

Draft Sporting Futures Submission

Geraldton Softball Association Inc



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1. Introduction

The Geraldton Softball Association Inc (GSA) is pleased to accept in principle the proposal of the relocation of the UtaKarra Ball Park to the “reclaimed tip land” adjacent to Flores Road.

Softball participation in Geraldton has a rich history which spans over 60 years. Historically, the game has been played at many different venues around Geraldton including Queens Park, Rovers Football Club, Eadon Clark Oval and the current premise UtaKarra Ball Park.

Due to membership growth as a result of implementation of the strategies from the GSA Strategic Plan (appendix), we recognise the urgent need for additional space to accommodate all the necessary fixtured games, training requirements and carnivals to accommodate the popularity of diamond sports in Geraldton.

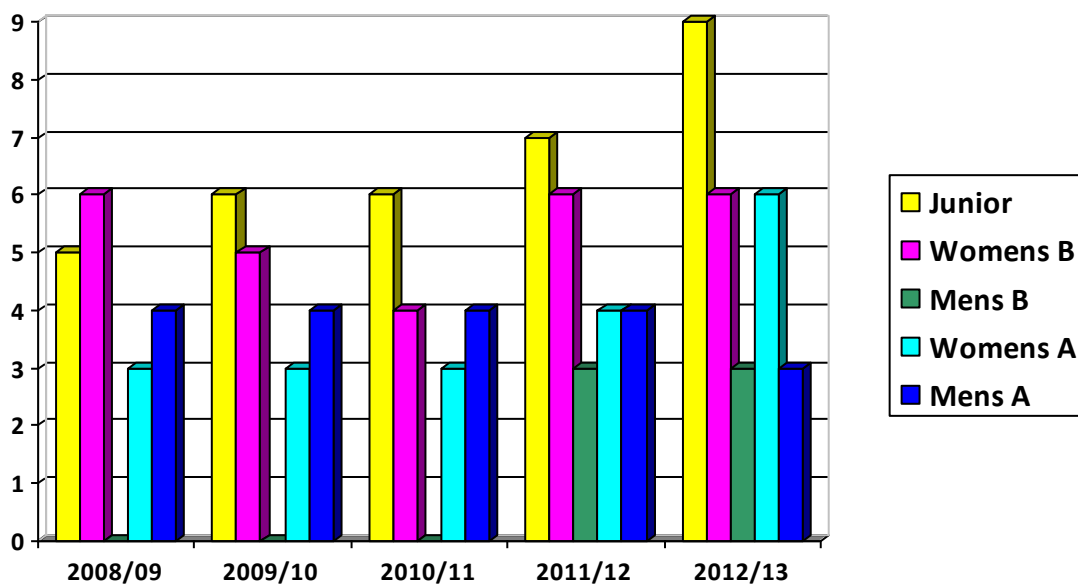
2. Membership growth

Over the last six years the GSA has experience a rapid playing membership growth as a result of implementation of a number of strategies to ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for Softball in Geraldton.

2.1 Number of teams

Division	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Junior	5	6	6	7	9
Womens B	6	5	4	6	6
Mens B	0	0	0	3	3
Womens A	3	3	3	4	6
Mens A	4	4	4	4	3
Total Teams	18	18	17	24	27

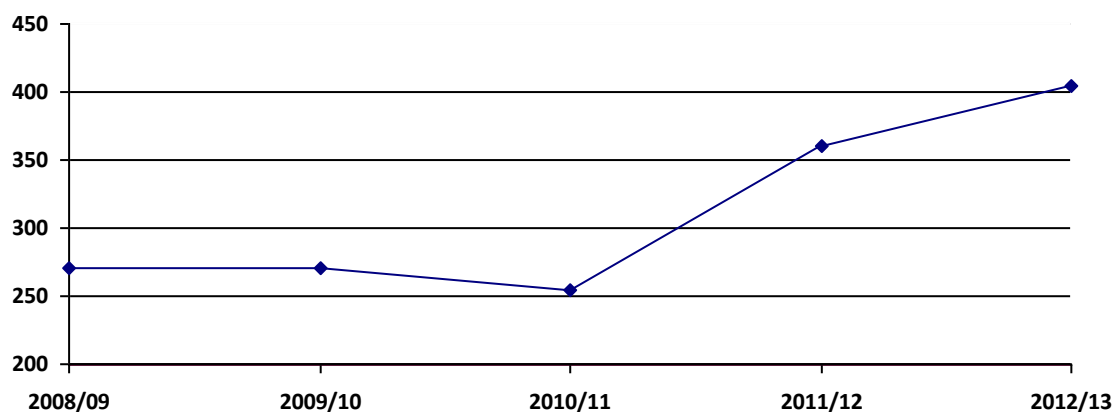
Divisions and Team Numbers



2.2 Membership Numbers

Division	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Junior	75	90	90	105	135
Womens B	90	75	60	90	90
Mens B	0	0	0	45	45
Womens A	45	45	45	60	90
Mens A	60	60	60	60	45
Total Members	270	270	255	360	405

Membership Growth



3. Current Facility Usage

Currently, the UtaKarra Ball Park Facility is fully utilised at is at capacity throughout the regular seasons of Diamond Sports (Softball, Baseball and Teeball) from September to April and for representative sides during the off-season for training.

In addition, the facility is also used for two Carnivals during the off-season. June Carnvial is held on the June long-weekend and has been recognised as the biggest softball event of its type in regional Western Australia. June Carnvial has been running for 35 years and due to it's reputation and popularity the carnival has been at maximum capacity for the last 20 years with 27 teams and an estimated 400+ visitors from around the state converging on Geraldton for a three day carnival.

The Choco Memorial Carnival has been running for 4 years. The Carnival is held in memorial for a well-respected mother of 5, Jolene Farrell who tragically lost her fight with cancer at 26 years. The Carnival is held as a women's health awareness event with particular emphasis on Aboriginal women's health.



The additional Stakeholders who also utilise the facility during off-season

- Auskick
- Rovers Football Club
- GNFL Umpires
- Rugby
- Northampton – Chapman Valley Cricket Club

The Geraldton Softball Association uses six diamonds including

- Diamond 1 – Fully enclosed and lit
- Diamond 2 – Permanent back net
- Diamond 3 – 6 – Open diamonds on the lower oval (these diamonds are set up using removable equipment and have no boundary/home run fencing)

4. Consultation

On Monday 29th October 2012, the GSA undertook a members consultation session to discuss the relocation proposal and to collate the information and concerns necessary for this submission.

Three questions were asked to members and the following information, questions and concerns were recorded.

4.1 Question 1 – What are our current assets and good features of our current facility.

- Umpires room
- Toilets
- Office
- Canteen
- Disabled toilet and access
- Enclosed fully lit diamond
- Large Car park
- Large Shaded spectating area
- Elevated spectating area
- Bar Facilities
- Permanent backnet on Diamond 2
- Large open space for additional diamonds (diamonds 3-6)
- Safety netting
- Enclosed dugouts
- Veranda areas
- Sea-container storage x 2
- Easy access
- Car spectating area from home run fence
- Established trees
- Central location
- Clubrooms – built, owned and maintained by GSA
- Major stakeholder of facilities and own clubroom infrastructure
- Access to council serviced toilets
- Set back from main road - safety
- Large licensed area
- Lighting in car park
- Easy access to clubrooms for deliveries
- Storeroom
- Showers
- Security system - good and all lights illuminate when security alarms are triggered
- Office
- Paved area
- High visibility
- Parameter fencing
- No cricket pitch – Considerable amount of effort was undertaken to remove the previous pitch due safety issues
- Function area within clubrooms

4.2 Question 2: Given the opportunity to relocate, what can we improve with new facilities?

- Car park surfacing – Asphalt surfacing
- Bar area overlooking D1/spectating area
- Incorporate better storage for clubs
- Reduce glass / window area in clubrooms - security
- Improve canteen design and bench space
- Separate canteen storage and bar storage
- Improve spectator area behind diamond 1 - dugout design
- Area / play area for kids – maximise safety from foul balls
- More seating - tired for spectators
- Possibly more shade
- Storage sheds - maybe added to clubrooms
- Additional diamond under lights
- Separate bar area within clubrooms
- More trees
- Capacity for more diamonds for competitions
- Improved office design
- Improved functionality of clubroom floor plan
- Orientation of clubrooms to diamond - view games within
- Useable wall space - honour boards etc
- Lockable chair / table storage
- Baby change area
- No cricket pitch or cricket nets
- Improved flooring
- Larger umpires room
- Records storage
- Can't hire clubrooms out as much as we should due to reduced security and protection of assets
- Lean-to' to top of permanent back nets to stop 80% of foul balls battered into other diamonds
- Token activated training lights
- Score board viewing - ease of use and visibility
- Change rooms
- Lockers for umpires
- Meeting room or partitioning of function area

4.3 Question 3: What are your concerns or questions that you would like addressed and answered in reference to the Sporting Futures proposal?

- Multi-user facilities - how does it work, who pays for what - cleaning, consumables, electricity, Insurance
- maintenance, fees, roster of usage, storage, security
- Timeframe of relocation - exact time for managing our current facilities and maintenance
- Contaminates from reclaimed tip land – Is there any risk and how is it being mitigated.
- Noise from ballistics – What is the timing / scheduling and decibels of ballistic noise?
- Plans for a cricket pitch – ensuring that safety is maintained and compatibility of playing surfaces between sports in multi-use open space.
- Positioning of diamonds on the original concept – Diamonds must face in calibrated directions to address issues of wind direction and sun.

- Turf - type, establishment time (Saltine)
- Security - implications of land positioning and visibility will we encounter the same issues as La Fiamma?
- Control of retic for control of surface dust of diamonds with cutouts.
- How do we access the facility? Proposed road and venue entrance
- User costs? Will users pay for blowouts
- Running costs of new facilities

5. Conclusion

The Geraldton Softball Association Inc is optimistic and excited about the proposed Sporting Futures plans. We ask that if the project is endorsed by Council it is on the condition that the Association is consulted throughout the process of implementation to ensure our sporting needs are met and to ensure the best possible outcomes for all stakeholders of the facility.

We would appreciate that all the members concerns and questions are addressed throughout the process to ensure that Softball continues to have a prosperous future within Geraldton.



Geraldton Softball Association - Strategic Plan 2011 - 2014

Our Aims

- To promote, advance, foster and cultivate the game of Softball
- To educate, train, coach and encourage members in the game of softball so that all members have the opportunity to reveal their maximum potential
- To encourage all members to assist in the development of the game of Softball.
- To encourage members to participate in a fair and sporting manner

Our Strategic Objectives

Administration	Services	Participation	Pathways	Partnerships	Facilities
To provide leadership through implementation of 'best practice' governance and management processes.	To develop and maintain effective and efficient services to the membership.	To increase participation in all areas of softball.	To provide resources and promote opportunities to support a development pathways for players and officials.	To identify and enhance relationships with all stakeholders.	To access the best possible facilities for players, clubs and the association.
Strategies					
1.1 Implement good governance and management processes at association level.	2.1 Continually review all events to ensure relevance and enjoyment for members.	3.1 Provide accessible, affordable community based programs through schools and clubs.	4.1 Ensure junior softball is a priority for all clubs.	5.1 Implementation of agreed priorities of the GSA to develop and grow the game.	6.1 Conduct a yearly audit of association facilities and assets to determine any future requirements for upgrades or refurbishment.
1.2 Facilitate the implementation of sound financial practices	2.2 Ensure all members have access to appropriate sport specific courses.	3.2 Explore the option for the delivery of the Batter Up program and/or other grassroots programs.	4.2 Promote opportunities for selection trials to association members	5.2 Develop mutually beneficial partnerships with key providers. e.g. CGG, Teeball, CDO, AASC	6.2 Pursue the continued upgrade of Utakarra Ball Park as identified through auditing processes.
1.3 Recruit, train and retain qualified board members and volunteers.	2.3 Ensure accessibility for club affiliates to maintain open communication with Board of Directors.	3.3 Promote the transition from teeball to softball including opportunities for volunteers and officials.	4.3 Promote opportunities for officials and coaches to undertake regular Professional Development	5.3 Maintain and enhance mutually beneficial partnerships with key stakeholders, including the media	6.3 Ensure the maintenance of playing fields and infrastructure at the best possible standard for members
1.4 Ensure communication processes embrace and effectively utilise changing technologies.		3.4 Continue to promote, provide and support quality senior competitions for all abilities, genders and ages.		5.4 Provide an excellent service to existing sponsors and actively seek new opportunities.	
		3.5 Provide and promote participation opportunities for non-playing members i.e - scoring, coaching, officiating, volunteering etc.			

Administration

To provide leadership through the implementation of 'best practice' governance and management processes.

Strategies	Action	Who	Timeline	Deliverables
1.1 Implement good governance and management practices at association level.	Develop and adopt appropriate Governance procedures and processes and ensure they are adhered to.	Board / Chair	Aug-11	Ensure all Governance procedures and processes are followed as per Constitution requirements
	Ensure compliance with all external legal requirements.	Board	Ongoing	All legal requirements are complied with.
	Ensure compliance with all funding requirements	Treasurer / Funding portfolio	Ongoing	All funding acquittals are undertaken on time.
	Undertake annual review of constitution, bylaws and planning documents and update accordingly and are circulated and implemented by association and clubs.	Board	Beginning of season commencement and at annual bylaws meeting	All plans are reviewed, updated and circulated. Policies are reviewed, implemented, distributed to members.
	Prepare for and ensure the AGM is held in accordance with the Constitution.	Board	Yearly - Aug	The AGM is held in accordance with the Constitution
	Ensure yearly reporting is undertaken against strategic priorities.	Board	Aug - presented at AGM	Reports are written and presented to membership at yearly AGM.
1.2 Facilitate the implementation of sound financial practices	The Treasurer to monitor the budget and report to the Board at monthly Board meetings.	Treasurer	Monthly	The Budget is monitored and variances reported to the Board.
	Ensure an annual audit is undertaken of the Associations finances and the relevant reports presented to the AGM	Treasurer	Aug - Presented at AGM	An external audit is undertaken and a report produced for members.
	Investigate and apply for external funding opportunities to benefit all levels of softball.	Funding portfolio	Ongoing	Alternative funding opportunities are accessed.

1.3 Recruit, train and retain qualified board members and volunteers.	Training and professional development opportunities for the Board and Volunteers are identified and scheduled.	Board	Ongoing	Training and PD is made available and undertaken as required program scheduled
1.4 Ensure communication processes embrace and effectively utilise changing technologies.	Develop a eMarketing processes for communications to all partners, and members including emailing, facebook and other avenues etc.	Board / Promotions portfolio	Ongoing	eCommunications strategy is developed and implemented.
	Ensure GSA is listed in all local directories and websites	Promotions portfolio	Ongoing	GSA details are listed is public local directories

Services

To develop and maintain efficient and effective services to the membership.

Strategies	Action	Who	Timeline	Deliverables
2.1 Continually review all events to ensure relevance and enjoyment for members.	A Committee is established to review all competitions, tournaments and events in conjunction with clubs. i.e - June Carnival, Corporate Cup	Board	When required	A Working Group is established and a report provided to the Board.
	Revised competition structures, tournaments and events are planned and conducted.	Board / Game & fixture committee	Prior to season commencement	Revised competition, tournaments and events are conducted.
2.2 Ensure all members have access to appropriate sport specific courses.	Accreditation courses relating to coaching, umpiring and scoring to be conducted for members yearly	Junior portfolio / Umpire Convenor	Yearly	Courses are offered and conducted yearly.
	Promotion of any additional / external courses to members	Board / Secretary	Ongoing	Membership are informed of external opportunities
2.3 Ensure accessibility for club affiliates to maintain open communication with Board of Directors.	Promotion and reminders of general meetings are sent to club contacts	Secretary / Promotions portfolio	1 week prior to meeting	Dates of meetings are emailed to club contacts and reminders posted on Facebook page
	All correspondence from members that is received is documented and discussed and outcomes minuted	Secretary	Monthly	All general and board meetings are accurately minuted
	Minutes of AGM, general meetings and any specific items are forwarded to club contacts for distribution to club members	Secretary	Monthly	Minutes of meetings are distributed in a timely manner to relevant parties
	Specific notices and reminders are advertised through a variety of mediums i.e - Facebook, flyers etc	Secretary / Promotions portfolio	Ongoing	Ladders, notices, results are made readily available to association members through flyers posted in clubrooms, emails and facebook.
	Proceedings of the Board and meetings are followed	Board / Chair	Ongoing	Constitution requirements are adhered to
	General meetings are open to all association members	Board	Ongoing	All parties are welcome to attend Association general meetings

Participation

To increase participation in all areas of softball.

Strategies	Action	Who	Timeline	Deliverables
3.1 Provide accessible, affordable community based programs through schools and clubs.	Review the programs available and currently offered to establish relevance for the GSA i.e - Batter Up, Mod Ball, Diamond Ball	Junior portfolio	Ongoing	All programs are reviewed to determine effective for future delivery.
	Utilise the Active After School Communities (AASC) program to promote softball.	Junior portfolio	Term 3 of current school year	AASC program is accessed to promote softball.
	Determine appropriate programs for delivery in regional and remote areas, including participation for players and officials.	Junior portfolio	Week 8 of current school term	Delivery of softball clinics through the Week 8 initiative. Implementation of Indigenous Softball Program (ISP) throughout the Midwest
	Source opportunities for an elite player/s to deliver clinics and rolemodelling for juniors in the GSA yearly	Junior portfolio	Feb	State / national / international level player is identified and delivers clinics to juniors
3.2 Explore the options for the delivery of the Batter Up program.	Maintain contact SWA about the effectiveness of the Batter Up program	Junior portfolio	Ongoing	Maintain contact with Melosa Jackson and negotiate pricing structure for the implementation of the Batter Up program
3.3 Promote the transition from teeball to softball including opportunities for volunteers and officials.	Meet with Teeball Chairperson to discuss opportunities to work cohesively with softball to create transitions and opportunities to grow both sports	Junior portfolio	Prior to season commencement	Regular contact is made with Teeball and MOU is created
3.4 Continue to promote, provide and support quality senior competitions for all abilities, genders and ages.	Aim to offer at least 2 divisions in senior men's and women's competition	Board	Ongoing	Senior A and B divisions are offered for both Men's and women's competition.
3.5 Provide and promote participation opportunities for non-playing members i.e - scoring, coaching, officiating, volunteering etc.	Work cohesively with clubs to support the involvement of non-playing members within the association	Board	Ongoing	non-playing members have roles within the GSA and clubs i.e - volunteering, scoring, coaching, supporting, board and other tasks
	Assist clubs to promote the benefits of membership and participation in volunteer administration.	Board	Ongoing	Assist clubs with a variety of resources and options to support growth

Pathways

To provide resources and opportunities to support a development pathway for players and officials.

Strategies	Action	Who	Timeline	Deliverables
4.1 Ensure junior softball is a priority for all clubs.	Ensure any junior events and opportunities are promoted by clubs.	Junior portfolio	Ongoing	Information about proposed and planned events are forwarded to clubs and actively promoted
	Encourage all affiliate clubs to have at least one junior softball team	Junior portfolio	Ongoing and prior to nominations	All affiliate clubs of the GSA have at least one junior softball team participating in GSA competition
4.2 Promote opportunities for selection trials to association members	Send all correspondence from SWA of selection trials to club contacts	Secretary	Ongoing	All invites and information are sent to club contacts
4.3 Promote opportunities for officials and coaches to undertake Professional Development	Promote all professional development opportunities for officials, scorers and volunteers and encourage their involvement i.e - Midwest Coaches network, CDO, DSR, SWA	Secretary / umpire convenor / junior portfolio / promotions portfolio	Ongoing	All invites and information are sent to club contacts

Partnerships

To identify and enhance relationships with all stakeholders.

Strategies	Action	Who	Timeline	Deliverables
5.1 Implementation of agreed priorities for the GSA to develop and grow the game.	Implementation of GSA Strategic Plan 2011-2014	Board	Ongoing	GSA strategic plan is implemented, and reviewed
	Monitor participation numbers and maintain correct membership records	Registrar	Ongoing	Maintain correct membership records and report on association statistics
	Promote the GSA and the game of softball in a positive, enthusiastic, ethical and professional manner	Board	Ongoing	All board members actively promote the GSA and softball
5.2 Develop mutually beneficial partnerships with key stakeholders. e.g .CGG, Teeball, CDO	Grounds committee - CGG	Grounds Committee	Ongoing	Liaise regularly with CDO and CGG regarding softball and UBP issues, suggestions and advise
	Aim to develop a partnership strategy and develop a MOU with Batavia Coast Teeball for the mutual benefit and growth of both sports	Promotions / junior portfolio	Prior to season commencement / ongoing	Development of partnership strategy and MOU Increased softball club participation in Junior and Intermediate teeball competition
5.3 Maintain and enhance mutually beneficial partnerships with key stakeholders, including the media.	Maintain weekly contact with the Geraldton Guardian Sports Editor and forward game write-ups weekly during season	Promotions portfolio	Weekly	Weekly write-up
	Meet with Club Development Officer as required to discuss direction, promotion and needs of the GSA	Promotions portfolio	Quarterly -	Update CDO quarterly
	Maintain weekly contact with Spirit radio and partake in the opportunity to provide weekly updates and news during Sports Magazine segment during playing season	Promotions portfolio	Weekly	Weekly radio segment
	Meet with DSR regional officer to discuss GSA direction, promotions and needs	Promotions portfolio	Quarterly -	Update DSR quarterly
5.4 Provide an excellent service to existing sponsors and actively seek new sponsors.	Maintain and service existing sponsors	Board	Ongoing	Reports / letters of thanks sent to sponsors after events and when sponsorships are renewed.
	Develop and refine Association sponsorship package and guidelines	Promotions portfolio	Oct-11	Creation of sponsorship package
	Identify and actively target new corporate sponsors	Board	Ongoing	New corporate sponsors are approached and recruited

Facilities

To access the best possible facilities for players, clubs and the association.

Strategies	Action	Who	Timeline	Deliverables
6.1 Conduct a yearly audit of association facilities and assets to determine any future requirements for upgrades and refurbishment.	Identify future upgrade and refurbishment requirements and develop plans to undertake work	Property officer / Grounds committee	Yearly and as required	Facility audit is undertaken and plans are developed to address need
	Identify asset upgrades, replacements and maintenance requirements on at least a yearly basis	Property officer	Yearly and as required	Asset audit undertaken
6.2 Pursue the continued upgrade of the Utakearra Ball Park as identified through auditing processes.	Ensure DSR are aware of softball's requirements for a continued upgrade of Utakearra Ball Park.	Grounds Committee	Ongoing	DSR have details of GSA requirements for UBP
	Advise City of Greater Geraldton (CGG) of softball's requirements for upgrades Utakearra Ball Park.	Grounds Committee	Ongoing	Ensure CGG are aware of softball's requirements
	Establish Grounds Committee to oversee required works	Grounds Committee	Sep-11	Grounds Committee established
6.3 Ensure the maintenance of playing fields and infrastructure at the best possible standard for members	Grounds committee to report to board and undertake agreed actions	Grounds Committee	Ongoing	Grounds committee requests are forwarded to board for consideration and actions are implemented upon approval from board