



# British Baseball Federation Facilities Survey

## Summer 2023

Release Date: N/A

Version 0.1

Written By: Tom Thornhill



---

## CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction
3. Methodology
4. Descriptive Analysis
5. Facilities Analysis
6. Diamond Analysis
7. Recommendations



---

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents a variety of insights on the state of both Facilities and Diamonds across the British baseball landscape in line with the BBF vision outlined in “Our Future”

The British Baseball Federation conducted a quantitative survey census aimed at gaining insights into the existing landscape of baseball facilities and infrastructure throughout Great Britain.

A survey was sent to all British baseball clubs irrespective of affiliation. 42 clubs responded covering 59 diamonds and 42 baseball facilities.

## Key Points

- A majority of facilities possess toilets close to their respective diamonds. 37% of facilities still do not possess any changing room facilities.
- A majority of facilities are maintained by none club volunteers (56%).
- A majority of facilities possess some form of permanent onsite storage (67%).
- There is an even spread across the various options for field hire/use agreements however only a minor number of the agreements are in place longer than 12 months (23%)
- A 100% of facilities possess first aid capabilities however further healthcare is limited with only seven facilities across the UK that possess access to defibrillators.
- Car parking is available close to diamonds (96%) however less spaces than 50 are available (45%).
- The availability of Refreshments and Water is only available in 20% of facilities.
- Only nine out of 59 diamonds (15%) possess the capabilities to host youth baseball
- A majority of diamonds possess Backstops (64%) and Dirt Pitching Mounds (81%). In contrast, a minority of diamonds possess any dug-out facilities (14%) or bullpen (10%).
- A majority of diamonds utilise a non-permeant mesh fencing solution (58%).
- The majority of diamonds, (80%,) feature sunken bases. However, additional facilities essential for developing hitters, such as Batting Cages, are absent in the majority of diamonds, accounting for 68%.
- Seating and scoreboards for spectators are also lacking in 80% and 64% of cases, respectively.
- Equipment for maintaining diamonds, including rakes, tamps, and line painting tools, is present in just over 50% of instances.
- In a wet climate, over 57% of clubs lack the means to protect diamonds from excess rain.



---

Based on the vision of the Federation, the following recommendations for action are made (see Section 7 for more details):

- Work with suppliers to provide better options for clubs
- Allocate funding specifically for Youth Facilities
- Support clubs to secure Land Access Agreements
- Establish Facility Standards for all clubs
- Encourage clubs to host Saturday Game Hosting:



---

## 2. INTRODUCTION

This analysis outlines the start of a process of review, engagement and delivery to develop the future of our sport regarding facilities. Our Development Committee seeks to assess the current state of infrastructure and facilities.

As outlined under “Our Future”, the following vision has been outlined for facilities here in Great Britain in 2022, 2035 and 2042.

Facilities	A few dedicated diamonds	Regional Hubs with multiple diamond facilities that can host tournaments.	County centric hubs with multiple diamonds that host county youth and adult competitions.
------------	--------------------------	---	---

The British Baseball Federation conducted a quantitative survey census aimed at gaining insights into the existing landscape of baseball facilities and infrastructure throughout Great Britain.

The survey included a variety of drop down and multi box questions in which Clubs completed.

The data analysed through this document census will serve multiple purposes:

Firstly, it will be used to establish a grading system for baseball diamonds, providing a standardised framework to evaluate and categorise them.

Secondly, the information gathered will inform the future requirements for diamonds at various levels of development, ranging from grassroots and Single A to our National Baseball League.



---

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The data for this analysis was collected in May 2023 using the British Baseball Federation's surveying and forms tool, Zoho Forms. The survey was designed to gather information about baseball diamonds and facilities from regional leagues and clubs.

The survey was distributed via email to regional leagues and clubs throughout the month of May. Efforts were made to increase participation by conducting direct follow-ups with a number of clubs, encouraging them to sign up and complete the survey.

The survey form itself was carefully designed to capture relevant information. It consisted of a variety of drop-down and multiple-choice questions, allowing the recipients to provide their responses conveniently. The questions covered various aspects of baseball diamonds and facilities, including, equipment, contracts, amenities and infrastructure.

After the survey period, the data collected was compiled and analysed to derive meaningful insights and patterns. The analysis involved data cleaning and preprocessing steps to ensure data quality. Any missing or inconsistent responses were addressed appropriately, and the dataset was prepared for further analysis.

It's important to note that while the survey provides valuable insights, there may be certain limitations to consider.

It is important to consider that the results may contain response bias, as the survey was voluntary not all the holistic data within the community has been collected and gathered. Participation in the survey was dependent on the willingness of regional leagues and clubs to respond. Nevertheless, every effort was made to ensure the validity and reliability of the survey data.



---

## 4. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

In this section, we present an overview of the information of the number of respondents and the distribution of club entries per regional organisation.

It is important to note that this survey was open to all British baseball clubs, irrespective of their affiliation status. We encouraged both affiliated and non-affiliated clubs to participate, as their input contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the current landscape of baseball facilities in the country.

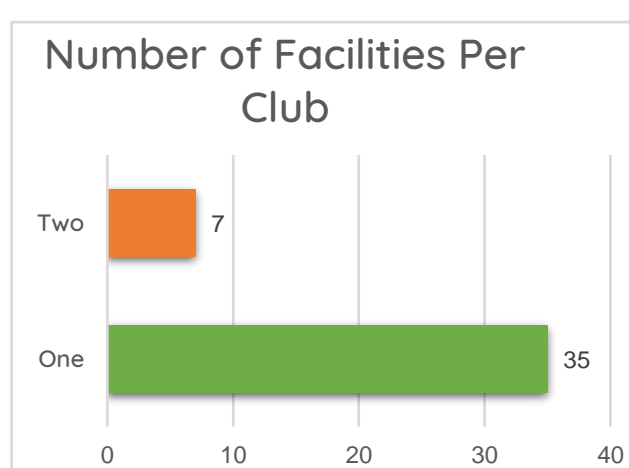
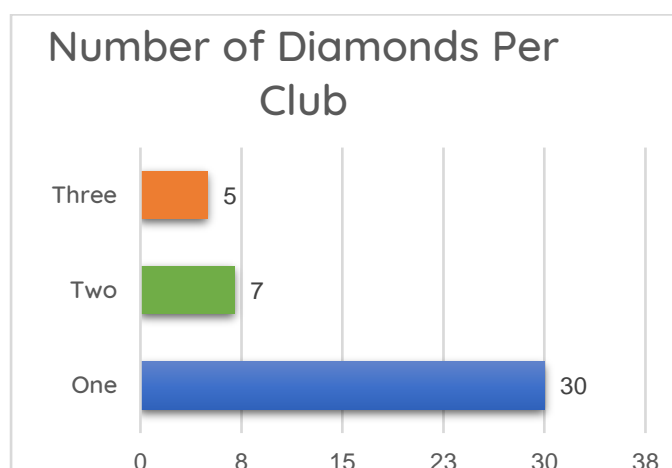
Number of Club Entries per Regional Organisation:

- Baseball Scotland: 2
- British Baseball League: 6
- British Baseball Federation: 15 (Clubs with teams participating in regional leagues were allocated to the regional league)
- East of England Baseball League: 4
- North East Baseball League: 2
- South West and Wales Baseball league: 7
- West Country Baseball League: 0
- West Midlands Baseball League: 6

Farnham Park was not included in the survey and as a result, this will only assess the facilities within British Baseball Clubs.

The survey received responses from a total of 42 British baseball clubs.

There was a total number of 59 diamonds and 42 Facilities across Great Britain in which data was collected from.





---

## 5. FACILITIES ANALYSIS

In this section, we present an analysis of the state of facilities within British Baseball. In total, data was collected from 42 Facilities across Great Britain.

Facilities are defined as separate sites that may or may not include more than one diamond. An example of this definition would be Farnham Park baseball and softball complex in Slough is the Facility with its own individual address and Diamond one would be the specific individual diamonds associated with that facility.

For the purpose of this analysis, we have split up this section into four categories to group together the individual areas of the quantitative survey. These include:

- Changing Rooms and Toilets
- Facility Maintenance
- Storage
- Agreements
- Healthcare
- Car Parking
- Food and Drink



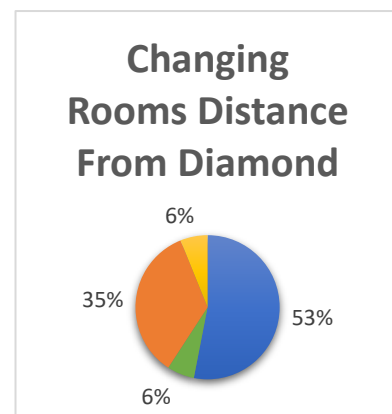
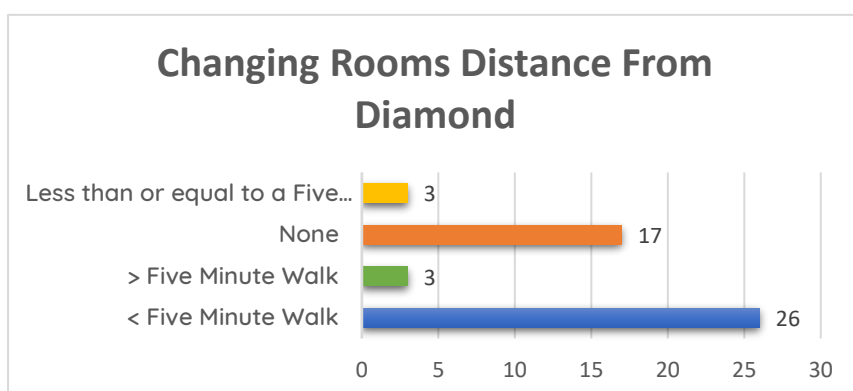
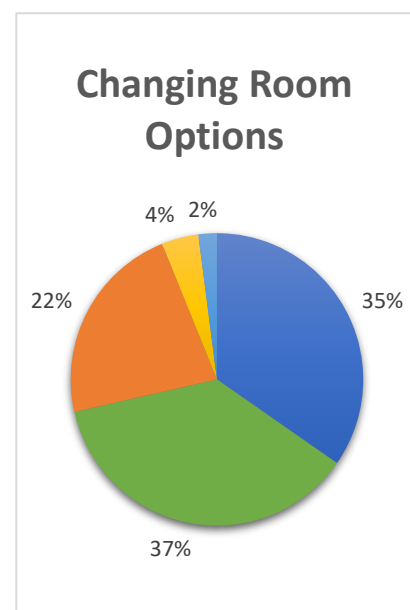
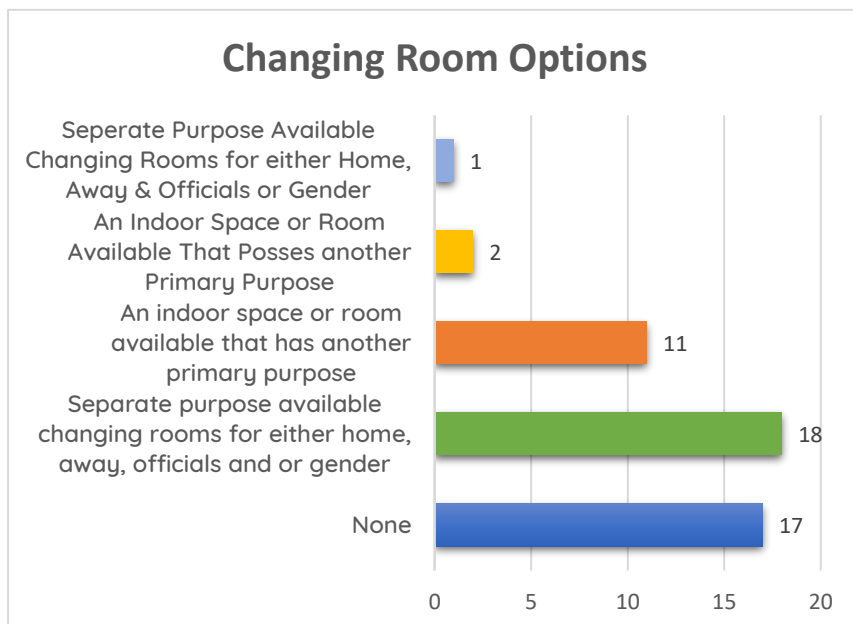
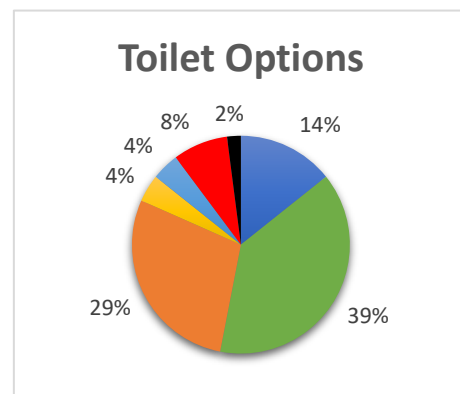
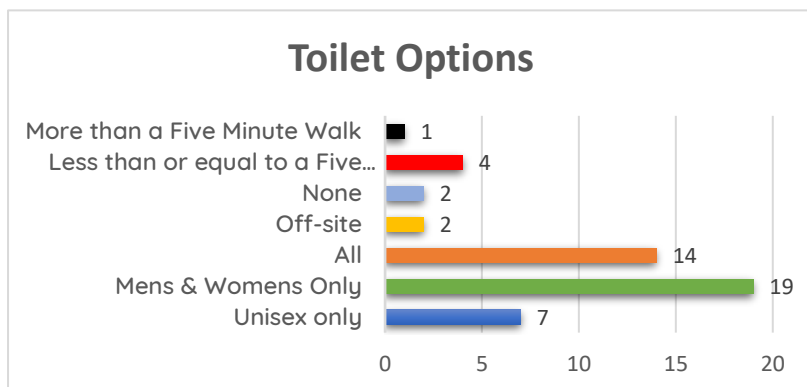


## Changing Rooms and Toilets

The changing rooms and toilet options outline the availability and distance of these facilities within the facilities of British Baseball Clubs.

A majority of facilities possess toilets close to their respective diamonds.

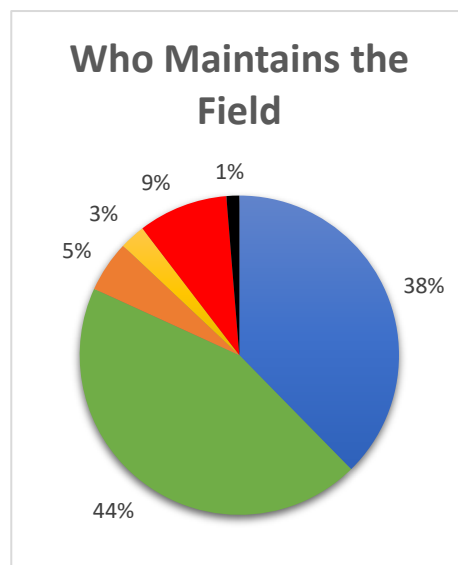
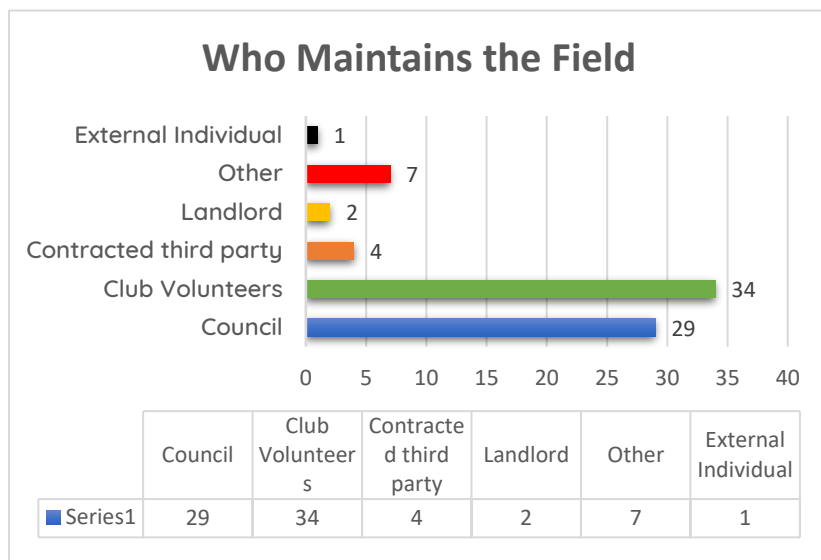
37% of facilities still do not possess any changing room facilities.



## Facility Maintenance

This category analyses how each facility is maintained and prepared.

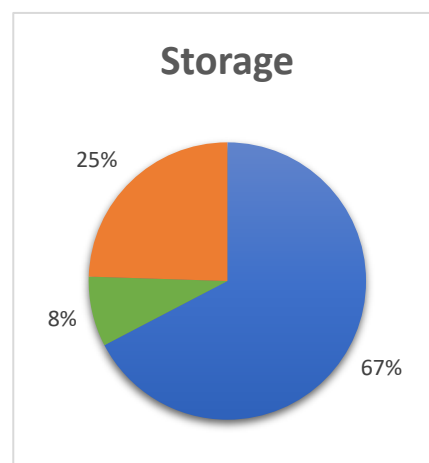
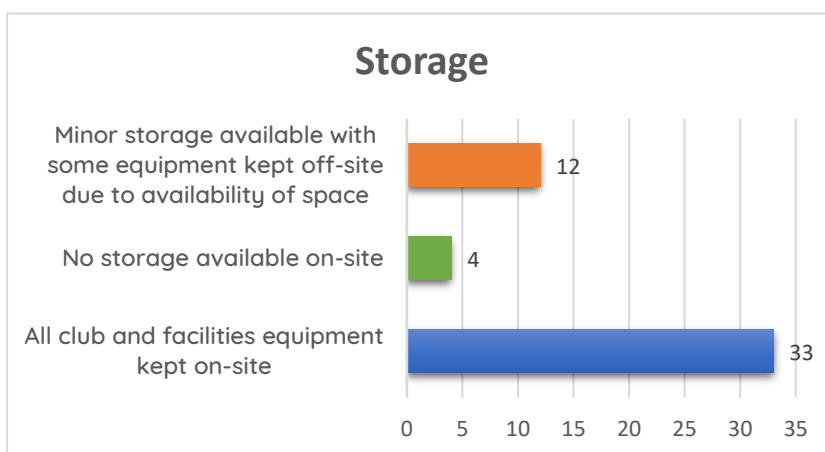
A majority of facilities are maintained by none club volunteers (56%).



## Storage

Storage can be defined as the way in which equipment is stored around the facility.

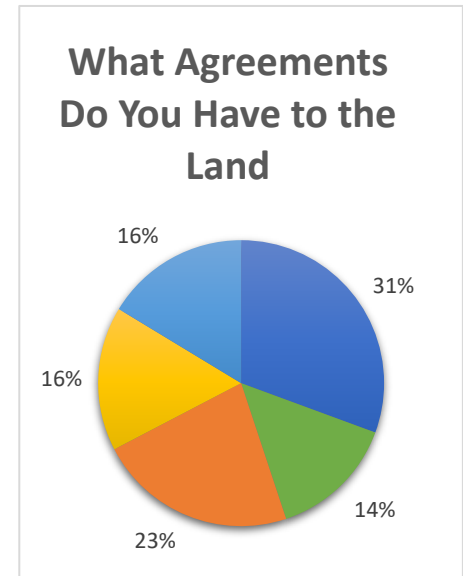
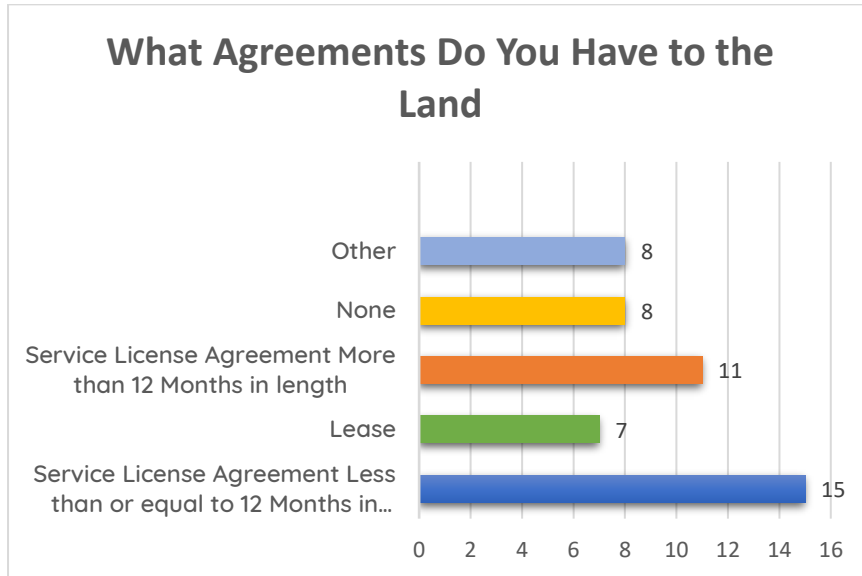
A majority of facilities possess some form of permanent onsite storage (67%).



## Agreements

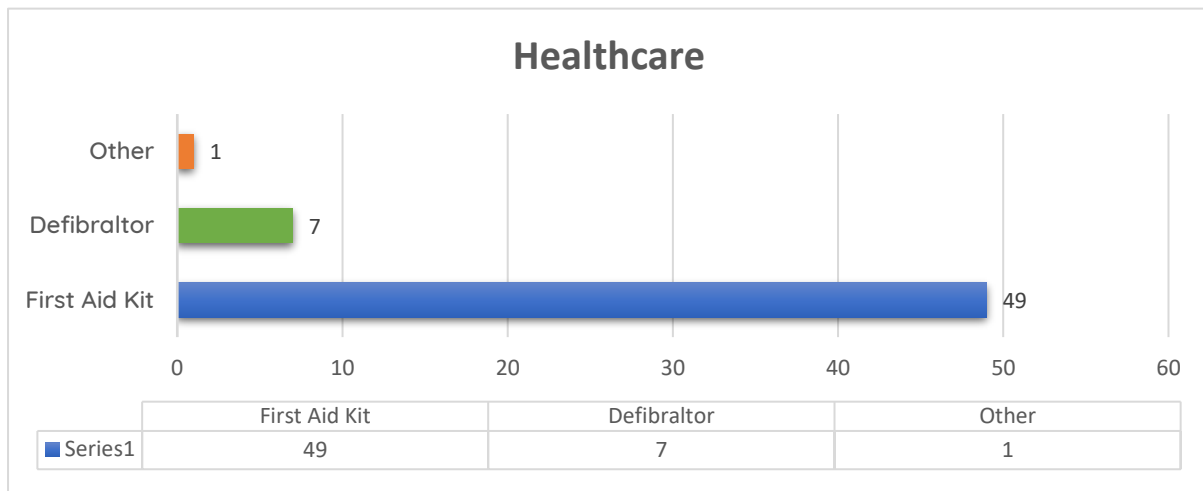
Agreements are the types of contracts that clubs have in place with the providers of the facilities for their use.

There is an even spread across the various options however only a minor number of the agreements are in place longer than 12 months (23%)



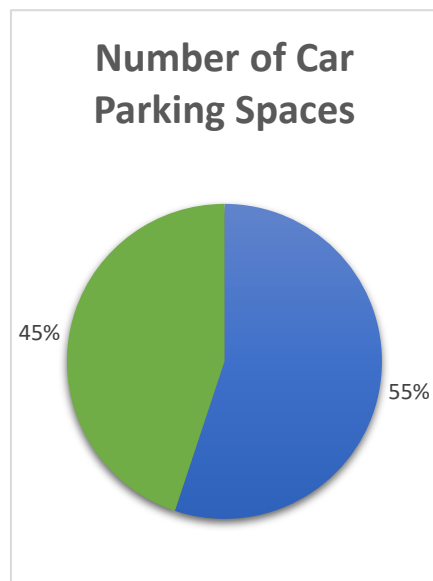
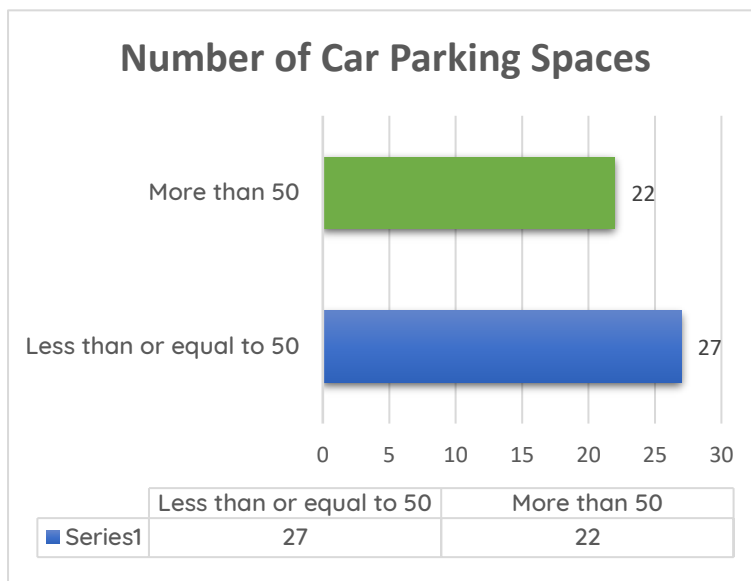
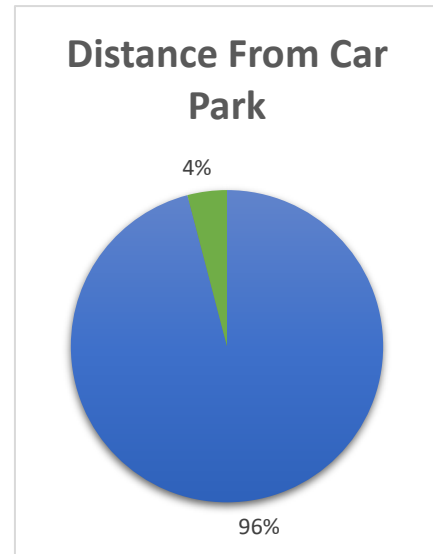
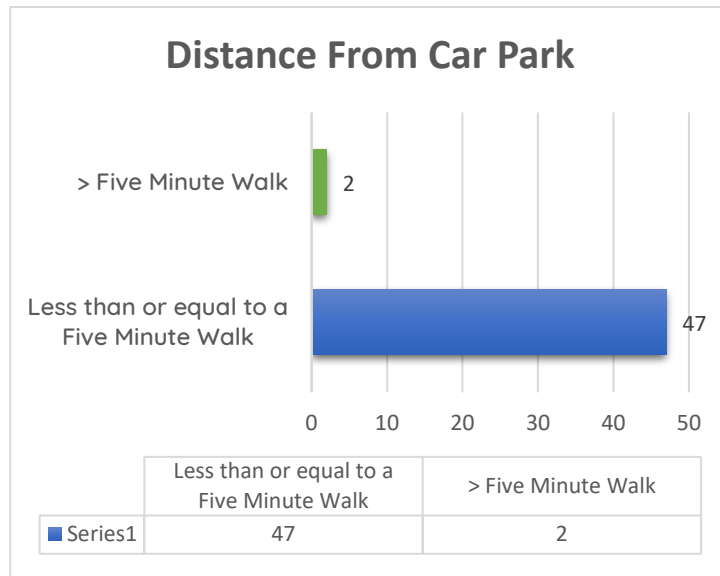
## Healthcare

A 100% of facilities possess first aid capabilities however further healthcare is limited with only seven facilities across the UK that possess access to defibrillators.



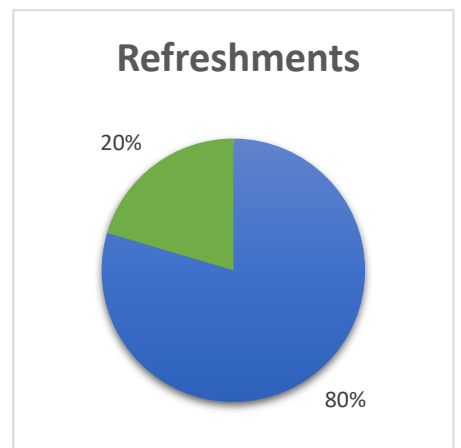
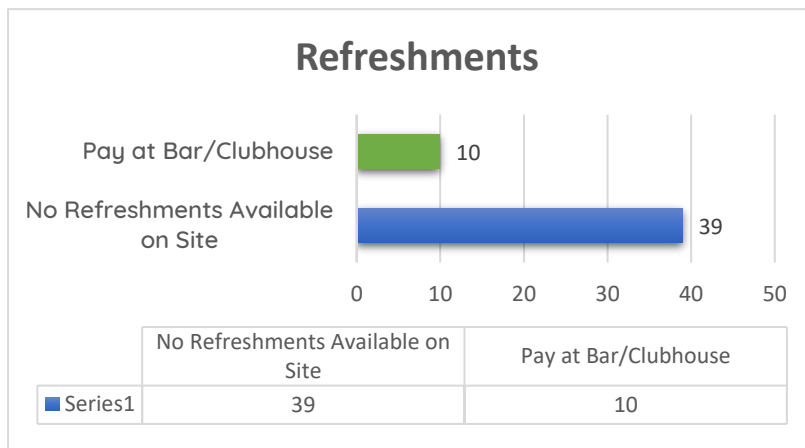
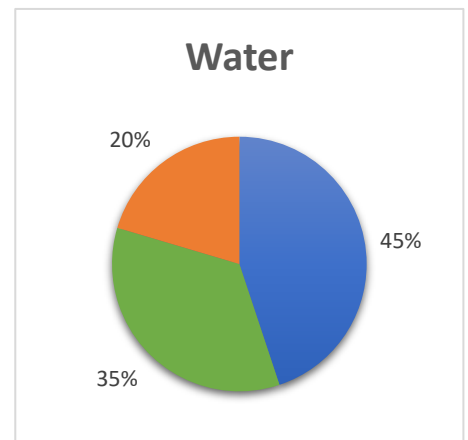
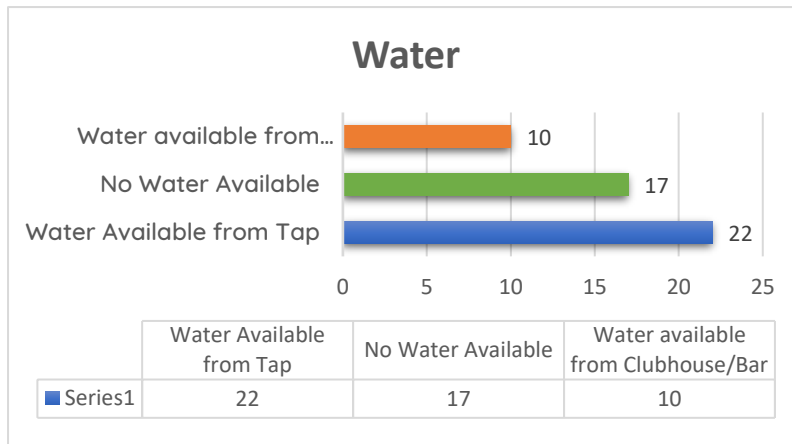
## Car Parking

Car parking is available close to diamonds (96%) however less spaces than 50 are available (45%).



## Food and Drink

The availability of Refreshments and Water is only available in 20% of facilities.



---

## 6. DIAMOND ANALYSIS

In this section, we present an analysis of the state of diamonds within British Baseball. In total, data was collected from 59 diamonds across Great Britain.

Diamonds are defined as the field upon which a game of baseball is played. A facility may contain multiple diamonds that possess the capacity to host multiple games of baseball at any one time.

For the purpose of this analysis, we have split up this section into four categories to group together the individual areas of the quantitative survey. These include:

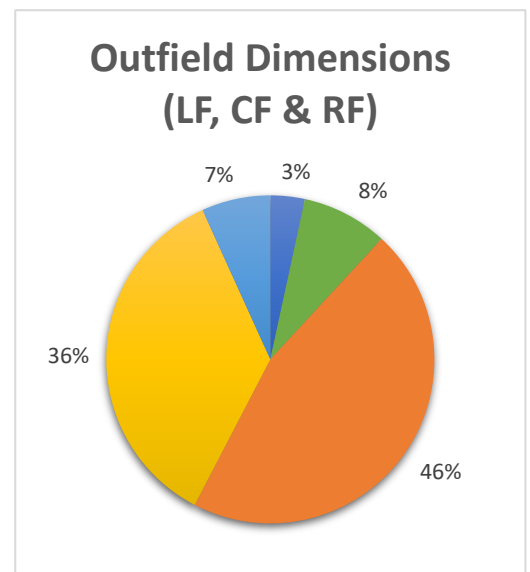
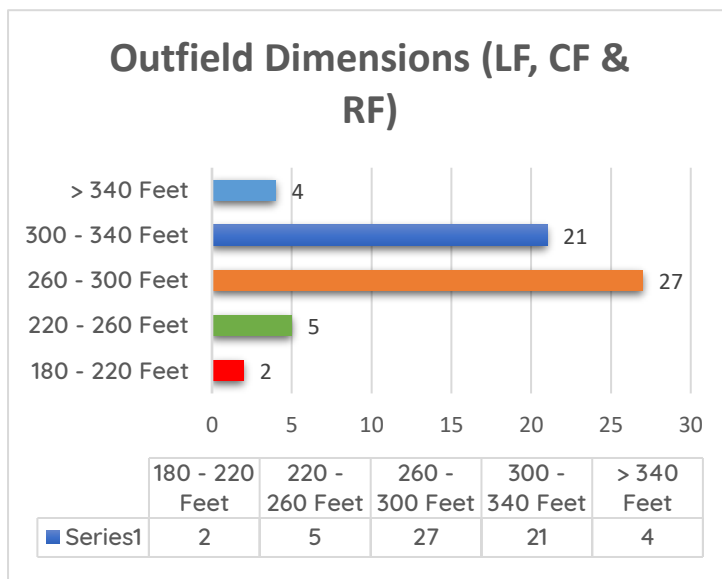
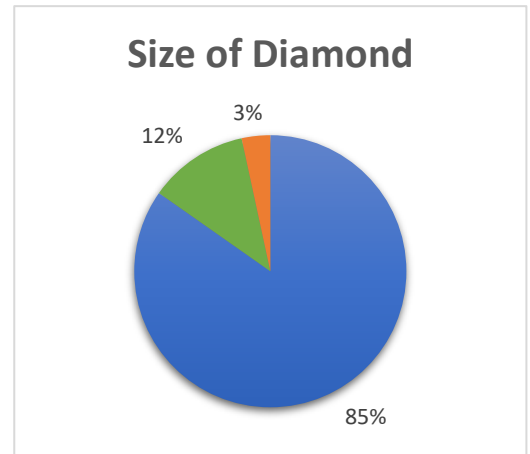
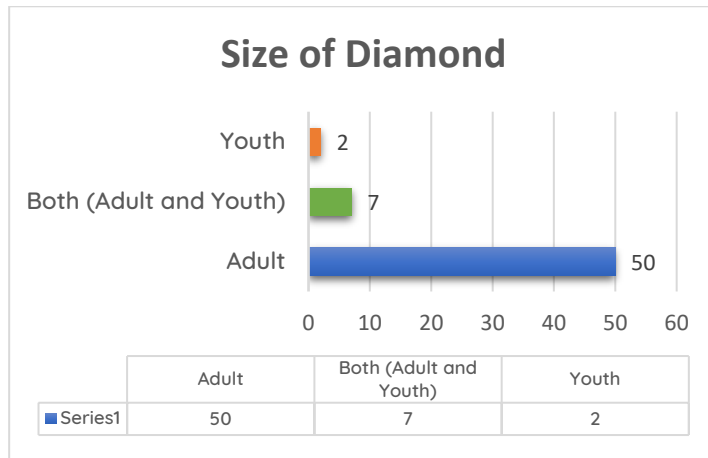
- Diamond Size- Size and type of each diamond
- Permanent Infrastructure - Fixed assets
- Fencing -
- Non-Permanent Equipment & Accessories- None fixed assets & Maintenance and miscellaneous assets



## Diamond Size

The diamond size analyses the type of diamonds that currently exist in Great Britain.

From our sample, we can see that only nine out of 59 diamonds (15%) possess the capabilities to host youth baseball. The majority of play here in Great Britain is at the adult level so limited dedicated youth diamonds is not a surprising insight.



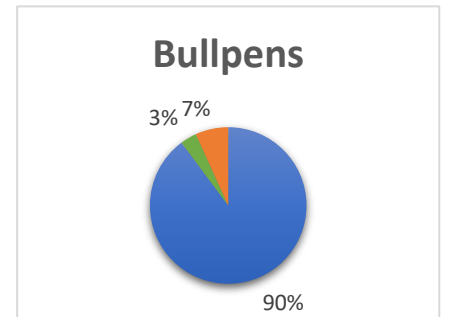
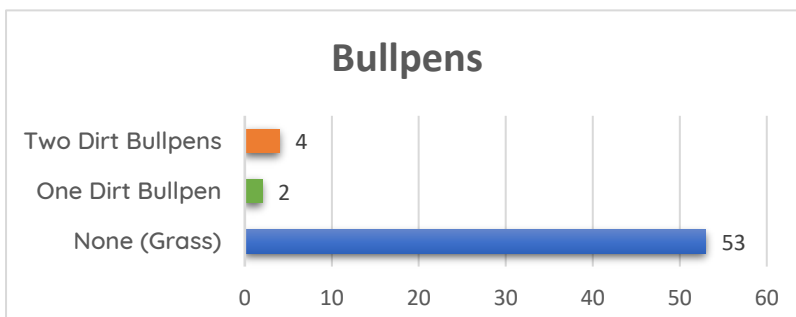
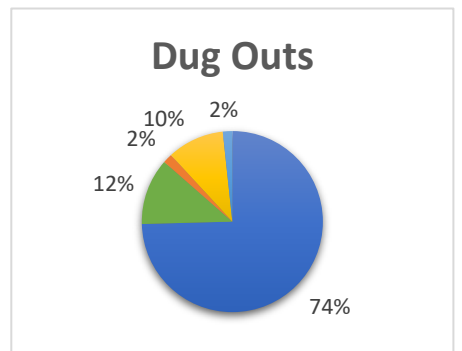
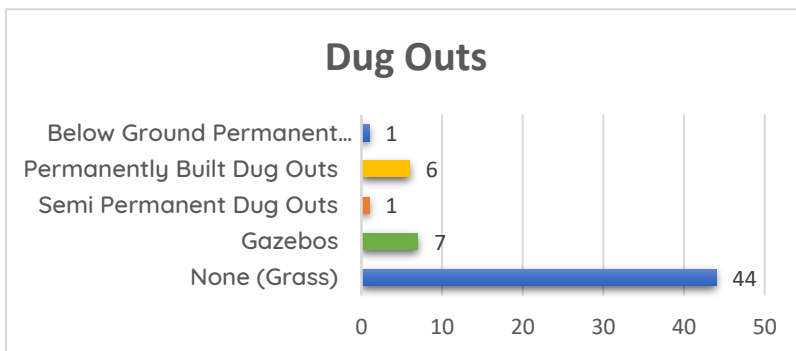
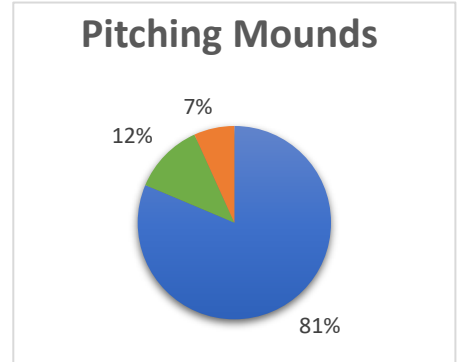
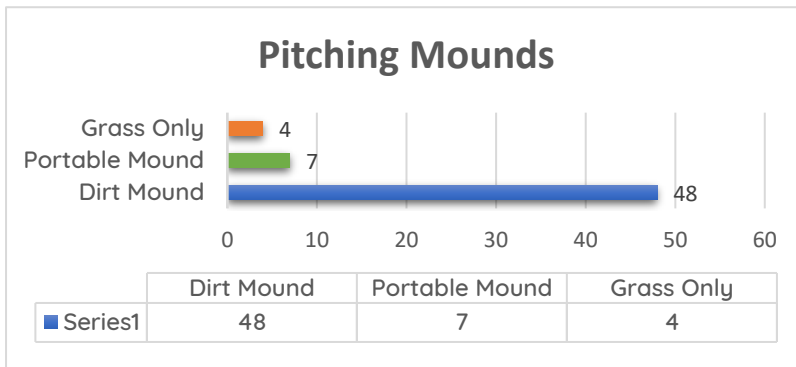
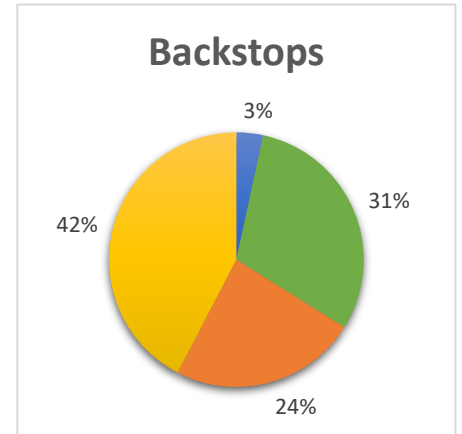
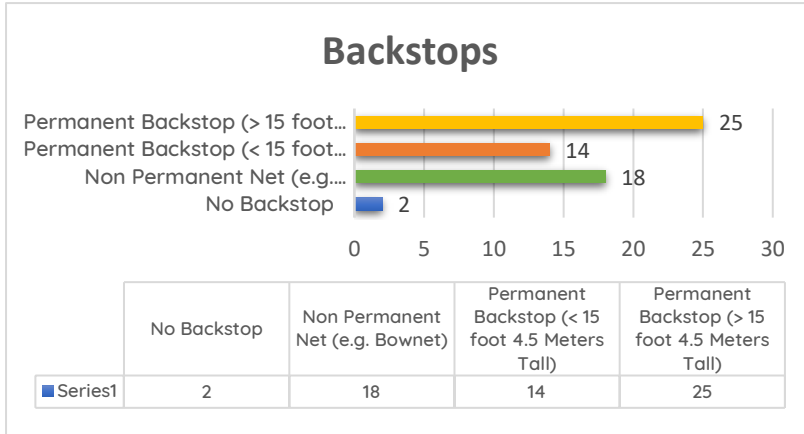


## Permanent Infrastructure

The Permanent Infrastructure category assess the current state of British diamonds relating to Backstops, pitching mounds, dug outs and bullpens. These are assets which cannot be removed from a diamond after they have been installed.

A majority of diamonds possess Backstops (64%) and Dirt Pitching Mounds (81%)

In contrast, a minority of diamonds possess any dug-out facilities (14%) or bullpen (90%).



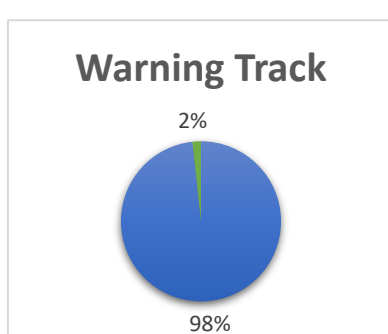
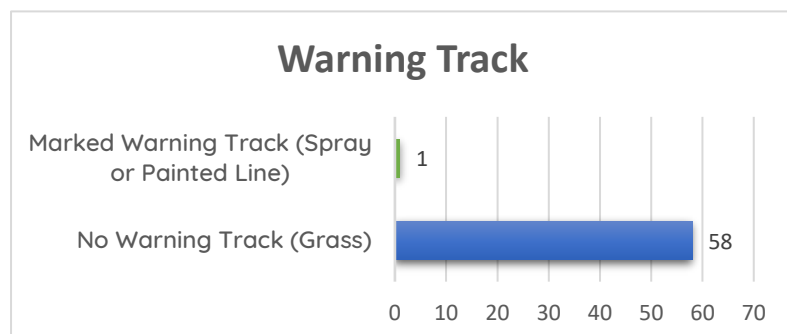
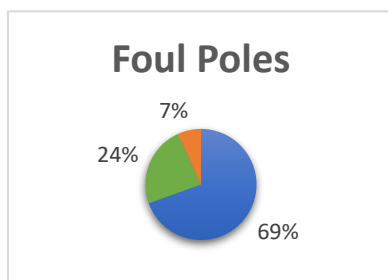
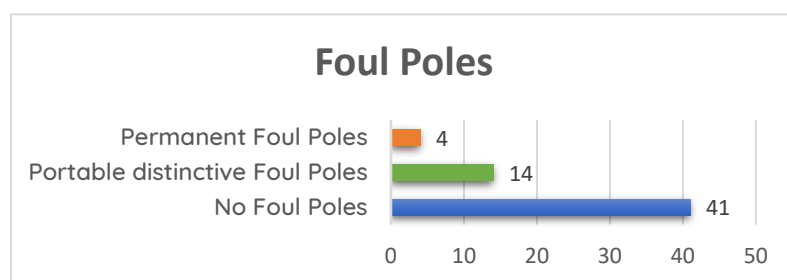
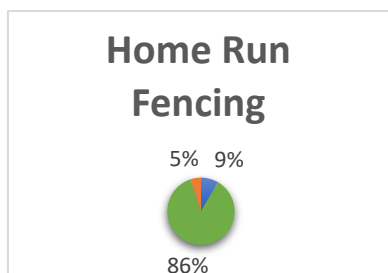
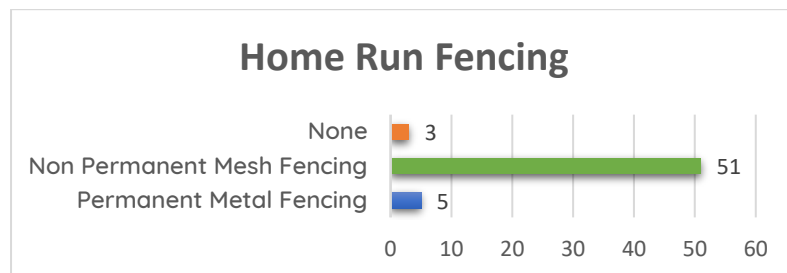
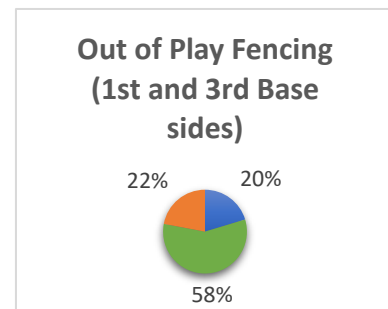
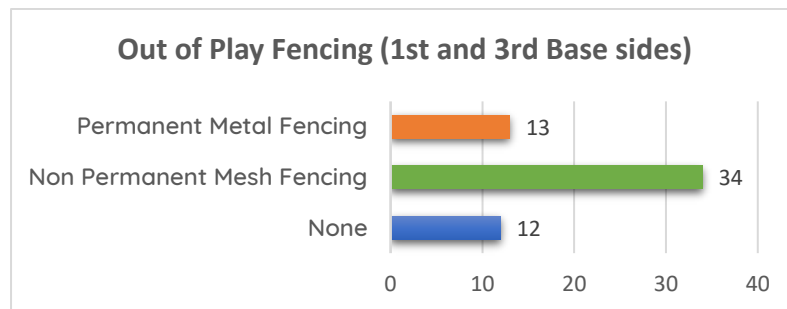
## Fencing

The fence is what marks the outer limit of the outfield portion of the field of play down the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> base lines as well as the outfield.

This category also includes Foul Poles and the Warning Track which are additional enhancements to the quality of the area around the fence.

A majority of diamonds utilise a non-permeant mesh fencing solution (58%). This may be due to a number of barriers including 1) cost or 2) Council restrictions.

This home run fencing is also not enhanced with any form of dirt or sprayed warning track (98%)



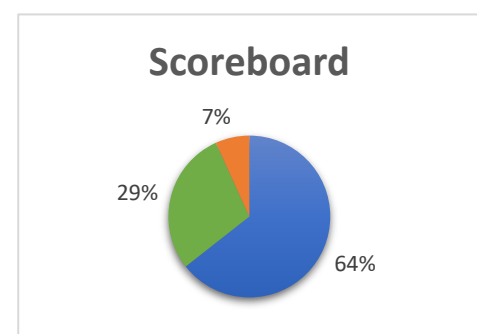
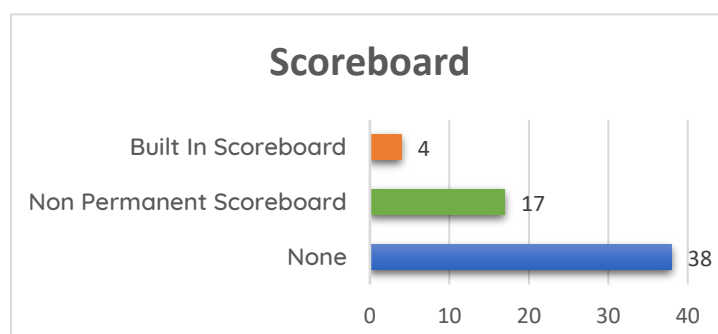
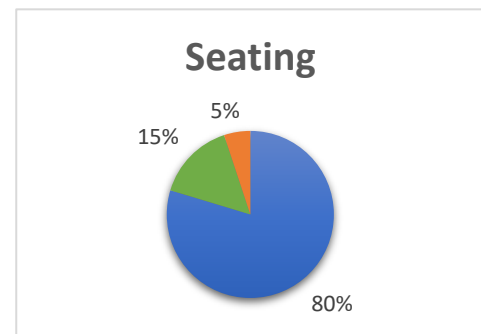
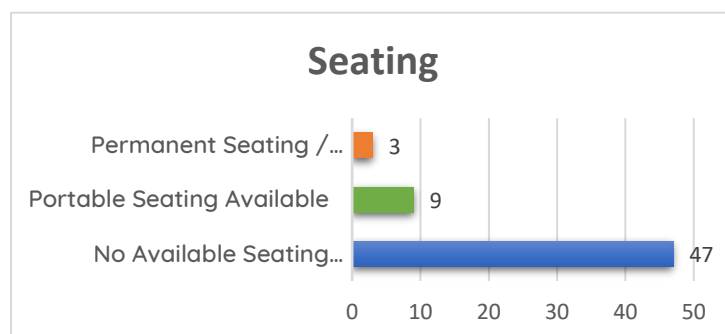
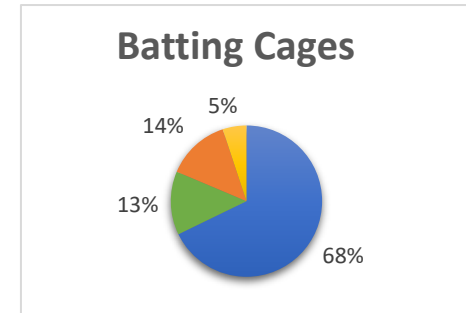
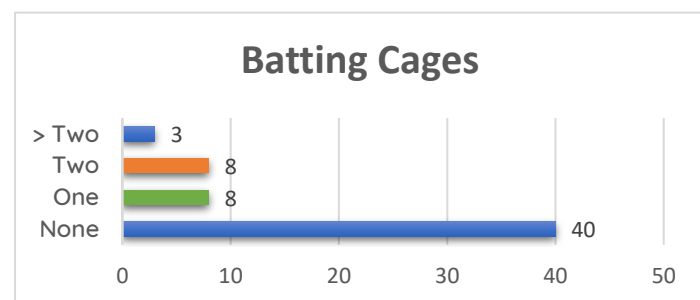
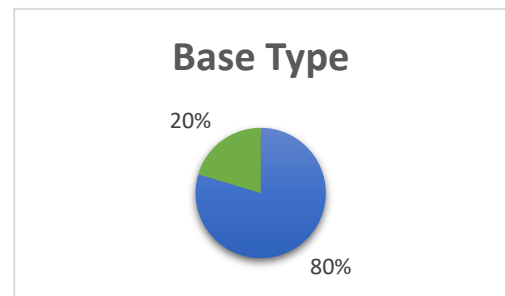
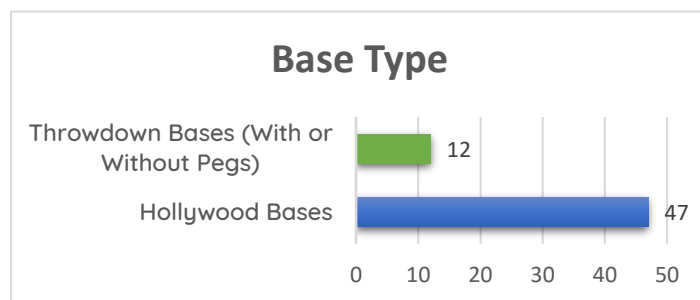
## Non-Permanent Equipment & Accessories

Non-permanent equipment and accessories are described as unfixed elements of infrastructure, including general maintenance and miscellaneous assets.

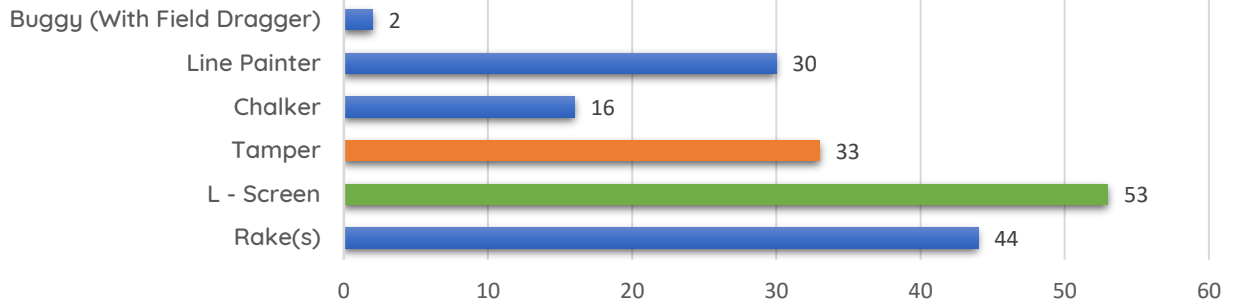
The majority of diamonds, standing at 80%, feature sunk bases. However, additional facilities essential for developing hitters, such as Batting Cages, are absent in the majority of diamonds, accounting for 68%.

Seating and scoreboards for spectators are also lacking in 80% and 64% of cases, respectively. Equipment for maintaining diamonds, including rakes, tamps, and line painting tools, is present in just over 50% of instances.

In a wet climate, over 57% of clubs lack the means to protect diamonds from excess rain.

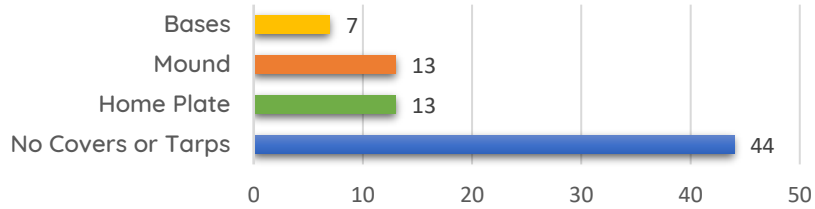


## Field Equipment



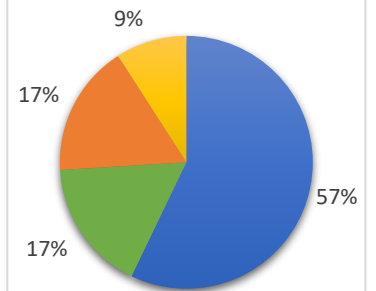
	Rake(s)	L - Screen	Tamper	Chalker	Line Painter	Buggy (With Field Dragger)
Series1	44	53	33	16	30	2

## Covers



	No Covers or Tarps	Home Plate	Mound	Bases
Series1	44	13	13	7

## Covers



---

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

it's evident that several key areas require attention to enhance the overall quality of baseball diamonds and facilities for British baseball clubs. These recommendations are strategically prioritised based on their potential impact and feasibility, taking into account budget constraints and community needs.

### Work with Suppliers:

We can strategically target a number of key suppliers that will be able to provide more accessibility to and better options relating to specifically 1) All weather covers (57% with nothing) 2) Youth infrastructure (two dedicated youth diamonds) 3) Outfield fencing (only 9% with none construction mesh fencing).

### Funding for Youth Facilities:

Allocate funds specifically for youth facilities, recognising the crucial gap that currently exists that is not facilitating youth participation (two dedicated youth diamonds).

### Land Access Agreements:

There is a clear lack of access to available and reliable land. A majority of club exists on year-to-year contract (47% have no security on the land). Explore and implement strategies to support clubs in negotiations with councils to secure access to land with long-term potential. This may involve advocating for supportive policies or providing resources to facilitate mutually beneficial agreements.

### Set Facility Standards:

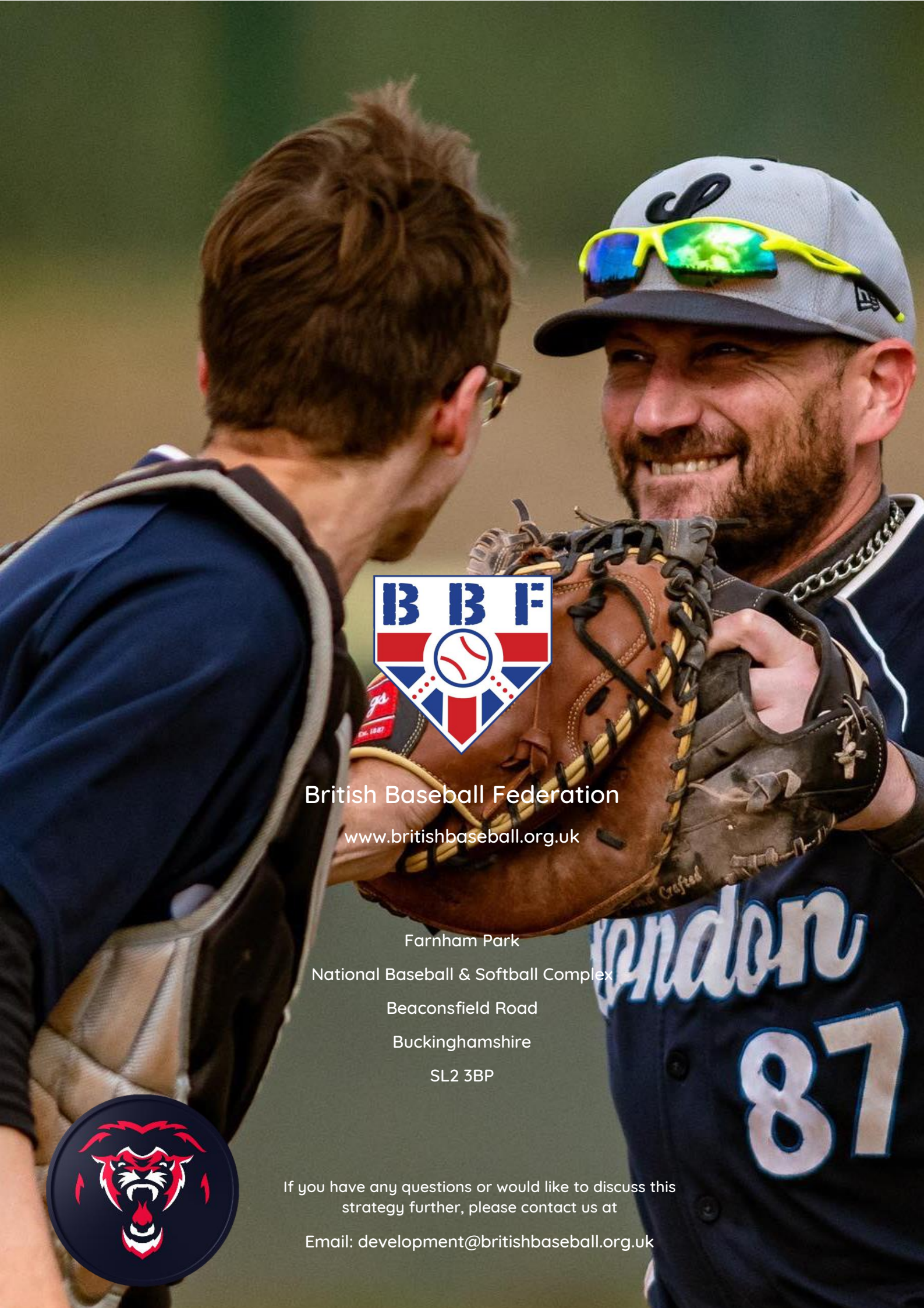
Establish and enforce standardised facility guidelines at the highest levels. This ensures that all baseball diamonds meet a certain quality benchmark, enhancing the overall experience for players and spectators alike. Consistent standards contribute to the professionalism and attractiveness of the sport.

### Saturday Game Hosting:

Maximise the utilisation of available diamonds by encouraging clubs to host games on Saturdays. This simple adjustment has the potential to double the number of available diamonds for games, providing more opportunities for matches and increasing overall engagement.







British Baseball Federation

[www.britishbaseball.org.uk](http://www.britishbaseball.org.uk)

Farnham Park

National Baseball & Softball Complex

Beaconsfield Road

Buckinghamshire

SL2 3BP



If you have any questions or would like to discuss this strategy further, please contact us at

Email: [development@britishbaseball.org.uk](mailto:development@britishbaseball.org.uk)