



England and Wales Cricket Board - Case Study - The achievement of ECB Clubmark & the difference it made Demonstrating Best Practice and Impact within Community Cricket Development

Harefield Cricket Club

Geographic Details

County Cricket Board	Middlesex
County Sports Partnership	London - West
District Development Group(s)	Hillingdon
Local Education Authority	Hillingdon
Project Start Date	July 2005
Project Completion Date	February 2006
Funding Streams	Middlesex Cricket Board Centenary Youth Trust MCB Facilities Development Fund for Focus Clubs, Awards For All, Lotteries Fund
Location (Inner-city/Urban/Rural)	Rural
Clubmark Status	Accredited
Author and Title	Steve Finch, Cricket Development Manager and Child Welfare Officer, Harefield CC, Middlesex
Date	6th July 2006

Quantitative and Qualitative Detail

Background

Even though Harefield CC had, and still has, a thriving adult cricket membership, the Colts section had been ticking along for a few years with no real aims or sense of purpose with regard to youth development or good practice.

Following a telephone conversation between David Holland (MCB Development Secretary) and myself, with regard to the progression of our Colts' section, a meeting was arranged at Lord's where the possibilities of our club striving to achieve ECB Clubmark accreditation were explained. We collected an ECB Clubmark Resource Pack and Evidence File, and MCB explained in a very positive manner the efforts required and the ways to achieve our goal, stressing that the achievement of ECB Clubmark Accreditation would be dependent upon the amount of time, effort and project management skills that we could generate within our club. I left the meeting with a very positive attitude.

Aims and Objectives

- To take on board all ECB Clubmark objectives, encourage cricketing members and officials to change their attitudes with regard to youth cricket, and in doing so encourage new and existing junior members and their parents to realise the benefits of belonging to a safe, professional and caring cricket club
- To encourage cricketing members to enrol on UKCC level 2 coaching courses and existing qualified coaches to attend Child Protection and First Aid courses
- To develop relationships with local primary and secondary schools and provide qualified coaches for after school coaching sessions

Main achievements to date

- Personal satisfaction from developing the Evidence File, and realising the significance of combining our existing rules, regulations and policies with the Evidence File templates, to develop our club to a standard that has had a hugely positive impact on attitudes throughout the entire club membership
- MCB promoted our club to Focus Club status in February 2006
- Achieved ECB Clubmark Accreditation May 2006
- Co-founder of Hillingdon Youth Cricket Alliance in April 2006, providing fully qualified coaches in primary schools through-out the borough, to further develop and encourage children with a desire to play cricket
- New net practice area laid in May 2006

Main partners involved

- Middlesex Cricket Board
- Hillingdon Sports Council
- Hillingdon Education Authority
- Harefield Academy

Key factors for good practice

- Believe in what you are setting out to achieve
- Take on board the advice of your County Cricket Board; the support and advice that I received from MCB was immeasurable
- Relay your enthusiasm to others in your club; it tends to instil a belief in what you are trying to achieve
- Keep parents and children informed of the way the club has adapted to new attitudes and policies
- Keep Notice Boards updated

What is still to be achieved?

- To increase the number of qualified coaches and volunteers within our club to accommodate the growing number of new junior players
- Further develop relationships with local primary schools to sustain objectives currently in place
- Further develop already forged links with the Harefield Sports Academy to identify and encourage cricketing skills and potential Freddie Flintoffs
- To nurture and integrate the talents of developing young cricketers into senior cricket

What mechanisms are in place to ensure sustainability?

- Continued support from MCB to ensure ECB Clubmark directives are kept up to spec
- Regular contact with MCB to secure places on coaching courses for potential new coaches
- Development of a programme to introduce coaching facilities to Harefield Sports Academy from September 2006, and build on the existing programme already in place in primary schools
- Continuity of the junior coaching programme already in place at Harefield CC

Monitoring and Evaluation process

- Annual update of all colts records on which to base team and age group selection
- Regular newsletter and noticeboard updates for junior member's information and feedback
- Coaches' feedback with regard to ability and progress, to establish suitability for team selection
- Feedback from schools coaching visits

Headline Figures and Statistics

- 1 Increase in qualified Coaches from 2 in 2005 to 4 in 2006
- 2 Club junior members (U10 to U17) increased from 67 in April 2005 to 88 in April 2006
- 3 Club junior members U9 increased from 2 in June 2005 to 39 in June 2006
- 4 Coaching sessions for junior members increased from 1 per week in 2005 to 3 per week in 2006 Parent volunteers increased from 1 in 2005 to 6 in 2006

Article written by Steve Finch, published in 'MCB Scorecard', magazine of the Middlesex Cricket Board, Issue 16, Spring 2006

Following a telephone conversation between David Holland and myself during last cricket season, with regard to the progression of Harefield Cricket Clubs' colts section, my colleague Paul Jennings and I attended a meeting during July, with David, at Lord's Cricket Ground, to discuss the possibilities of our club striving to achieve Clubmark accreditation. David issued to us a Clubmark Resource Pack and Evidence File and explained to us the efforts required and the way in which to achieve our goal in a very positive manner, explaining to us that, the achievement of Clubmark accreditation would be dependent upon the amount of time, effort and project management skills that we could generate within our club. We left the meeting with a very positive attitude.

During the next few months I sat at my computer and studied the documentation and templates that came with the Clubmark Resource Pack, which were enormously helpful and allowed me to develop a great deal of the forms, policies etc required for our Evidence File. Gradually, as I produced more and more of the evidence required, combining the templates with existing rules, regulations, policies etc already implemented within our club, I began to realise that, the more pieces that were coming together, the relevance of all the information was making more and more sense with regard to making our club a far safer and more efficient environment for children to learn and play cricket. This realisation was further enforced by the required courses that I attended over this period, some on my own and some with coaching colleagues and officials of Harefield Cricket Club.

The personal satisfaction that I gained while developing the Evidence File, with excellent support from Paul Jennings, began to have a real positive effect on other members of our clubs committee and senior cricketers, and there is now a positive and forward looking attitude running throughout our membership, where, prior to embarking on this venture, ambition for development was only felt by a minority of members and officials. We have three more senior cricketers attending an ECB Coach Award course in March, with several more senior cricketers chomping at the bit to attend any future coaching courses. We have also produced a Development plan to improve all facilities at our club to further encourage and sustain youth cricket.

Since September, with the unerring encouragement and support of the MCB, in particular David Holland, Roger Cook and Graeme West, we have been nominated by the MCB for our Clubmark accreditation, and have been rewarded by the MCB to become one of their Focus clubs. We are also working very closely with the MCB and the London Borough of Hillingdon to develop cricket in local Primary schools, and we have forged very positive links with the newly formed Harefield Academy to identify and encourage cricketing skills and potential Freddie Flintoffs.

In conclusion, I can honestly say that this venture has been, without doubt, the most important and effective course of action that Harefield Cricket Club has ever embarked upon, and the attitudes and ambitions of everyone involved with our club have never been more positive and meaningful.