



BRITISH DODGEBALL

SEASON REPORT



2021 - 2022 SEASON



INTRODUCTION



Welcome to our 2021-22 season report, the first full season of return to play after the Covid Pandemic lockdowns. The season saw the return of our national leagues, national mixed leagues, our first season as a BUCS sport, our regional leagues, junior leagues, primary school championships and the introduction of our 4 year strategy (2022-2025). The strategy not only enables us to provide key information around the direction of the organisation, how we operate and our focus areas but also ensures a level of accountability for the work we do. The 6 priority areas highlighted in the 4 year strategy are:

- Come Join In - People of all ages and abilities are afforded opportunities to play the sport.
- Girls Dodge Too - Provide new opportunities that increase female participation in dodgeball.
- Club Development - Increase the number of strong and sustainable clubs that benefit their whole community.
- Coach Education - increase the number of and quality of coaches within the sport.
- Youth - Provide new and exciting opportunities for children both in and out of school to play dodgeball on a regular basis.
- University & College - Participate, Educate and Compete. How we can grow the game through universities and colleges across the UK.

Later within this report we will detail the successes and challenges faced throughout the past season in relation to each area and a look ahead to the progressions we want to implement as we head into the 2022-23 season. We hope you find the report useful and have enjoyed getting back to dodgeball.

STAFFING STRUCTURE & VISION

British Dodgeball is a self funded non-profit organisation. All income generated via the sale of our products and services is invested back into the sport. Our products and services encompass our whole range of offers that support the development of the sport, from equipment and resource sales, event and league entries, coach education and membership. We invest this income back into the sport via equipment, resource design and production, referee and event staff, coaching, facility hire and most importantly staffing.

The game has grown a lot since our inception in 2017 and In order for us to continue to do so we prioritise investment in our workforce. Having members of staff on the ground who are dedicated to their role, to growing the game and are in turn employed by British Dodgeball will enable us to have the foundations in place to continue to do the work we do that ensures British Dodgeball is at the forefront of the sport around the globe.

We are now at the very start of an exciting new chapter where we are able to use the funds we have generated over the past 5 years to appoint our first regional development officer. Success here will lead to the recruitment of new development officers in all regions of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales over the next few years. James began his role as the British Dodgeball Development Officer for the South West of England in September 2022 and signs are encouraging that we will be able to employ more regional development officers in more regions around the UK from 2023 onwards.

All positions however must be sustainable and the approach must be measured as there is no core staff funding provided, areas of specific demand will be prioritised.





AREAS OF FOCUS WOMEN & GIRLS

From our 2022-25 Strategy we said we would:

Promote new opportunities specifically designed to increase female participation in dodgeball.

Our Sport England funded Girls Dodge Too! project saw 51 sessions delivered by our ambassadors, 9 leadership courses by our team of tutors and 8 Girls Dodge Too! Festivals hosted by our affiliated clubs.

Utilise our team of Girls Dodge Too! Ambassadors to inspire new female players across the UK.

The Girls Dodge Too! Project has engaged a staggering **860** participants, 488 0-13 year olds, 342 14-25 year olds and 30 aged 26 and over. With the target number for the project being 320 we are delighted that demand is high and the project has been such a success.

Women and girls specific events.

Successful GDT festivals took place and a successful regional league was introduced in the South of England. The number of women's dodgeball teams competing in our national leagues and in BUCS has grown over the past year which is encouraging and we will be aiming to discover more about how we can improve our offer by consulting our membership in our next dodgeball survey in 2023.

Advance what has been a very successful project beyond the SE funded timeframe and seek further investment in order to expand the Girls Dodge Too! initiative through our member clubs, schools and universities.

The project has now ended, British Dodgeball is waiting to hear back from Sport England as to whether there is more funding available due to the success of the project. What we will continue to do is support any club that wishes to set up a new women and girls session or a new group wishing to focus on women and girls dodgeball to access funding from their local area. This is an area where we have been successful in the past and one where funding is available right now. Any club with an interest in growing the game for women and girls should get in touch to find out how we can support you to secure investment.



AREAS OF FOCUS YOUTH

From our 2022-25 Strategy we said we would:

Continue to educate school teachers with resources and training that highlight the benefits of playing dodgeball.

This has always been an area of focus for British Dodgeball and is taking place all over the UK.

CASE STUDY

The introduction of dodgeball to the Kent School Games has been the catalyst for the growth of the game across the county's school network. School PE departments have been joining forces in order to support the growth of the game by accessing online training, organising multi school CPD training in regional areas and delivering dodgeball within their PE sessions, lunchtime clubs and SEND groups. In 2022-23 we're going to be seeing these same schools taking part in our Primary and Secondary Schools Championships.

Provide opportunities for schools to participate in inter school dodgeball competitions.

We achieve this via two methods; one, is to support organisations such as the School Games network to deliver dodgeball events in areas of specific demand. Our support and expertise is vital to ensuring a successful event is delivered for the many children eager to play dodgeball. Dodgeball is still in the top 5 most participated sports within the School Games. School Games events are participation based with an emphasis on providing an offer for those children who may not have ever represented their school before or competed.

The second way is via our Primary Schools Championships. These events are open to entry from all schools within a region. We work in partnership with the Association of Colleges to train young leaders who in turn support on the day of the event. Our Primary Schools Championship events are delivered as a 'best of the best' event with the winning team qualifying for the National Finals. With our School Games work covering the participation offer and our Championships offering that competitive feel we are ensuring as many children as possible have the opportunity to play inter school dodgeball.



AREAS OF FOCUS YOUTH

From our 2022-25 Strategy we said we would:

Work in partnership with key organisations that help us achieve our aims and vision.

British Dodgeball continues to work with organisations that share our values for the sport such as the Youth Sport Trust, member clubs, universities and schools, Active Partnerships, the Active Schools Network, School Sports Partnerships, the School Games and Coaching Companies. All of whom help us to increase the number of young people playing dodgeball through qualified coaches delivering the sport correctly.

Support the growth of new junior clubs and new junior sections at existing clubs across the UK.

Our Come Join In funding Award has supported the formation of 9 new junior clubs and plans for this season will help us support not only new clubs but existing ones to set up new junior sections.

Provide opportunities that cater for the needs of junior players.

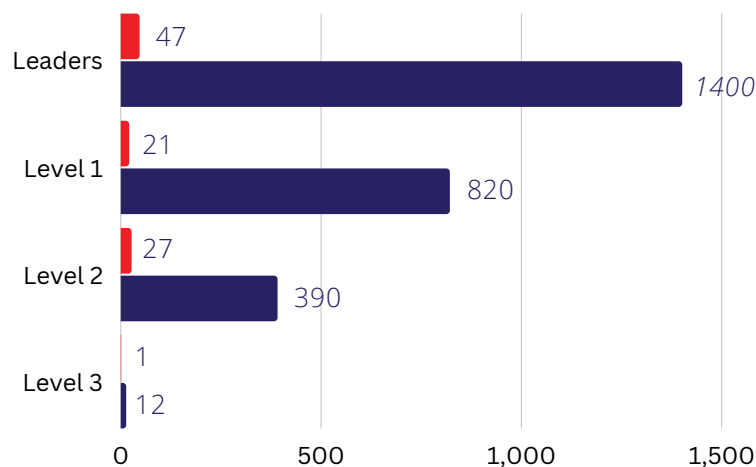
One area where we have faced challenges in the junior game has been our under 17's offer. It simply wasn't fit for purpose and was both difficult for British Dodgeball to deliver and for clubs to take part in. We have to be realistic with how far our capacity can stretch and understand where the game is at. Our junior league and championship focus is now on u11's, u13's and u15's with the u17's age group encouraged to take part in our adult regional leagues. Our school events cater for u11's and u13's currently and our festival events cater for u11's and u15's.

Deliver dodgeball programmes that tackle inequalities across the UK.

We have recently been successful in receiving over £8,000 of funding to develop dodgeball in the Erdington & Lea Hall area of Birmingham and the Plaistow & Poplar area of London. This project will see both children and adults engaged in new dodgeball initiatives that culminate in the formation of sustainable dodgeball clubs in areas of deprivation.



AREAS OF FOCUS COACHING



From our 2022-25 Strategy we said we would:

Enhance the skillset of dodgeball coaches across the UK by continually providing an expert level of service via our coach education courses and resources and also provide more entry level courses for key partners.

The chart opposite indicates the number of courses (red) and coaches qualified (blue) for each of our 4 main courses. Here are a few key points:

- For the first time due to our advanced certification system we are able to track the number of leaders trained. The majority of whom have gained the qualification at college in order to support our schools competitions.
- The Level 1 Online version has proved to be a huge success with numbers increasing each year.
- We have revamped our Level 3 Coaching Award to provide the learner with a higher level of knowledge.

Support more coaches wishing to develop a career coaching dodgeball within their local community, at clubs and even on the national stage.

Incredibly important for the development and sustainability of the sport is for there to be more dodgeball coaches that use the qualifications gained to enhance their career as a dodgeball coach. Our coach membership offer comes with the opportunity to join a coaches forum, access a coaches newsletter, receive discounts on further qualifications and receive insurance, all aimed to support the coach on their journey. We now have 81 British Dodgeball Coach Members.



AREAS OF FOCUS COACHING

Support community coaches to not only work within schools and at after school clubs but to either develop new community dodgeball clubs or to link with already existing clubs.

Our Come Join In funding award has proven to be a great tool for attracting new and ambitious coaches who want to set up and develop new community opportunities. We will continue to support this on a more regular basis in 2022-23.

Continue to enhance referee development through education and employment.

During the past season we released a new 'Intro to Officiating Dodgeball' online course and free access to this course has been provided to over 20 partner colleges in return for hosting School Championship events. There have been some challenges in the 2021-22 season that we hope to address in 2022-23 with an improved management system of recruiting, training and deploying referees throughout the game.

Key Focus for 2022-23

1. We will utilise our increased capacity with Regional Development Officers to promote and deliver more courses to key partners at educational institutions.
2. We will further promote the concept of building a career as a dodgeball coach, leading to the creation of more clubs & opportunities to play in the UK.
3. We will continue to develop the culture of coaching within the UK, recommending each club has a L3 head coach.
4. We will continue to improve the Coach Membership Offer by developing the coaches forum with more opportunities to connect, discuss ideas and challenge one another, leading to a stronger dodgeball coaching scene in the UK.



AREAS OF FOCUS COME JOIN IN

From our 2022-25 Strategy we said we would:

Advance our Regional League offer.

In the Autumn/Winter leagues of 2021/22 there were 18 teams competing, a year on and we have 32 teams competing across the leagues this Autumn/Winter. The regional leagues continue to be an excellent opportunity for new and developing teams and players to compete away from the top level of the game.

Reduce the barriers to setting up community clubs.

Our new club award scheme has supported 12 new groups, 8 of which are now set up as clubs since its inception in 2020, in the past season there have been 4 new groups, 3 of whom have used it. The Come Join In funding has provided £7,942.59 worth of funding to 15 new adult and junior clubs.

Provide easy to access resources and webinars.

We ensure our club support section of the website is up to date each season and added to where appropriate. We have delivered webinars to support clubs on 'How to develop a membership offer', 'Increasing female participation' and 'Managing a university club'. In the 2022-23 season we will be delivering workshops on 'Dodgemark Accreditation', 'Organising and Growing your Committee', 'Budgeting & Good Financial Practice' as well as 'Supporting & Growing your Workforce'. We believe our resources and webinars are highly beneficial, however, we are always eager to listen if there is an area outside of what we are offering that your club needs support in.

Continue to advance our national league offer.

For the first time ever in England there are 2 complete leagues of 10 in the women's game and the men's leagues have expanded to include a 4th division. In total the number of teams competing in the English national leagues have expanded from 18 women's and 40 men's to 20 women's and 46 men's. In Scotland the number of teams competing in the leagues has grown to 6 teams from 4 clubs, whereas the previous league involved 5 teams from just 2 clubs. In Northern Ireland we are looking at new ways to support the development of the league with the introduction of a mixed league expected in the 2022-23 season.





AREAS OF FOCUS COME JOIN IN



Our Mixed League offer has changed based on feedback from our member clubs. In order to reduce travel time and hopefully encourage more teams into the league the league has been split into a North & South league. With the demand for mixed dodgeball still growing we look forward to seeing an exciting mixed league season in 2022-23.

Continue to support the national teams.

Coming out of the pandemic the international dodgeball season in 2021/22 has been seen as a comeback year with two major events taking place in the summer of 2022. At British Dodgeball, via our Director of National Teams, our aim is to put in place more long term planning around pathways, performance, management and structures that will support the numerous volunteers and players.

Key focus for 2022-23

1. Amending the Come Join In Award process so that new clubs can apply at any time, so that existing clubs can apply at any time to receive support in setting up a new junior section.
2. Introducing Come Join In junior festivals that will be FREE to enter for junior teams. These events will be in targeted areas that a) have junior clubs in them but these clubs are not yet competing in our leagues and b) we have a junior league but there is significant room for growth.



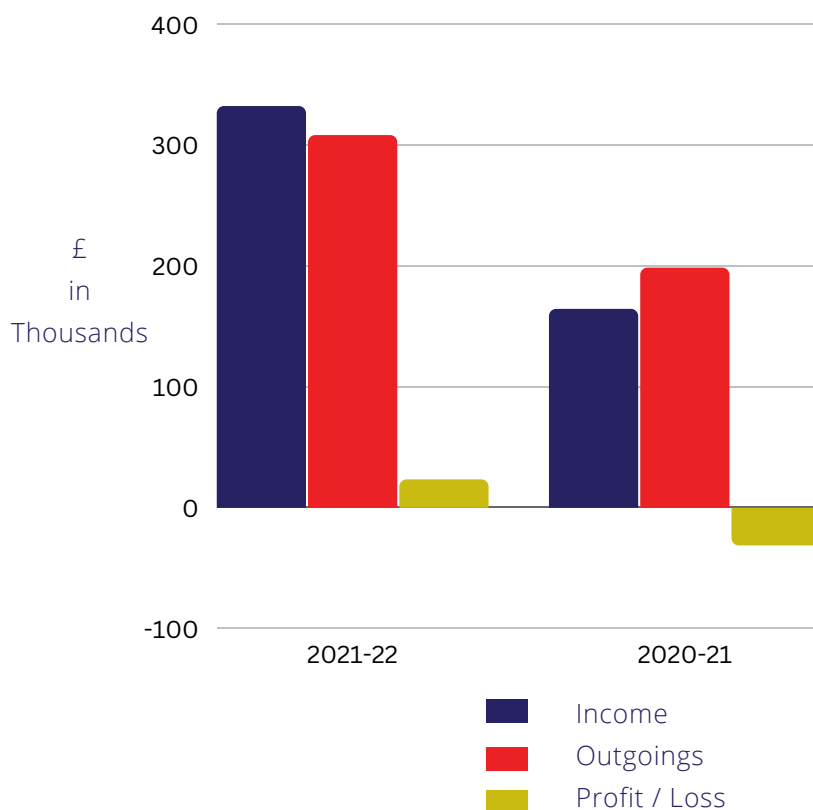
Come
Join In

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The chart to the right shows the income v expenditure comparison between the 2021-22 season and the previous 2020-21 Season.

The income of £332k for the 2021-22 season has more than doubled that of the previous season. Overall profits have also risen to £23k from a loss of £31k the previous year.

Being the first full season back after the Covid Pandemic we are delighted to have returned to and surpassed the £300k income we saw at the end of the 2019-20 season. After a difficult year in 2020-21 British Dodgeball is back in a place where we can continue to invest in the growth of the sport.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The three charts to the right show where British Dodgeball spends its money, from which product categories income is generated and a breakdown highlighting the income generated within each of our event categories.

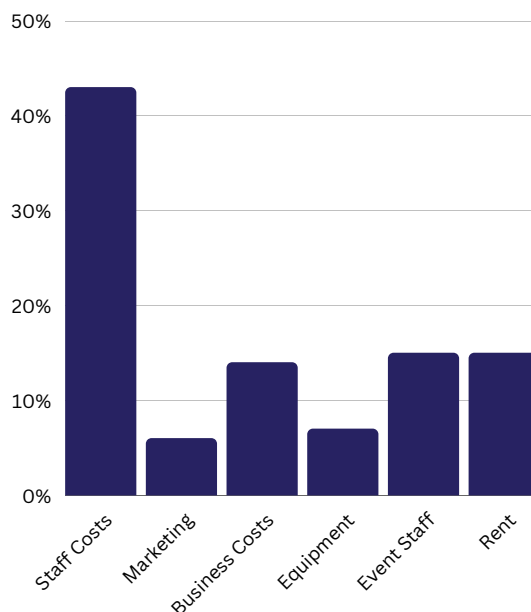
Staff costs including wages, expenses, tax and pensions will continue to be our largest outgoing as we invest heavily in growing our workforce. This is the priority area for us to achieve our aims as an organisation.

We have also invested more during the past season in marketing as we continue to promote the sport nationwide.

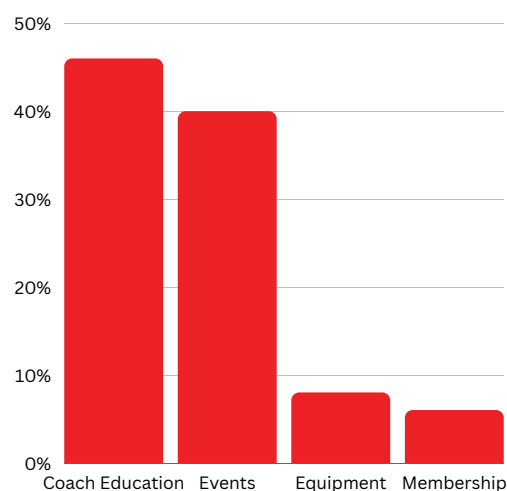
Our two largest areas for income continue to be via our Coach Education and Events offer. With adult dodgeball events being our most comprehensive offer.

The introduction of a pathway of school dodgeball events and increased demand will see this area continue to rise each year.

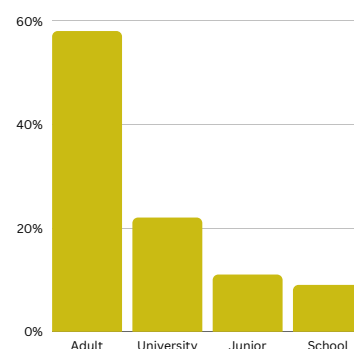
Outgoings



Incomings



Events Breakdown



ADULT DODGEBALL

Many amateur sports experienced a drop off in participation numbers and the number of teams competing in national leagues after their return to play since the pandemic. At British Dodgeball our national leagues however saw no drop off and going into the 2022-23 season are seeing strong growth.

The priority for us each year is our league system, ensuring the best possible offer can be achieved in dodgeball, in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Competing in leagues promotes sustainability and commitment for the sport,

Our National Leagues and British Championships are the highlight of the season for many and we are always aiming to improve our offer. We recognise challenges each year, make improvements where possible and grow the leagues where we can. We have invested heavily in a new netting system that will be utilised where possible at our larger one off events such as the British Championships, British Open and other large events such as the BUCS Finals day and Schools Championships. We hope to be able to utilise the new netting system on a regular basis at our adult leagues and are in talks with St George's Park about how we can increase set up time to make this possible.

One area of improvement we have recognised and must make is the recruitment, training and deployment of referees. All referee training and development will be managed by our coach education staff, utilising a team of experienced referee mentors around the UK. The culture of respect is very important and one of the priorities of our newly formed rules, regulations and disciplinary committees will be to improve the respect culture in adult dodgeball from the 2021-22 season.





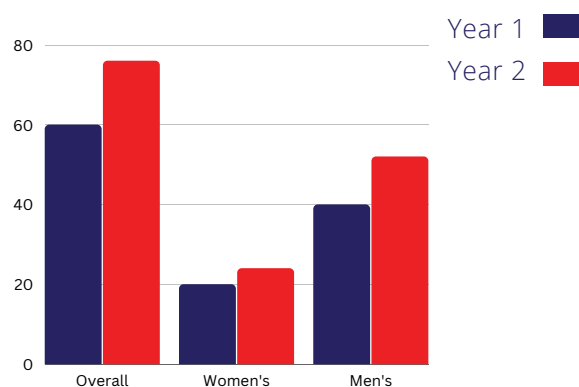
UNIVERSITY

After some delay we were finally able to get our first BUCS dodgeball season off and running in 2021-22, congratulations to Imperial College London (women's) and Warwick Warriors (Men's) for becoming the inaugural BUCS dodgeball champions.

Becoming a BUCS sport comes with some compromise, we have less control over the events, schedules and format but there are increased opportunities for more universities to get involved in dodgeball. And that is what we are seeing already and for the growth of dodgeball we're certain the positives far outweigh the negatives.

Entering year 2 on our BUCS journey we are welcoming a total of 76 university teams, 52 men's and 24 women's, in comparison to 60 university teams in year 1, 40 men's and 20 women's. We are of course aware that the BUCS leagues have fewer rounds than the previous British Dodgeball leagues, to counter this however our offer of university only opens and regional league dodgeball creates significant further opportunities for this area of the sport.

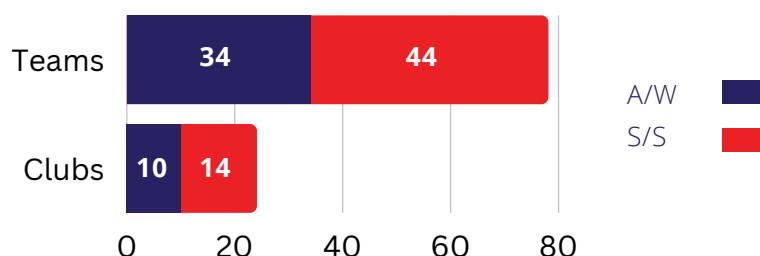
Pictured are the 2021-22 British Dodgeball University Championships - Derby Seahawks



JUNIOR

We're always aiming to grow our junior leagues and engage more and more clubs each season. In the majority of locations where we have leagues we run 2 leagues, an Autumn/Winter league and a Spring/Summer league, with the aim that new emerging teams will have the opportunity to become involved in our leagues in the new year.

In the 2021/22 season we held 2 Autumn/Winter leagues in the North West (Bolton) and the East Midlands (Leicester) and 3 Spring/Summer leagues in the West Midlands (Stoke), East Midlands (Leicester), the North (Durham) and Scotland (Dundee).



One area of our junior offer that wasn't working was the under 17's category. This has now been removed due to challenges faced around logistics, location of teams and demand. We are pleased that those previously competing in this age group are participating in our regional and national leagues.

The return of our Primary Schools Championships proved a great success with 26 events taking place in 22 counties across the UK. 230 teams took part with 755 boys and 381 girls.



JUNIOR

Key Focus for 2022-23

British Dodgeball currently has **49** affiliated junior dodgeball clubs across the UK, in 2017 when we were formed there were under **5**.

However, only **14** of these clubs compete in our regional junior leagues and for the growth of the game we need this number to rise.

We're supporting many junior clubs to get set up in new areas of the UK every month and our long term ambition is for these clubs to be competing in our regional junior leagues. What we have noticed however is that there is a step in the middle that needs to be in place in order to encourage the players at these new clubs to experience the benefits of competitive dodgeball first.

In the 2022-23 season we will be launching our new Come Join In Junior Festivals. The festivals will be completely free to enter and provide new junior players with the opportunity to play against other dodgeballers from clubs, youth groups and schools.

The festivals will also provide opportunities for our staff to speak to club leads and parents and talk through any challenges they might face and allow them to witness the benefits of competitive dodgeball first hand.



JUNIOR

Secondary Schools Competition

Continuing on from the success of our Primary Schools Championships we will be introducing a new Secondary Schools Championships in the 2022-23 season. The championships will consist of local and regional rounds before a national finals day in July 2023.

Regional Rounds

North East
North West
East
West
South West
South
South East

Finals Day

Stoke



JUNIOR

Rules Improvements

We have made what we believe to be significant improvements to the under 11's rules ahead of the 2022/23 season with the following changes taking place:

1. Players are no longer able to leave the court whilst in play, ball retrievers have been introduced.
2. The court width has been increased from 6.1m to 8m to enable players more room and increased ability to compete within a fixed court boundary.
3. The court length has been increased from 13.4m to 14m so that the return line for under 11's and older age groups is the same. This slight change will make marking out multiple age group courts simpler whilst at the same time ensuring younger players are still afforded the opportunity to hit their targets.
4. The change in court length has the added bonus of doubling the size of the area between the return line and the back line so that players can confidently retrieve the ball behind the return line.

As well as the changes above being positive for the game we also believe that the under 11's game will become easier to referee and more participants will be involved at all times with the introduction of team ball retrievers.



CLUB DEVELOPMENT

Our vision for clubs in the future is that they become self-sustaining organisations that outgrow the individuals that initially set them up, and into something more for the whole community. We envision clubs that develop dodgeball in their area by having strong links with local organisations such as Leisure Trusts and Active Partnerships to run sessions for all age groups, and can reward committee members' hard work through the provision of reimbursement, volunteer rewards, payment and eventually employment.

Clubs that have junior sections regularly report that they are financially better off, with the popularity of junior sessions (under 11's in particular) meaning that their adult section, with lower session attendance, is financially supported.

When clubs have the capacity to go beyond running a single community dodgeball session and operate more like a business, they will be able to use session payments to invest in getting coaches to run outreach sessions in local schools and colleges; this can then create a strong feedback loop as these school sessions promote & grow attendance at club sessions, and lead to more business as more schools pay for coaching sessions. This will lead to increased income which leads to more growth.

Some clubs are well on their way to achieving this with the first steps coming from finding new ways to increase revenue via participation.

- Hartlepool Mavericks now operate out of their own venue and see upwards of 150 participants per week.
- Kapow! have set up a junior club section and have recently moved venue to encourage more participants.
- Manchester Bees reimburse their committee a small amount and pay a development officer half a day per week to develop their junior club.
- Eden Dodgeball Club use the income generated via their junior sessions to ensure their fledgling adult sessions are not under financial pressure in a low populated area.





THE SEASON AHEAD

This Autumn we will be recruiting for and appointing a new chair after our previous chair Helena Law stepped down after her 3 year term this summer. We thank Helena for all the work she did behind the scene supporting the governance of the organisation. Our aim is to appoint a new chair first and then follow this up with a refresh and recruitment of a new board to help steer the direction of British Dodgeball throughout the duration of our strategy.

Now that our member numbers are high enough we will be assessing what the benefits of Sports Council recognition will mean for the sport in the UK and whether now is the right time to apply.

We welcome feedback and are always looking to improve our dodgeball offer. If you have something to say the best way to make your voice heard is by getting in touch with a member of the team. We will be producing our dodgeball survey in 2023 that will give you a chance but we also encourage our members to get in touch at any point during the season. The more conversations we can have with our members the better job we can do for the sport of dodgeball in the UK.