolled automatically through their NGB's membership. Sign-up requires clubs to commit to adhere to our nationally recognised and regulated baseball/softball safeguarding standards.

MLB London Series Legacy Programme Steering Group

A dedicated Legacy Group has been created to combine expertise and resources to drive forward the development and delivery of the MLB London Series Legacy programme. It met regularly throughout the year. Legacy Partners include: BaseballSoftballUK, Major League Baseball, Greater London Authority (Mayor of London), CSM, LS185 (London Stadium), British Baseball Federation, and the British Softball Federation.

Universities



2022-2023 was the second season that BUCS featured baseball and softball as part of their sport programme.

The 2023 BUCS University Championships were again held at the National Baseball & Softball Complex at Farnham Park, with Loughborough again winning the double to give them all four BUCS championships during the brief, two-year history of the competition. Rain did affect play in year 2, with baseball only able to complete one day of the scheduled weekend, and wrapping up the championship tournament on Wednesday, 3 May.

Facilities Fund

BSUK has dedicated £50,000 over five years (2021-2025) to enable clubs and leagues to build and upgrade local facilities across the UK through a new Facilities Fund. Three years in, BSUK has provided more than £32,000 of funding, unlocking over £85,000 of grassroots facility improvements. The Fund became available to any not-for-profit club, league or association that has signed up to the Development Charter.

Applicants were asked to show their commitment by providing match-funding. Joining the eleven recipients from 2021, BSUK awarded £10,558 in 2023 to:

- Croydon Baseball Club - £2,600
- Guildford Baseball Club - £4,000
- Milton Keynes Softball League - £1,900
- Norwich Iceni Baseball Club - £1,000
- Wragby Warhammers Baseball Club - £500

Coach Summit 2023



For the first time since 2020, the Coach Summit was held in-person, taking place on 28-29 January 2023 at Bisham Abbey National Sports Centre. Themed around the return to play, presentations focused on overcoming obstacles created by the pandemic, presenters included newly appointed GB Women's Fastpitch Head Coach Tara Henry, GB Baseball Programme Manager Drew Spencer, British Softball Hall of Famer Amy Moore and British Cycling's Lauren Forrow. BSUK's Gary Anderson, who also gave the after-dinner speech before the Coaching Awards.

The first day of the summit focused on presentations and the Awards, while the second day featured a practical session, with BSUK's Alyson Spinus-Valainis and Colin Barrett, along with GB Men's Fastpitch Head Coach

2023 Coaching Awards



The British Baseball and Softball Coaching Awards recognised the outstanding work of coaches and volunteers, and were presented in-person for the first time since 2020. Winners of the 2023 awards were as follows:

- **Young Coach of the Year:** Aged 25 or younger, who made the biggest contribution to coaching, managing and supporting baseball and/or softball in Britain. **Winner: Matthew Moran, GB U18 Baseball**
- **Baseball Youth Coach of the Year:** Outstanding contribution to coaching young people in baseball in Britain. **Winner: Scott Bourgeois, London Archers**
- **Softball Youth Coach of the Year:** Outstanding contribution to coaching young people in softball in Britain. **Winner: Jodie Rushin, GB Cubs**
- **Baseball Adult Coach of the Year:** Outstanding contribution to adult baseball coaching in Britain. **Winner: Drew Spencer, GB Baseball**
- **Softball Adult Coach of the Year:** Outstanding contribution to adult softball coaching in Britain. **Winner: Kellie Whitaker, GB Slowpitch**
- **Volunteer of the Year:** A volunteer in a non-coaching role who has made a significant impact on the development of our sports. **Winner: Abi Battisto, Leicester Diamonds**
- **Equality Diversity and Inclusion Award:** New for 2023, this award recognises a contribution made by a coach towards tackling inequality and removing barriers to participants from an underrepresented group. **Winner: John Eaton, UK Blind Baseball**
- **Services to Coaching:** Best personifies what it means to be a coach, who can use the lessons learned on the pitch to motivate and engage others. They have probably played a great number of roles, and without whose services to coaching, their teams wouldn't be the same. **Winner: Michael Harrold, GB Baseball**

Communications

Our communications remit includes raising the sports' appeal to new and existing fans, communicating with the playing community, and getting more people into the game. Efforts focused on the success of the Great Britain Olympic national teams, as well as supporting events and initiatives.

Website Refresh



BSUK's new website was launched in April 2022. Featuring a new user experience and a mobile friendly design, the new site is a key part of the communications infrastructure going forward.

Website Statistics

With the BSF's new website, and BSUK's website being completely redone, this was a transitional year for both websites, especially with Google changing their analytic methods in early 2023. As such, this year's website statistics are the last under the "old" Google analytics, with the 2023-24 numbers coming from the new G4 platform.

- BSUK.com's traffic reduced from the previous year due to site updates during the website project. BSUK.com had 72k page views, down from 129k in 21-22.
- The BSF's new website traffic was 150k page views, the second straight year

with an increase (21-22: 137k views; 2020-21: 74k)

- The Team Finder was the most popular page across both sites.

Social Media

BSUK operates Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube profiles and administers the BSF's Facebook and Twitter accounts. BSUK launched a TikTok account, aimed at the 18-24 demographic in 2022; however, this platform was used less frequently following the IOC's decision to fine the company for mishandling children's data.

Content created with an emphasis on video when possible and on short term, quick wins, and high energy content when possible. In 2022-23, social media focused on video content as well as high-definition photography, showcasing the players and participants at tournaments, events, and socials.

BSUK also provided as much content as possible to teams for them to post at each tournament covered, using Dropbox to distribute photos and video. With Jody Demay-Davies acting as BSUK's local photographer, BSUK distributed more content to more people than ever before.

Crown Jewel Events

The Crown Jewel concept offers extra marketing, communications, social media, and broadcasting resources at events.

The BSF designated the following events as "Crown Jewel" events:

- GB v Sweden Men's Fastpitch Series
- GBFL League Play (12 June)
- NSL League Play: final days of NSL1 and 2 plus NSL3 Nationals (10 July)
- NSL Nationals (4 September) and Slowpitch League Nationals (7 August)
- Softball World Series (11 September)

Database Marketing

The team supported the publishing of the following e-newsletters through HubSpot:

- *Hot Corner* (monthly), highlighting news, activities and opportunities. With The Clubhouse no longer sent, the Hot Corner also contained club and league information.
- *Newsflash* (occasional), used for occasionally for standalone stories announcing important news, developments and campaigns.
- newsletter with case studies
- *Safeguarding Newsletter* (as needed)

HubSpot became the email system in lieu of Mailchimp, and worked well, especially for analytics. Across the year from June, when HubSpot came online fully, 36 emails (to 19,800 cumulative recipients) were issued with an open rate of 26.11%, and 3.66% click-through.

Visual Resources

BSUK maintains an extensive library of over 41k images on Flickr. With the move to a Microsoft SharePoint server, photos are now stored on the BSUK intranet, with the entire staff having access. The Flickr account will, at some point, need to be downloaded and archived on the BSUK intranet.

External Media

BSUK keeps a database of national and local media outlets. Several press releases were distributed to these outlets. The list is constantly reviewed for changes and errors.

BSUK also created bespoke distributions for each of the Senior National Teams, as well as a combined list for announcement covering both programmes. This was particularly useful for the World Baseball Classic Qualifier, where BSUK's Chris Knoblock provided both game stories and release for the press.

BSUK began a relationship with SportsBeat that saw the company syndicate GB Softball's Silver-Medal press release free of charge.

Data Protection & Management

In 2022, BSUK's Chris Knoblock began to implement the HubSpot CRM as a replacement for several BSUK systems, to ensure all data was properly maintained and protected. HubSpot was rolled out in stages, and replaced the following systems:

- Buffer (Social Media Management)
- WuFoo (Forms and Payments)
- Mailchimp (Email newsletters)
- Insightly (CRM)

HubSpot system was an improvement over previous systems, further work is being undertaken to ensure that any system is fit for purpose.

National Teams

Following Chris Knoblock's work as broadcaster for Great Britain Baseball at the 2021 European Championships, BSUK's communications work with the two IOC-format Senior National Teams has greatly expanded. After negotiations with the BSF, Chris joined the team as media manager for the 2022 European Softball Championships, and the training camp in the UK prior. BSUK organised the first-ever media day for GB Softball, which was well received by the athletes, as was the provision of on-the-ground social media, photography and videography.

Similar support was provided to Great Britain Baseball at the 2022 World Baseball Classic qualifier in Regensburg, Germany in September. With the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September, the week before the tournament, Chris and Head of Delegation Gary Anderson ensured that the team followed the Operation London Bridge protocol issued by the Royal Household. With limited social media and communications due to the protocol, the event was a huge success on and off the field, as the GB Baseball Twitter account was verified (under the merit-based system) following the team's WBC-clinching win.

The National Baseball & Softball Complex at Farnham Park



The National Baseball & Softball Complex at Farnham Park is the UK home of our sports.

Opened in 2013, with a long-term lease in place through 2041, the complex has six diamonds across four fields (two softball / youth baseball diamonds and two international grade baseball fields). The site boasts a dedicated clubhouse called Home Plate Bar and Kitchen, operated by Fresh and Tasty.

In 2022, a rebrand of Farnham Park was investigated for the 10th anniversary of the site, which included uplifting the facility's name to be in-line with other elite facilities around the country. Following deliberation, Farnham Park Baseball & Softball Complex was rechristened The National Baseball & Softball Complex at Farnham Park.

BSUK began the process of Farnham Park becoming an accredited UK Sport Elite Training Centre, part of the network of facilities across the UK which include the National Sports Centres at Bisham Abbey and Lilleshall.

Site Development

The new Field 5 was completed in time for the start of the outdoor playing season in 2022, giving Farnham five softball fields and two baseball fields for the summer months.

After receiving significant feedback from the playing community, work to resurface Softball 2's infield was undertaken, creating a full dirt infield to provide a flatter and safer playing environment.

In May 2022, one of the most significant developments in the history of the Complex took place with the delivery of the new Tournament Control Centre. The TCC, located next to Softball 1, provides a viewing deck for broadcasting, internet and power close to the fields, as well as enclosed workspace for BSUK's staff. A portion of the TCC was allocated to Baseball Outlet for an on-site store, and work will continue to improve the TCC for use across events.

Pricing

After consulting with the Federations and Farnham Park bookers, pricing for the Complex was simplified to remove a number of categories and streamline the booking process.

Booking System

2022-23 saw the implementation of the EZ Facility Booking System at Farnham Park, complete with a new booking process. The system was the first programme used to manage Farnham Park's bookings and improved both facility management along with league management through the EZ League platform. Following the outdoor season, the decision was made to investigate further options, which resulted in the switch to Hallmaster. Hallmaster was highly recommended by Greater Linford Parish Council and allowed for BSUK to book fields at Conniburrow Sports Pavilion as well as Farnham Park. BSUK continues to use Hallmaster as the booking solution for Farnham Park.



Events

BSUK ran several events at Farnham Park including the Slowpitch Cup, featuring Australia's Fully Loaded format, as well as the new May and June Cups, implemented with the BSF following the end of the Diamonds Series.

All Star Fastpitch League

The All Stars Fastpitch League was a new concept, designed to showcase fastpitch softball featuring some of the best players in the country. Featuring

two teams – named the Eagles and Ravens – led by GB Softball coaches Rachael Watkeys and Liz Knight, the athletes were selected from the GBFL and the GB programme.

Two games were played as part of the series, each after a day of NSL1 play to retain a slowpitch softball audience. Both games featured game presentation elements, including PA announcing, video and social media coverage. The Eagles swept the series 2 games to nil.

BSF Events

BSUK delivered several events on behalf of the BSF. BSUK's Liz Knight acted as tournament control for the majority of BSF events at Farnham Park, including the NSL Nationals, Co-Ed League Nationals, and the Softball World Series.

BBF Events

BSUK provided free coverage for the NBL Championship during the last weekend of August to improve the relationship between the Federation and the Company. 2023 will see the return of full coverage, including broadcasting, for the BBF's NBL title.



Performance

World Baseball Classic Qualifier

Gary Anderson led the delegation for the 2022 World Baseball Classic Qualifier in Regensburg, Germany. GB defeated France in the opener 14-4. GB then beat the hosts 8-1, who were the top-ranked team 8-1, before facing Spain with a trip to the Classic on the line. Despite falling behind 8-3, GB rallied, with Jaden Rudd's 1 out 9th inning home run tying the game before Alex Crosby's sacrifice fly in the 10th score Matt Koperniak and gave GB their very first entry into the World Baseball Classic. GB's Harry Ford, making his debut for the programme, homered in all three games to lead the GB offense.

GB entered the Qualifier ranked 23rd in the world – second lowest in the tournament – and finished the year 18th, giving Great Britain two programmes in the top 20 for the very first time.



World Baseball Classic

The 2023 WBC took place in March 2023. GB was assigned to Pool B at Chase Field, Phoenix, Arizona along with the USA, Canada, Mexico and Colombia. Led by Head Coach Drew Spencer GB opened with a strong performance against the world Number 1 USA. GB won their first WBC game against Colombia 7-5. The win clinched automatic qualification to the next WBC in 2026.

Harry Ford was again a standout for GB, with Trayce Thompson hitting the first WBC Home Run for GB. GB's Chavez Young led the tournament with five stolen bases in just four games, while GB's pitching was anchored by veterans Vance Worley, Dan Cooper, Tyler Visa, and newcomers Joseph King and Ian Gibault.

BSUK's CEO John Boyd attended the Classic along with several BBF Board members to capitalise on GB's debut.

European Women's Fastpitch Championship

Great Britain matched their best placement at the 2022 European Women's Championships, finishing with a silver medal for the 2nd time in team history. Led by Rachael Watkeys and under the direction of BSUK Head of Performance Gary Anderson, the team was able to hold a UK-based training camp for the very first time, spending one week at Bisham Abbey National Sports Centre before flying to Barcelona for the Tournament.

Georgina Corrick was phenomenal, throwing a no hitter during pool play against Germany. She finished the tournament as leader in wins (5), complete games (5) and strikeouts (57). Kendyl Scott led the tournament with 17 RBIs. Lauren Evans hit .542. Katie Burge had five triples and 17-year-old sparkplug Tia Warsop stole six bases in her senior debut.

GB finished the year ranked 16th in the WBSC World Rankings. Despite significant points accumulation, points lost during the Covid-limited years impacted the final world ranking.



Performance Staff

In establishing a new Performance Department, Colin Barrett and Alyson Spinas-Valainis moved from the Development Department into new roles in Performance. Alyson took on the role of Performance Pathway Coach, while Colin became the Performance Pathway and Academy Manager.

Safeguarding

Development Charter

The Development Charter has enabled BSUK to communicate directly with leagues, clubs and teams in order to build a Safeguarding database with details of coaches of youth players, including a record of who have been DBS checked and what Safeguarding training coaches have completed. This makes our sports safer and brings Safeguarding into the 'normal' day to day operations. These are fundamental checks for Chartered members. BSUK can assist all clubs, teams and leagues with DBS checking and Safeguarding training.

DBS Checks

In 2022-2023, BSUK assisted with 228 DBS checks - up from 211 last year - 89 new (74), 41 renewed (53), 98 using DBS update service (84). The update service enables a coach to be renewed without having to complete the new application, the easiest update method available to our coaches.

Training

BaseballSoftballUK continued to deliver the CPSU Time to Listen course virtually. Mark Caress and Chris Knoblock work together to present the three-hour course, with four sessions across 12 hours presented between January and April 2023. 49 people attended the Time to Listen Courses in 2022-23.



Microsite/Website

The Safeguarding Microsite was replaced with a new website structure as part of the Website Redevelopment Project, with all the information transferred and updated during the process. The CPSU and NSPCC have reviewed the new website and are satisfied that it meets their expectations. Additionally, Safeguarding was featured on the new BSUK home page for most of the year in the Spotlight section.

Newsletters

Safeguarding Officers and club officials have been kept informed regularly through newsletters that include news, updates on requirements and training course details. The Safeguarding Newsletter has been added to the promotional schedule of newsletters and digital marketing.

Child Protection in Sport Unit

BSUK maintained our ongoing relationship with the CPSU, who formally review and assesses our safeguarding effectiveness annually. They consider our action, policies, procedures and processes. Once again, BSUK passed the assessment and continues to work with CPSU to keep our safeguarding support up to date.

Incident Reports

35 incidents were reported to BSUK from various locations around the UK, with 14 taking place at Farnham Park. BSUK review each incident report and report any reported injuries to the insurers, signposting injured players to the information on what's covered to allow them to decide if they will submit a claim. BSUK also checks for trends to ensure a pattern of accidents are not occurring at the same spot. Most injuries are sprains and bruises (resulting from being hit by a ball!)

Diversity

BSUK's focus on increasing the playing and workforce diversity spans several areas: LGBTQ+, Women and Girls, those from a lower socio-economic demographic, people from diverse ethnic communities and those with a disability.

BSUK has a dedicated LGBTQ+ Panel to oversee the development of the sports for LGBTQ+ participants. This year's work focused on supporting You Can Play and creating playing opportunities for the LGBTQ+ community.

In partnership with the international sports-based LGBTQ+ organisation You Can Play, BSUK – led by Luis Arreivillagas and the BSUK LGBTQ+ panel – created a You Can Play pledge video, with members of the community pledging to make the sports as inclusive and open as possible. The video, in the style of many others done by You Can Play's supporters and allies, is a small, but important, way of showing the LGBTQ+ community that they are welcome and supported by those who currently play the sport. During this time ten clubs recorded their pledge which can be found on the

BSUK YouTube page. The project will continue through 2023 – 2024.

In May, we created the BSUK LGBTQ+ Facebook network group, Out on the Bases. The platform allows members of the playing community, friends and allies to interact and share ideas and news all year round with like-minded people.

Specific inclusive opportunities to play were provided in Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool. The three inclusive tournaments allow current playing members to invite their friends and family to experience our sports.

In November, the LGBTQ+ committee met for their annual meeting to put ideas together for the coming season.

In February, prior to the start of the season, the language in the inclusive Rules for Slowpitch were revised.

In February, BSUK worked with the BBF and WB-UK to create the first BBF policy on inclusion for the women's league.



Staffing

MLB London Legacy Manager



Jon Rye joined the team as MLB London Series Legacy Manager in November, an exciting new role within BSUK. Jon works with Greater London Authority and Major League Baseball to maximise the opportunities around the MLB London Series. Legacy plans include growing the participation base, strengthening the club and league infrastructure and talent development. Jon's work has initially focused on managing the delivery of the MLB First Pitch programme to primary schools, engaging community groups in East London and overseeing the volunteer recruitment programme.

Head of Commercial

Joelle Watkins departed the company after four years in July. Her tenure saw major improvements to Farnham Park and the creation of the Commercial Team. She led on the Return to Play protocols during the pandemic. Following Joelle's departure, the Commercial Team combined with Operations, reporting to Erica Barrett.

Staffing

BSUK hired several part-time staffers to assist with projects. John "AJ" Anderson led on the Website Redevelopment Project and assist Chris Knoblock with the implementation of the HubSpot CRM. Callum Opere-Hoyle joined the Development Team

in the summer, working two days a week in the London region. His work focused on clubs and leagues, particularly on the Health Checks, and he also worked closely with Leah Holmes on the Development Charter.

In June 2022, Development Manager Jayde Ellis left, joining Take Her Lead, a cricket development programme focusing on women and girls.

Alan Le Marquand joined the staff in July to assist with the company's IT needs and oversaw the company's transition to fully utilise Microsoft 365. He also worked closely with Liz Knight on tournaments and event organisation.

GB Softball Head Coach

GB Senior Women's Softball Head Coach Rachael Watkeys resigned in September after six years at the helm. Watkeys, who was inducted into the British Softball Hall of Fame this year, left as the winningest coach after a pair of bronze medals and the 2022 European Silver, along with the 2019 Olympic Qualifier campaign.



Following an extensive search, Tara Henry was appointed as the new Head Coach in December 2022. Tara, a former UCLA standout and the editor of D1Softball.com, brought in new staff, featuring long-time hitting instructor Lincoln Martin, and is working on preparations for the 2023 Softball World Cup Pool A in Ireland, next summer.

The Board

National Governing Bodies

Relations with the BSF continued to be strong, under the new leadership of Lesley Morisetti, who was appointed Interim President in February. Lesley joined the BSUK Board during the year, with outgoing President Ieuan Gale, who continued his term on the Board. Developmental, promotional, event organisation and administrative support continued to be provided to the BSF.

Collaborative work with the BBF is highlighted by the efforts to support GB Baseball's World Baseball Classic success. The second year of BBF President Tom Thornhill's term, Tom was invited to join BSUK Board meetings as a guest. He and BSUK leadership met regularly. In February, the BSUK Senior Leadership Team hosted a full day with the BBF Board.

The BBF and BSF attended MLB London Series Legacy Steering Group Meetings, chaired by BSUK. The year also saw the formation of a joint International Steering Group, working to align BBF and BSF international influence strategies and to prepare for congresses. This work is part funded by UK Sport through BSUK.

In February, a BSF, BBF and BSUK delegation attended the WBSC Europe Congress in Belgrade, Serbia. CEO John Boyd, who was appointed to the WBSC Europe Governance Department, co-presented to the Congress. He and Gary Anderson continued to provide support to the NGBs at Congress.

Major League Baseball

During the year, BSUK was invited to form and chair the MLB London Series Legacy Steering Group. The group comprises of Consortium Partners: the Greater London Authority, the London Stadium, the event promoters CSM, Major League Baseball and the NGBs. The group met regularly, setting out a Legacy Bible detailing plans to develop the sports locally to the Stadium, across London and the country. Highlights of the year included implementation of the MLB First Pitch

primary school programme; and a Play Ball Festival in Regents Park for schools across London, supported by London clubs.

BSUK was involved in MLB's HRDX event in Crystal Palace, south London, working closely with the BBF and BSF to use the event for recruitment and hosting of key partners.

Sport England

Sport England continues to provide vital financial support and expertise to baseball/softball through BSUK. This was the first year of the five-year funding period 2022-27, aligned to the Sport England Uniting the Movement Strategy. Funded work focuses on addressing inherent inequalities within sports provision. It also provides funds for governing, systemic and delivery work.

UK Sport

This was the second year of working with UK Sport through their National Squad Support Fund to develop the Olympic programmes for baseball and softball. Head of Performance, Gary Anderson, led this work on a full-time basis. BSUK also administered UK Sport's grant for International Relations.

British Olympic Association

BSUK is the member of the BOA for baseball and softball. A MOU with the BBF and BSF is in place to empower BSUK to act on their behalf on the National Olympic Committee. During the year, discussions began with the BOA to prepare for the inclusion of Baseball 5 in the 2026 Youth Olympics. BSUK also worked with the BOA on the process for securing a place for baseball/softball in the LA 2028 Olympic Games.

UK Anti-Doping

BSUK continued to meet the requirements necessary and deliver anti-doping training to all our GB age group players and support staff. BSUK also supported UK Anti-Doping Week.

Governance Statement

BSUK is committed to conducting business responsibly. By maintaining high standards of corporate governance, BSUK will enhance performance. Our approach to governance is set by the Board, and effective and robust governance remains central to our ongoing success.

Our key governance document is The Articles. These are supplemented by our policies and contractual obligations, which together determine how we conduct our business, setting out the standards that drive performance. BSUK conducts an annual Policy Review and updates for any legal requirements.

Board oversight, reviews, management and financial audits form part of the monitoring and supervision process. Risk management processes are embedded and reviewed on an ongoing basis across the business.

It is the organisation's view that an appropriately skilled, experienced and diverse Board is essential to effective governance. The Board continues to ensure that effective succession plans are in place.

Code for Sports Governance

The Code for Sports Governance came into effect in 2017. Funded organisations funded are required to comply with it as a condition of grant. Throughout the year, the Board continued to monitor and refresh the policies that keep us Code compliant.

Financial Audit

Once again, the Barcant Beardon Partnership conducted a financial audit of the year's accounts.

Board Composition

At the BSUK Annual General Meeting in November 2022, Fiona Breeden, Gary Henderson, and Jayne McLernon were reappointed to the Board as independent directors. Matthew Knowles and Prashant Dave concluded their terms. Members of the board serve on the following committees:

- Governance
- Finance
- Development, Fundraising & Partnerships
- Nominations
- Remuneration

Independent Directors are defined as those who are recruited via an open, publicly advertised recruitment process; and are free from any close connection to the organisation and, from the perspective of an objective outsider, would be viewed as independent. A person may still be deemed to be 'independent' even if they are a member of the organisation and/or play the sports.

'Close connection' includes Directors who within the last four years have been actively involved in the organisation's affairs, e.g. a representative of a specific interest group within the organisation, or Member; have been an employee of the organisation; or have close family ties with any of the organisation's Directors or senior employees.

Six Directors are deemed independent: Fiona Breeden, Kirsty Clarke, Gary Henderson, Peter Kim, Jayne McLernon and Phil Veasey. Other Non-Executive Directors were Paul Convoy, Lesley Morisetti and Ieuan Gale. The CEO, John Boyd, is an Ex-Officio Director. The Board lead for DEI, Safety and Welfare is Kirsty Clarke.

Membership

The member of BSUK is the BSF.

Board Diversity

Equality of opportunity and diversity is a fundamental BSUK value. It is part of BSUK's vision. Policies, procedures and good practice have been put in place to work in a positive and proactive manner.

The Board is committed to making appointments on the basis that no less than 30% of its total membership be female, with the aspiration of achieving gender parity. The Board has also adopted a Diversity Action Plan. At year end, the Board is:

- 40% female (4 out of 10)
- 11% LGBTQ+ (2)
- 20% from diverse ethnic backgrounds (2)

Roles are advertised extensively through appropriate online avenues, ensuring that opportunities target a range of demographics.

Corporate Partnerships

The financial sustainability remit includes the diversification income sources, reducing reliance on Sport England grants and increasing turnover. This year saw the return of several of non-grant income streams.

It was the second year of a three-year partnership for Playing Equipment, expanding the existing relationship with the Baseball Outlet, BSUK's Official Wearable Kit Supplier.

Financial Summary 2022-23

Income

Sport England	£525,750
UK Sport: Softball	£97,319
UK Sport: Baseball	£59,484
Capital Grants Released	£20,625
Federation Service Charges	£10,717
Development Services and Grants	£67,539
Commercial	£21,685
Events	£106,854
Academies	£13,607
Facilities Hire (Farnham Park)	£89,239
Other Income	£445
TOTAL	£1,013,264

Expenditure

Baseball and Softball Staffing	£526,971
UK Sport Spending	£177,753
Development	£35,788
Baseball and Softball Academies	£29,146
Baseball and Softball Events	£82,540
Farnham Park Running Costs	£99,898
IT and Computer Running Costs	£25,021
Accountancy, Audit, Write-offs and Depreciation	£73,289
Commercial, Marketing and Events Staff and Activities	£23,557
Operations, HR, Infrastructure and Governance	£23,409
TOTAL	£1,097,372

PROFIT/LOSS	(£84,108)
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National Lottery and Exchequer grants from Sport England and UK Sport have been spent in accordance with the grant agreements.

Sport England grant related expenditure was: **Systemic & Governing** £405,750, **Delivery** £60,000 and **Talent** £60,000.

UK Sport funds are ringfenced for the Olympic baseball and fastpitch programmes. overspent by (£20,950), which will be offset against the total Paris Cycle award.

Full company accounts are available by contacting info@bsuk.com



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