



# Gloucestershire Cricket Foundation

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## **CHAIR REPORT for Annual General Meeting – Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

It's been another year of terrific achievement and performance for the Gloucestershire Cricket Foundation and I'm proud to present my Chair's Report for the year ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

Our mantra is to 'put more bats and balls' into people's hands and in the past twelve months, we have significantly improved lives through the power of cricket. We have worked with old and new friends across our diverse community in Gloucestershire, Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

The Gloucestershire Cricket Foundation Annual Report, included in the papers for the AGM, has more detail.

These are the highlights:

- ECB has recognised that the GCF is a leading organisation in more areas than any other county. We are the first organisation to excel in six key performance areas, Equity Diversity & Inclusion, Governance, Cricket Workforce, Women and Girls Participation, Facilities and Disability Pathway. The GCF is a trailblazing organisation and we have set a high bar for others to aspire to.
- The National Programmes (All-Stars & Dynamos) ranked 4th in young female sign-ups, also 4th overall in the country, with a total of 4,562 children registered. This is a fantastic achievement when the GCF is benchmarked against some of the larger counties.
- The GCF has provided cricket activities to young people from low socio-economic backgrounds, offering opportunities they might not normally have.
- Our work has reached around 22,000 children in approximately 240 state primary, secondary, and SEND schools, in 4,600 hours of sessions.
- We have embraced the ECB's Cricket Collective ideals aimed at volunteers. And our locally developed Get into Cricket campaign has targeted 14 -18-year-olds to attract new volunteers to our game.
- We have worked to improve access to cricket in urban areas and have engaged with people who do not normally have access to cricket. We have targeted new venues the ACE campaign (Afro-Caribbean Engagement) has expanded to provide activities beyond the city of Bristol.

- In the community, GCF has increased Walking Cricket Hubs to 6, we have one additional Super 1's hub and maintained Chance to Shine Street projects. Wicketz grew to eight weekly hubs. Once again GCF is extremely grateful to a wide set of funding partners who make this work possible.
- GCF continues to place a high focus on club development and support to the 184 affiliated clubs in the county. Ensuring clubs provide a safe and sustainable environment is achieved through the ECB Clubmark Accreditation process, where safeguarding of young and vulnerable people is of high priority.
- We thank all our funding partners for their support ensuring we can deliver a vast array of programmes.

This year, the Women's Pathway migrated to the County Club in line with the ECB national strategy on women's cricket. The growth of the women and girls game has been a highly successful area of GCF activity historically and the Foundation looks forward to providing more opportunities for the women's game to grow.

Looking forward, the GCF has some significant pieces of work to be undertaken in the new business year. The creation of the Inspiring Gloucestershire Strategy will replace the current County Partnership Agreement (CPA 1.0). This will set out our objectives for the next five years and provide the framework for our work. We appreciate the input we've had from everybody across the cricket community and I hope you will be able to support our aims and goals.

GCF has been the first organisation to attain ECB Gold Standard Accreditation which recognises the high standards of governance in our organisation. This award enables us to access funding from the ECB's Game Changer Fund this spring. This will provide the financial resources to recruit staff and create additional programmes, particularly in our urban communities as we are deemed ready to be invested in.

The sale of the Hundred will potentially help to fund expansion in the grassroots game and give us more power to make a difference in the recreational game. The ECB is likely to ring-fence some of the revenue from The Hundred to safeguard the national game post-2029 when current national media contracts end. But we may also see funding for capital projects such as the construction of the Cricket Domes, as demonstrated by Yorkshire's Bradford Park Avenue project.

You can be assured that the GCF, with its strong position in performance and governance, will fight for a share of this funding to improve grassroots cricket across our area.

We are fortunate to have a passionate team of GCF staff supported by an active board of trustees who check, challenge, and support the organisation in many ways.

In the past year, we have seen some of our people move on to progress their careers within the game and we have welcomed new faces who have brought their own enthusiasm and fresh ideas. We thank everyone who has worked with us this year.

One item of business to be transacted at the Annual General Meeting is the election and/or re-election of Trustees.

Sybil Ruscoe and Pete Boorman wish to continue in their roles after their present terms as Trustees conclude. They are thanked for their input and support.

Andy Parsons, who has been invaluable in our journey to becoming a charity in 2021, is retiring from the board. However, Andy wishes to remain in a co-opted capacity and his expertise in the field of Grants and Charity will have a significant role to play in the future direction of the Foundation.

Finally, Phil Carter, Finance Director has taken the decision to stand aside. This comes after 29 years of fantastic service to recreational cricket in Gloucestershire. Phil has led our financial work from the start of the Gloucestershire Cricket Board and through our journey to becoming a charity when he mastered an entirely new method of running our accounts. He has seen the organisation grow enormously in that time and he has been at the heart of our development. It could not have happened without Phil.

We all owe Phil a huge debt of gratitude. His good humour, expertise, and support in all financial matters is deeply valued by all of us. The fact that the GCF financial position is in a healthy state is down to Phil's leadership and his role in the Finance, Risk & Governance Group.

Thank you for your service, Phil.

The Annual General Meeting will therefore look to appoint Rich Bernard as our new Finance Director. We look forward to working with Rich.

Finally, on behalf of the Gloucestershire Cricket Foundation, I would like to thank all of you for your commitment and support to the organisation. We appreciate your support. The GCF is committed to supporting club development, the Women's & Girls' game, coaches, leagues, officials and schools under our banner of **'Good for Cricket - Cricket for Good'**. Our sincere hope is to improve people's lives through the power of cricket and with new financial opportunities we aim to reach out to even more people in the diverse communities we serve – from village green to inner city.

As the start of the 2025 season approaches, I as chair and on behalf of the GCF, wish everyone involved in the game a successful, safe and enjoyable cricket season.