

# GHA Player Pathway Report

## May 2023

James Doughty & Helen Jefferies

### Terminology

**DC - Development Centre** - introduction to the county hockey environment and the lowest tier of hockey in the Player Pathway. For the second season, we ran a DC in parallel with the Junior County Programme. We will continue to do this and we will not be running DCs in the summer, other than an U12 introduction to the county environment in April/May 2024.

**Junior County Hockey** has now replaced **AC - Academy Centre**. This has been decided to avoid confusion with the new Talent Academies which have become the regional tier for hockey.

**Talent Academy** - a newly created coaching environment at regional level to replace PC (see below). England Hockey announced 17 Talent Academies on 6th May 2022 - the ones within range of Gloucestershire (@ < 1 hour) are Team Bath Buccaneers HC, Stourport HC and Oxford Hawks HC. Bristol University has recently been approved as a Talent Academy.

***Talent Centre** - newly created coaching standard for clubs - implementation is in progress but has had limited impact on junior county hockey.*

***Talent School** - these are still under discussion with England Hockey*

***PC - Performance Centre** - now defunct.*

### 2022 - 2023 Season Summary

- This has been the first season of the 3 year deal with King's School Gloucester for indoor and outdoor pitches and it has worked well.
- Finances Part One  
The Treasurer's Report shows that the Player Pathway made a loss of £1,160.79 this season. Please note the following:
  1. GHA replaced all county shirts with a new design and supported parents by financing 16% of the cost which incurred a one off cost of £710. This was very well managed by the Stick Club, our thanks go to them for this.
  2. GHA paid an old debt for the very old county shirts that the Stick Club had bought but not been paid for. This was a one off cost of £360
  3. GHA invested in indoor and outdoor equipment at a cost of £835 - these would be expected to last 3 seasons.

Total exceptional expenses for 2022/23 season = £1,905

- The season for County Hockey ended on the 27th March, culminating in matches versus Stourport Talent Academy on 20th and 27th March (girls and boys respectively). However, for the first season there is a county finals day arranged which is due to be on the 21st May in Bristol. See Match Report section for further details.
- The indoor sessions have been a success and we will continue with them next season and we will extend them to the Development Squad players.

## **2022 - 2023 Match Reports**

Tournaments were scheduled for the West North Counties - Herefordshire, Wiltshire, Avon and Gloucestershire, and the West South Counties - Devon, Cornwall, Dorset and Somerset.

Our first set of games took place on 13th November 2022 and saw U14s Girls and Boys, U15s Girls and U16/17 Girls and U15/16/17 Boys take part. Overall we had 10 wins, 3 draws and 2 losses. The U13s teams played against Wiltshire and both the girls and boys won their games.

Our next tournament was on the 12th February 2023, where again all teams took part. With 8 wins, 5 draws and 1 loss in total. Our U13s played against Somerset and Wiltshire and the girls won both of their games, whilst the boys beat Wiltshire, but unfortunately lost to Somerset.

Our final tournament day was on 12th March 2023, where we had 5 wins, 3 draws and 5 losses. Our U13s had an in-house tournament of AC vs DC.

Overall Gloucestershire U14s Girls and Boys won their league whilst the Girls U16/17 and Boys U15/16/17 also won their leagues.

A 'Finals Day', as mentioned earlier, has been arranged for the winners of the North league to play the winners of the South League. This has been scheduled for Sunday May 21st and will be held at Coombe Dingle Sports Complex, Bristol. Avon have decided to pull out due to other commitments, which has meant that Gloucestershire U15s girls will also be playing in the finals.

The Schedule is — Girls U14s - Glos v Somerset  
Boys U14s - Glos v Somerset  
Girls U15s - Glos v Devon  
Boys U15s - Wiltshire v Devon  
Girls U16/17 - Glos v Devon  
Boys U16/17 - Glos v Somerset

Pin badges will be awarded to the Winners and Runners Up.

## **2023 - 2024 Season Planning**

- Over the summer, England Hockey will replace the Player Pathway System with a customised Club Buzz application. Testing is due to finish on 30th March and a smooth transition is theoretically possible. The new application will, in theory, simplify several processes that are currently time consuming to manage and the transition will impact on providing feedback to players this season using the existing system. Thanks to Shaun, the GHA Treasurer, for setting up GoCardless and Stripe.
- The schedule for next season is complete and will be sent out in the coming weeks and will include some strength and conditioning sessions, an indoor tournament for each age group and access to the Performance Coach App for coaches and players.
- We have done a financial forecast for next season and as a result, we will be putting the price of Development training up to £50 for the season and County training up to £90 for the season. A surplus of £815 is currently forecast. This works out at less than £5 per hour of coaching and match time per player. We have been running at a slight loss for the past couple of seasons, this is usually impacted by the weather, how successful the teams are, how we account for assets that last for more than a season, paying off old debts as well as us providing support for the transition to new shirts.
- We are engaged with Stourport Talent Academy, James Doughty is a member of their Executive Team and is responsible for representing the interests of Gloucestershire Hockey. We have offered the Stourport Talent Academy pitch time on the warm-up astroturf alongside all of our U15 to U17 sessions throughout next season and we hope to repeat the matches v Stourport Talent Academy at the end of the season. Other Talent Academies have been less proactive in communicating with us but we remain open to working with them wherever we can.
  - GHA Committee has agreed in principle to ring-fence some bursary funds (currently a fund of £2,000 has been proposed - see Finance section) for players that have been selected to Talent Academy as it is quite expensive (£600 - £1,000 per season depending on the academy). Other counties across the county have done likewise. Once the application process has been agreed, we will communicate this to the 20+ Gloucestershire based players that are currently at Talent Academy. We propose that this runs for the next two seasons, as each Talent Academy has a 3 year initial contract, of which one year has just been completed.
  - Once this process has been finalised, we will approach West Hockey to see if they are willing to do likewise with some of the £160,000 they have in reserve (as of their 2022 AGM report)

## Long Term Planning (5 years)

### **Succession Planning**

In the next couple of seasons, James Doughty and Helen Jefferies will start to step away from Player Pathway administration responsibilities. This means that the transition to a new person(s) will start sooner rather than later so that there is a seamless transition if possible. Clearly, it is difficult to find volunteers who will take on the amount of work that they do for the Player Pathway.

GHA Committee has agreed to investigate and trial outsourcing some of the administration overseas next season to see how this might be a longer term solution.

### **GHA Reserve Funds**

GHA does not currently have an agreed target reserve fund figure or a plan to reduce the reserve fund level to an agreed level. GHA fixed costs per year are approximately £5,000. The current, unagreed policy is to keep a year's worth of expenditure in reserve. Given the stability of the market GHA is in and the fact the GHA is highly unlikely to pay for coaches and pitches without remembering to ask some paying players to turn up, the reserves seem to be unnecessarily high to some members of the committee. As such, the GHA Committee has agreed to put this to a vote at the AGM. The proposal by the Player Pathway Team is to set the reserve fund target to a figure of £15,000 - £20,000 by the end of the 2029-2030 season.

If proposal PP01 is agreed then this would leave a fund of £25,000 to £30,000 to be slowly reduced to zero over the next 5 years at @ £6,000 per year. The GHA Committee has already created a draft funding policy which will help shape a spending strategy to document how this will be achieved; however, please note that the draft funding policy already covers:

		<b>Proposed Annual Total</b>
1	Support for players at Talent Academy	£2,000
2	Support for state schools for regional or national finals	£500
3	Support for affiliated GHA clubs for regional or national finals	£500
4	Support for GHA coaches (safeguarding, DBS, first aid and coaching)	£1,000
5	Coach development courses for club and state schools	£1,000
6	Support to increase the number of qualified umpires	£1,000

## **Employment Status of GHA Coaches**

There has been an ongoing discussion for several seasons at the GHA Committee regarding the employment status of the GHA coaches. Recent advice, supported by checklists provided by England Hockey shows that GHA coaches are highly likely to be self-employed. The GHA Committee has agreed to use these forms to provide evidence of this should it be required. Completed and signed electronic copies of these will be held in the GHA cloud store.