



Glasgow City Basketball Club - Innovative thinking

Glasgow City Basketball Club based in the East of City thought innovatively to create playing opportunities when the Scottish Government's route map restrictions were eased July to permit outdoor contact sport for young people up to the age of 17.

After a review of the limited outdoor public courts in the East End together with the challenge of being unable to book, the club were highly successful in the setting up of outdoor sessions for their Junior members in an industrial estate car park after close of business. The idea was generated from a Basketball Scotland West Club Forum on the back off discussion surrounding the use of outdoor courts/space.



Glasgow City Basketball Club general manager **Kenny Watson** works for a company which operates from the estate. *"The offices in the industrial estate close at 5pm, leaving an empty concrete space unused for the rest of the night, which I thought would be an ideal alternative"*. An area which is not traditionally used for basketball but an opportunity which allowed the club to establish an opportunity to existing members and new young enthusiasts with the desire to give basketball a shot.

Glasgow City provide basketball in the east end of Glasgow for all levels and abilities. Pre-COVID they provided training and competitive opportunities five days a week so it was extremely difficult for club members and volunteers to go to nothing. Club Chairman Alister Geddes shared his major concerns of the negative effect this has had both physically and mentally on the clubs youngsters.

The return of club activity was a tremendous success for Alister highlighting that *"The safety of our participants was paramount and the additional responsibility it placed on our volunteer coaches cannot be underestimated and expressed his gratitude to club manager Kenny who was instrumental in coordinating the logistics to enable the sessions to go ahead. While we look forward to returning to some sort of normality, the outdoor sessions were an active reminder of the importance and positive impact that sport can have on the individual."*

Due to the nature of the Scottish weather, weekly programming was flexible and weather-dependent. There was no fixed evening, whatever evening provided the best opportunity for the young people to participate in the safest conditions.



In conjunction with the development sessions, the club's charity partner organisation Shoot for Success, introduced an outdoor session for their additional support needs club members. This was a welcomed reintroduction of activity for many of the parents and carers who have experienced additional struggles during lockdown.

The outdoor sessions were a tremendous success but as the winter months approached the sessions were no longer safe and practical to continue. Glasgow Life Officer support explored alternative venues access options and secured short term training space within Glasgow Club Tollcross in early December.

The club moved promptly to ensure all paperwork and protocols were in place to secure the space and allow them to provide an indoor experience for their junior players. An experience closer to what players and coaches used to know but a very different experience from how the club used to operate

The club's commitment to providing virtual, outdoor and indoor opportunities for club members over the past months highlights innovative thinking, unmeasurable commitment and demonstrated the value that key club personnel place on the mental, social and physical benefits of reconnecting people in a sporting environment. As we continue in a period where planning is extremely difficult, the club are doing everything in their powers to secure both outdoor and indoor training space in the East of the City for when the route map allows play to resume.