

Glasgow Rens Basketball Club

Mission, Values and Vision

Our Mission

Our mission centers around the belief that every young person deserves access to experiences and opportunities that change their lives for the better—regardless of their socio-economic status, ethnicity or other factors that often contribute to inequity or prejudice. We believe that basketball has immense potential to transform the lives of young people and that every individual's life is enhanced when relationships are built across a variety of cultures.

With a commitment to serve others using basketball as the vehicle, we look to improve society through the actions of the individual---our coaches and staff, parents, and young people—as they take what they learn at Glasgow Rens and make a positive impact on the world.

We are committed to providing a safe, positive and nourishing environment where our young people and coaches are afforded the opportunity to develop strength of character, build self-esteem and realise personal development while building positive relationships, camaraderie and sense of belonging.

Our Culture and Values

Young people are at the heart of Glasgow Rens. We are passionate about how the game of basketball can be instrumental in developing people. We build confidence and resilience, skills and aspirations—on and off the court-- and instill values that will serve our young people as they move forward.

Our young people are seasoned in a competitive environment with skills that apply beyond the game of basketball. They learn life skills essential to developing successful habits such as:

- Sacrificing for a universal goal
- Working with people from different backgrounds and cultures
- The value of hard work
- Competing in a respectful manner

We are proud to have a culture centered around four values:

- Inclusivity
- Community
- Responsibility
- Self-actualisation (striving to be the best version of oneself)

Legacy

The Rens identity is a club who plays exciting basketball and gives an opportunity to develop and compete to young people from many different ethnic backgrounds.

The Early Years

Back in 2000, youth basketball in Glasgow was at an all-time low. The two main clubs, Storm and City, did not have the coaching or playing resources to compete at National League level. The solution put forward was a joint entry to be backed by the Glasgow Basketball Development Group.

A coach/organisational team of Mick McKechnie and John Campbell was put in place, and playing numbers were increased from the Hillhead High school team. The club entered an U16 team in 2000-01. The following season, an U18 team was added and the group was formerly recognised as Glasgow Rens.

After four seasons of positive development, some success was achieved in 2004 with the U16 team reaching the Scottish Cup final. The same group of players later went on to win both the U18 National League and Scottish Cup. By that point, the Rens were firmly placed as a competitive club at the highest level of youth basketball.

Cuckoo Joins Rens

In 2009 the prospects for Rens merged with a new local league club in the area, Cuckoo. This brought on board two enthusiastic coaches, Ahid Ojaghi who served as a Director on the basketballscotland Board and Joshua Tackie who brought nine years professional playing experience and over 20 years of coaching along with some talented new players.

Cuckoo brought to Rens a formal process of marrying academic achievement with sporting performance which included formal mentoring for performance players, academic tuition and emphasis on life skills. Rens coaching staff became instrumental in building personal relationships with players extending to family members laying the foundation for what became the Rens Community.

During the Covid lockdown, Rens were a key contributor to the health and wellbeing of the youth in the community. Our coaches ran outdoor sessions, and these attracted many new players and laid some of the foundation for the success that has come to the Rens in the two years since.

The Rens continue to achieve at the highest level of basketball. In recent years, the U18 National League team reached the Scottish Cup final in back-to-back years winning in

2021. Rens have had numerous players select for Scotland and currently have the only male Scottish player selected for Great Britain.

Alongside performance success, Glasgow Rens employs a policy of not turning away any player based on their ability to pay fees or their skill level. Each age group is multi-tiered allowing us to provide appropriate levels competition and coaching regardless of ability. The Rens' all-inclusive policy extends to community engagement with a current coaching presence within six secondary schools and over 25 primary schools.

In a sport popular with many different cultures, Glasgow Rens stands out in Scotland as the most ethnically diverse club boasting over 25 different nationalities on the National League teams alone and 197 members registered.

Our Vision

More vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in society are attracted to basketball, and basketball is consistently more impactful on health and well-being compared to other sports (Sport England Active Lives, State of Life). Basketball has a nationally strong representation of diversity in the sport at all levels.

Glasgow Rens is committed to engaging with the underserved youth in Glasgow and launching new offers to engage young people from diverse backgrounds. We are looking to grow at both the performance and community engagement level.

Create a student-athlete program for National League players

Rens have had talented players go on to compete at all levels. While supporting dreams to play at the highest level, Rens have the commitment to holistic development ensuring that athletic dreams do not hinder academic and social progress. As a result, we plan to offer players support encompassing academic tutoring, life skills and planning, as well as physical and skill-based training.

The program will design individual schedules to encourage players to develop in all areas. This includes time management of school, homework, tutoring, exam preparation, course work, individual and team training and games.

Each student-athlete will receive mentoring within their schedules and consistent review and feedback sessions. Further support will be offered in creating a secondary pathway to success outside of sport.

Coach Joshua Tackie would lead the student-athlete program as he successfully led a similar program in North London. We currently have a partnership with the

University of Glasgow program, Rising Stars, which offers access to academic tutors experienced in a similar program.

Glasgow Rens Club requires the following to make the student-athlete program successful:

- Financial means to support mentors
- Financial means to employ academic tutors

Expansion of competitive offering to younger players and girls

Due to the level of interest, we would like to offer additional sessions specifically aimed at under-provisioned groups.

Currently we have an U12s session that is attended by youth from age 8 leading to disparity in skill level due to the large age range. We frequently have parents contact us looking for basketball sessions for children from age five for which we are unable to provide. Likewise, while our intramural sessions are open to any gender we are unable to provide specific sessions for girls.

Within these new sessions, we plan on providing development at an intramural, local league and national level.

Glasgow Rens Club requires the following to successfully expand its offering:

- Reliable access to facilities
- Financial means for nets and equipment
- Financial means for coaches' training and qualifications

Expansion of player development camps

Glasgow Rens Club wants to offer player development camps during school holidays and summer months for players at all levels and abilities.

Due to the socio-economic profile of Glasgow Rens families, the Club requires support to provide players with opportunities regardless of means. Most of our players are priced out of the player development camps throughout Scotland, thus we want to offer valuable opportunities to all our families.

The proposed plan for Summer Camps includes offering of inspirational guest coaches who not only share their basketball story but also life lessons.

Glasgow Rens Club requires the following to successfully provide player development camps:

- Reliable access to facilities
- Financial means for lets and equipment
- Financial means towards coaches' expenses
- Financial means to offset cost to low-income families

Expansion of community engagement

While Glasgow Rens currently has a presence within the local community, we want to expand the engagement levels. Basketball is the first-choice sport for many young refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland.

We currently provide weekly sessions for secondary schools and have previously provided this for primary schools. We have had numerous requests from local groups to provide sessions but are unable to fulfil the demand due to lack of coaching availability. Some requests have come from primary schools, secondary schools and refugee support groups.

Our goal is to employ a community outreach coach to fulfil this demand.

Along with the above offering, we want to resurrect a social club centred around basketball and music previously run by one of our coaches, Greta Montgomery. We would look to mirror the success of her free Twilight Basketball session that attracted up to 60 youth on a Friday night, some coming for basketball and others coming for the social interaction. The club would target young people at-risk providing an attractive setting which would encourage healthy participation.

Glasgow Rens Club requires the following to successfully expand community engagement:

- Reliable access to facilities
- Financial means for community outreach coach
- Financial means for lets and equipment
- Financial means to offset cost to low-income families

Glasgow Rens Community Hub

One of the biggest challenges Glasgow Rens faces is provision for facilities. We are currently homed in Shawlands Academy in the southside of Glasgow.

We have challenges surrounding availability throughout the week. Additionally, in exam periods and due to short-notice school events, we are forced to either cancel sessions or find other arrangements at a high financial cost.

We seek to mirror other clubs with access to their own facilities. Boroughmuir Blaze obtained their own facilities which they now manage for their club and community. Dunfermline Reign and Dundee Madsons partnered with their home school and have unlimited access to the gym on the weekends.

Glasgow Rens Club requires the following to obtain their own community hub:

- First choice is our own club facilities based in Glasgow southside with strong transport links
- Alternatively, venue that allows continuous club access in evenings and weekends