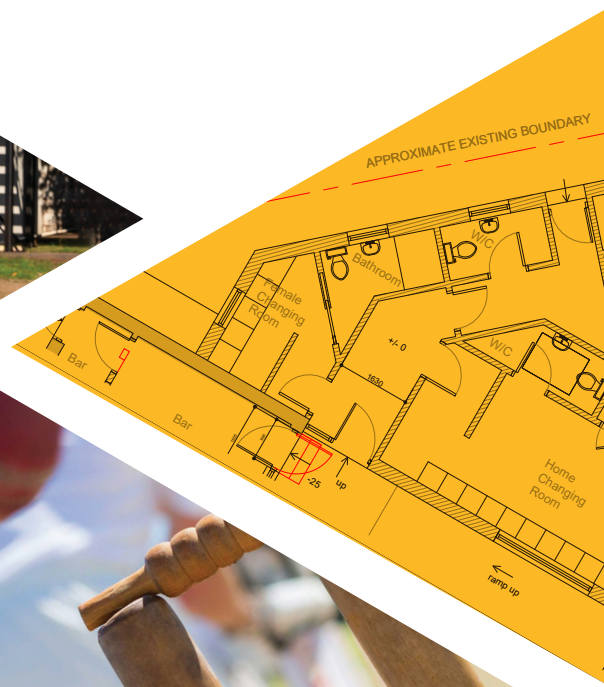


DEVON CRICKET



**PROTECT
SUSTAIN
EVOLVE**



2023

Devon Cricket Facility Strategy

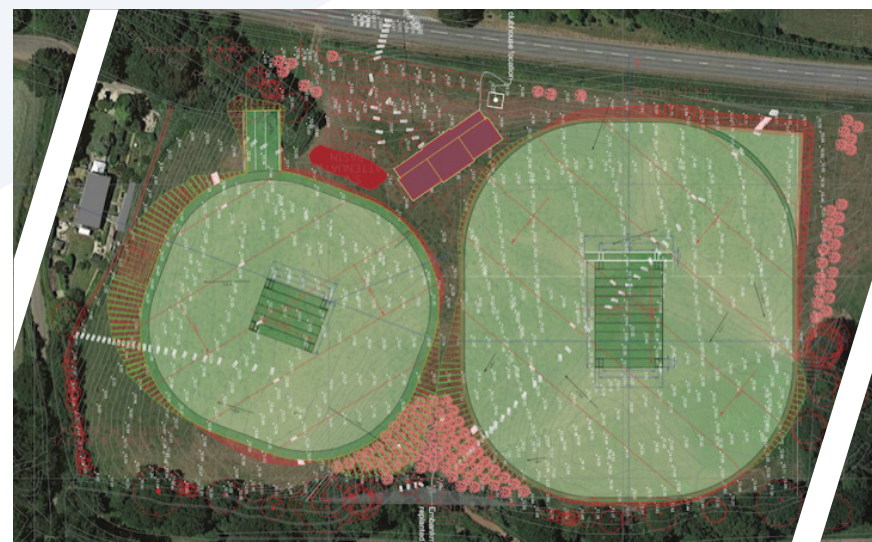
Prepared by the Devon Cricket Board

Identifying cricket facility needs in the
county over the next 10 years

Devon Cricket - County Facilities Strategy 2023 - 2033

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page		
1.0 INTRODUCTION		3.6 Youth Cricket in Devon	46
1.1 Background	4	3.6.1 Youth Leagues	46
1.2 Objectives	6	3.6.2 All Stars and Dynamos	48
1.3 Scope	6	3.6.3 Education Cricket Sites in Devon	49
1.4 Governance	7	3.7 Grounds Management	52
1.5 Study Approach	7	3.7.1 Challenges Facing the Volunteer Groundskeeper	52
1.6 Abbreviations	9	3.7.2 Facility improvements to Assist Groundskeepers	55
2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (<i>Headline findings from the review</i>)		3.8 Disability Cricket in Devon	58
2.1 Basic Facility Needs	10	3.8.1 Current Status	58
2.2 Meeting the Growth and Demand for Women and Girls Cricket	11	3.8.2 Aspirations	59
2.3 Club Needs	11	3.8.3 Facility Needs to Meet Aspirations	60
2.4 Creating Welcoming Environments	12	3.9 Cricket in Urban Areas (Plymouth, Exeter, Torbay)	61
2.5 Disability Cricket	13	3.9.1 Current Status	61
2.6 Performance Facilities (non-club)	13	3.9.2 Aspirations	62
2.7 Specific Urban Needs	14	3.9.3 Facility Needs to Meet Aspirations	62
2.8 Grounds Management	14	3.9.4 Future Communal (non-club) Facilities	63
3.0 STUDY		3.10 Wider Recreational Cricket Viewpoint	65
3.1 Devon Cricket Clubs	16	3.10.1 Protecting Clubs at Risk – Common issues and concerns	65
3.1.1 Dimensions	16	3.10.2 Viewpoint of Officials	66
3.1.2 Club Survey	16	3.10.3 Plight of Rural Cricket Clubs	66
3.1.3 Playing Challenges	17	3.10.4 Ownership & Management of Playing Sites	68
3.1.4 Training Challenges	18	3.10.5 Pitch Quality Evaluation	68
3.1.5 Recreational Challenges	19		
3.1.6 Indoor Facility Challenges	20		
3.1.7 Priority Facility Improvement Needs	22		
3.2 Open Age / Mixed Cricket in Devon	26		
3.2.1 Devon Cricket League	26		
3.2.2 District Leagues and Non-League Cricket	30		
3.3 Women’s Cricket in Devon	32		
3.3.1 Devon Women’s Cricket League	32		
3.3.2 Viewpoint from DCB W&G Development Officer	34		
3.3.3 Viewpoint from Devon Women’s County Cricket Club	35		
3.3.4 Western Storm (Performance Cricket)	35		
3.3.5 Girls Cricket in Devon	38		
3.3.6 Summing up facility needs for the Women’s Game in Devon	38		
3.4 Performance Cricket – Devon County Cricket Club	40		
3.4.1 Current Status	40		
3.4.2 Aspirations	40		
3.4.3 Facilities Needs to Meet Aspirations	41		
3.5 Performance Cricket - Youth Dev. & County Age Group Player Pathway	42		
3.5.1 Current status and challenges	42		
3.5.2 Aspirations	43		
3.5.3 Facilities Needs to Meet Aspirations	45		



Budleigh Salterton CC – Relocated Two Pitch Cricket Ground at East Budleigh

3.11	Local Authorities Perspective	70
3.11.1	Overview	70
3.11.2	East Devon District Council	74
3.11.3	Exeter City Council	75
3.11.4	Mid Devon District Council	76
3.11.5	North Devon District Council	77
3.11.6	Plymouth City Council	78
3.11.7	South Hams District Council	80
3.11.8	Teignbridge District Council	82
3.11.9	Torbay Council	83
3.11.10	Torridge District Council	85
3.11.11	West Devon District Council	86
4.0	CONCLUSIONS AND DEVON CRICKET BOARD INTERPRETATION	87
5.0	RECOMMENDATIONS – ACTION PLAN	89
6.0	IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW	97
7.0	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND REFERENCES	98

Appendices (available as separate documents)

- A Club Survey – questionnaire and summary of responses
- B Local Authority – PPS Master List for cricket – Note - this is an evolving process
- C Facilities Checklist (specimen example)
- D Rural Viewpoint (Anonymous)



1.0 Introduction

This is the **Devon Cricket Facility Strategy**, prepared by the Devon Cricket Board after engagement with the playing and support community involved in all aspects of the game. The foundation of this strategy is based around broad engagement and consultation to arrive at a viewpoint and approach which should closely represent the whole needs of cricket in Devon for the next ten years.

The formation of this strategy is the outcome of a twelve-month study period, in which all aspects and divisions of cricket in Devon were analysed, consulted and invited to provide input. Those “stakeholder” visions are reflected in the main body of this strategy, with key objectives and requirements identified and included in the action plan

Our Mission Statement:
“To create welcoming environments for everyone engaged in cricket, by improving the playing, training and recreational experience across the county.”



Fig 1.1 Hatherleigh Cricket Club new pavilion opening ceremony
 Image Courtesy of Conrad Sutcliffe




For successful execution of The Strategy, it will be paramount to establish and nurture strong relationships with key partners such as local authorities, leagues, governing bodies and education providers.

1.1 Background

Built in periodic reviews shall be included over the duration of this strategy to ensure objectives and aspirations remain on track for implementation and any evolvment of key criteria factors and themes disseminated from governing body, are appropriately incorporated.

The **Inspiring Generations** *master strategy, challenges all cricket bodies and administrators to think about how we can create environments where the next generation see cricket as **“A GAME FOR ME”**.

*The Inspiring Generations Strategy, written in 2020, is the 5 year plan for the growth of cricket. It highlights the development pathway for cricket and provides the backbone in terms of directional focus and priority. The six main priorities are detailed in Fig 1.1 below. It’s evident that improved and welcoming facilities in the right locations, can play a significant part in meeting these priorities. Those items ringed in Fig 1.1 illustrate how facilities improvements can have influence across these priorities

 GROW AND NURTURE THE CORE	 INSPIRE THROUGH ELITE TEAMS	 MAKE CRICKET ACCESSIBLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an Infrastructure Investment Fund for FCCs • Introduce a new Community Investment Fund for FCCs and CCBs • Invest in club facilities • Develop the role of National Counties Cricket (formerly Minor Counties) • Further invest in county competitions • Drive governance reform across the whole game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase investment in the county talent pathway • Incentivise the counties to develop England players • Drive the performance system through technology and innovation • Create heroes and connect them with a new generation of fans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broaden cricket’s appeal through the The Hundred • Create a new digital community for cricket • Install non-traditional playing facilities in urban areas • Continue to deliver the South Asian Action Plan • Launch a new participation product, linked to the The Hundred

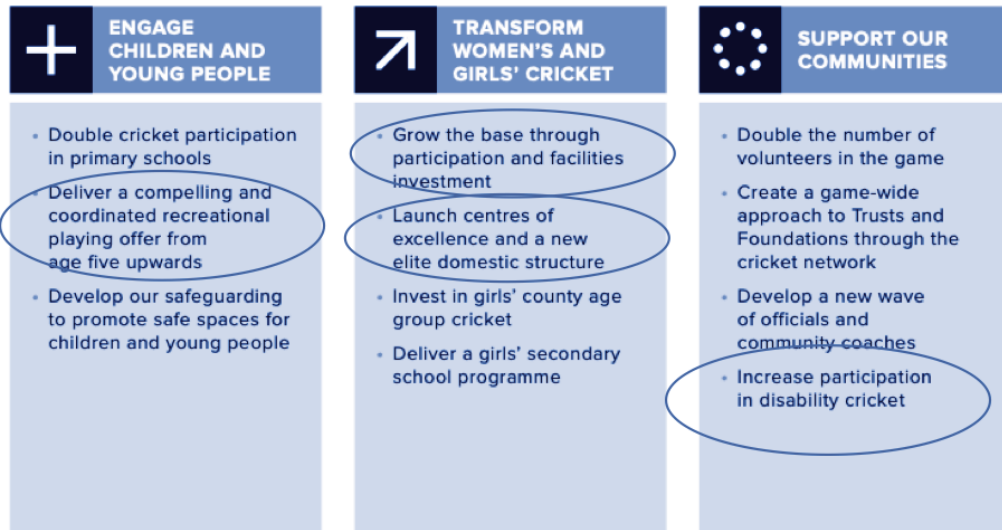


Fig 1.1 – Six main priorities of Inspiring Generations

Taking into consideration these priorities from Inspiring Generations, the following five essential themes have been identified which form the cornerstone of this County Facilities Strategy. All aspects of this study shall give consideration to these themes and where an action is defined it will, where possible, be referenced to the relevant theme. This does not preclude other actions which may still be a good fit for Devon but may not necessarily align with any of the five themes.

- Transforming Women & Girls Cricket
- Creating Welcoming Environments
- Urban areas, population growth and diverse communities
- Tackling Climate Change
- Pathway and Performance

The first impressions created on arrival at any cricket ground can have a lasting impact on how visitors and new members feel when they use the club.

The ECB **Creating Welcoming Environments (CWE)** initiative compliments the Inspiring Generations strategy and aims to increase the number of people playing cricket recreationally, through a strong, sustainable and **inclusive** club network, meaning everyone is made to feel welcome and an integral part of their club cricket landscape.

Club facilities are an important factor in ensuring that everyone, regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, race, faith or disability, feels comfortable within the club environment.

CWE offers guidance for cricket clubs to help make their facilities more welcoming to all, encouraging a wider diverse range of individuals and families to join cricket clubs and get involved in the game.

It's important to state that giving focus to NGB strategies doesn't mean that other factors preventing the growth of cricket in Devon, are not considered in this strategy, as its essential to give consideration to all influences. All stakeholders within the cricket environment in Devon, have had the opportunity to be consulted and invited to offer a viewpoint on the game and how facilities improvements could stimulate growth and create a real sense of club belonging.

The Strategy places considerable emphasis on supporting our existing clubs and organisations across the county whilst recognising the opportunity for growth in urban areas where demand may be greater than the current supply. Refer to Section 3.11 for more details on the geographical landscape for Devon.

First and foremost, this is a facilities development plan for our county. It will focus on the cricket needs for Devon over the next ten years and take into consideration key factors such as population growth, urban and rural shortfalls, inequality of access to cricket facilities, and the changing dimension of the recreational game.

The key purpose of this study is to deliver a quality Facility Strategy that enables the DCB to make informed decisions regarding development of playing and recreational facilities, and to target future investment towards priority needs and locations.

1.2 Objectives

The Stakeholder Core Team have identified the following underpinning principles that link all aspects of the recreational game and interface with the performance game:

- Identify the facility and infrastructure needs for Devon
- Deliver the strategic aims and objectives of Devon Cricket
- Allow cricket to thrive, enhancing the experience of all players, spectators and volunteers

The above overarching principles have helped to derive the following specific objectives for the Strategy:

- To obtain an accurate understanding (baseline) of the current cricket provision in terms of quantity and quality for recreational cricket (including indoor training facilities) throughout Devon.
- To identify any shortfall and deficiencies in current facilities and present solutions for improvements and sustainability
- To support and invest in priority projects over the duration of the strategy to meet existing and projected demand.
- To relate potential investment to areas of facility shortages, need and deprivation
- Understand club needs for the recreational game, largely based on the following key themes:
 - Family friendly welcoming environments
 - Women and Girls friendly facilities
 - Disability friendly facilities
 - Urban and rural provision
 - Digitisation and modernisation
 - Environmental sustainability
 - Training and playing facilities (indoor and outdoor)
 - Basic level of a cricket facility (services)
 - Competitive, performance and social playing provision
 - Improving the quality of playing pitch surfaces
- Identify collaborative working opportunities across the Devon cricket community to maximise the potential of sites and their facilities.

1.3 Scope

This strategy encompasses all aspects of the cricket playing provision in Devon, including;

- the recreational game
- the performance game,
- junior and senior cricket
- mens and womens cricket
- indoor & outdoor playing facilities,
- practice facilities
- quantity and quality of playing provision,
- tenure of facilities,
- on and off field facilities
- future population increases
- areas designated for high volume urban development
- education sites / programmes *

*obtaining a voice from state and private school establishments has been difficult and therefore the education viewpoint is more subjective following consultation with other stakeholders throughout this process.



Fig 1.2 Yelverton Bohemians Cricket Club

1.4 Governance

The development of the Devon Facilities Strategy has been dependent on the contributions from a broad cross section of stakeholders, all united in one way or another with improving the recreational cricket experience across Devon.

- Collectively all Stakeholders have;
 - a comprehensive vision of all countywide facilities in the recreational game
 - an understanding, in terms of immediate, short term and long term needs.
- A **sub-team** foundation was established to allow a dedicated Core group of individuals to perform most preparatory aspects of the exercise, in a structure which enables prompt review and consultation with a wider “**Oversight**” team.
- Regular consultations took place between **Core and Oversight** Team members, at key stages in the development process, permitting a consistent method of approving each element of the plan.
- Additionally, a third team of Stakeholders (**External Partners**) were formed to provide where necessary:
 - consultation support
 - sense checking
 - technical or administrative input to assist with evolution of the plan.

1.5 Study Approach

In order to make the Strategy and subsequent task prioritisation both meaningful and appropriate, it was important to adopt a consultative and engaging approach, which led to interaction with a broad cross section of stakeholders in cricket across Devon.

The needs of these various consultees are identified in the forthcoming sections in this report and where appropriate, they are identified in the priority action plan.

Devon is the 4th largest county in England with an area just over 2500 square

miles and a population of approximately 1.2 million making it only the 11th highest populated county. With approximately 8000 miles of public roads, Devon has the largest road network for any county in the UK. More details on the geographical landscape and its influence on cricket in Devon is explained in Section 3.11.

For cricket purposes the county has typically been split into four geographical regions; North, East, South and West (see Fig 1.2). All affiliated cricket clubs in Devon align themselves within these four regions, with youth cricket leagues and other regional competitions generally falling in line with these regions. To a large extent this works well for the management and playing of recreational cricket in the county.



Fig 1.3 - Devon showing the DCB cricket regions, overlaid with the 10 local authority districts

Whilst the four cricket regions are given consideration in this study, the Core

Team concluded that a higher importance should be given to the ten local authority boundaries in the county, as this provides a much greater alignment with the District Council “Playing Pitch Strategies (PPS)”, which largely drive actions and responsibilities for playing facilities across the county.

A PPS is an evidence based document, used to guide investment, development and improvement in pitch sport facilities and meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework in England. It is a “non-standards” based approach which provides a sport specific assessment of need and a required evidence base for local authorities in their production of a robust Local Development Plan.

It is also helpful in determining planning applications impacting on existing facilities or driving the need for new sports playing pitches, as factors such as expected population growth are taken into account. It can also guide prioritisation of investment from a range of bodies.

For the purpose of this study Devon Cricket engaged professional services from Bennett Leisure and Planning Ltd (Belap), to analyse the content of the county wide PPS and extract all relevant cricket related data to enable the key identified requirements from across the county to be considered. The salient information from each local authority PPS is included in the main study section of this report.

National surveys and consultations indicate that despite efforts to improve the situation over several years, inequality of access to cricket facilities still exists and is particularly apparent in urbanisations, diverse communities, lower socio-economic groups and amongst women and girls. This plan carefully and openly considers how to address inequality of access to cricket, quality and quantity of spaces to play, and facility needs to ensure everyone feels welcome and included.

Upon completion of this study, an accompanying action plan will identify the priorities for developing a fit for purpose, facilities infrastructure for the future of cricket in Devon until 2034. The combination of the above will form the Devon County Facilities Strategy (The Strategy)



Fig 1.4 Modernisation and expansion work at Tavistock Cricket Club



Fig 1.5 Improvements to the pavilion at Plympton Cricket Club



Fig 1.6 Changes to the facade at Ipplepen Cricket Club



Fig 1.7 Steel erection for new pavilion at Budleigh Salterton Cricket Club

1.6 Abbreviations

Affiliated	Affiliated to the Devon Cricket Board in some capacity.
Belap	Bennett Leisure and Planning Ltd
CAG	County Age Group (cricket)
Clubmark	ECB Clubmark is an accreditation scheme for cricket clubs which shows that a club is sustainable, well run and provides a safe environment for its members
CWE	Creating Welcoming Environments
DACO	Devon Association of Cricket Officials
DCB	Devon Cricket Board
DCL	Devon Cricket League
DCST	David Shepherd Cricket Trust
DWCL	Devon Womens Cricket League
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board
EPP	Emerging Player Programme
GMA	Grounds Management Association
IG	Inspiring Generations
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation – which factors in a combination of indicators known as domains, including education, income, health, housing and employment, broken down into neighbourhood levels
LA	Local Authority (District Council)
NGB	National Governing Body
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
SHMS	Safe Hands Management System
The Strategy	Devon Cricket Facilities Strategy
YDC	Youth Development Cricket

2.0 Executive Summary

On an average week during the Devon cricket season, over 8,000* senior and junior cricketers run out onto a cricket field to take part in a sport they enjoy. Behind these staggering numbers are in the region of one hundred cricket clubs spread across the county who support the necessary playing facilities, competitions, and programmes for such levels of participation to occur.

Normally through loyal and hard-working volunteers, operating with limited resources, these clubs strive admirably to maintain their facilities to a standard which can sustain and where possible, grow their participation numbers. Often these same clubs have desires to improve their playing, training, and recreational facilities to either meet the expectancy of its members or enhance both the playing and spectator experience.

Additional built facilities across the county provide further opportunities for participation in cricket during the off-season period. This allows some playing provision via indoor leagues but more commonly through indoor training facilities, which permit both junior and senior training programmes to happen.

The Devon Cricket Board have been tasked to conduct a review of ALL facilities associated with cricket in the county, the purpose being to identify suitability of the provision to meet current and future demands over the next 10 years. This has resulted in extensive research, engagement and consultation with all stakeholders involved in the cricket game across Devon. Full details of the findings and viewpoints of the various stakeholders are contained in the main study (Section 3.0).

This section provides a summary of the principal findings and priorities resulting from the study. In many instances there is alignment across more than one stakeholder with the need for a specific improvement.

The initiatives of the ECB in their overarching Inspiring Generations strategy and other supportive campaigns, also have significant influence to these established priorities.

The summary below highlights, in no particular order, the key areas for facilities development. The Action Plan contained in Section 5.0, provides more of the strategy behind delivering specific improvements.

For ease of reference, bracketed numbers beside each paragraph below indicates the relevant section in the Action Plan.

*Combination of players from Devon Cricket League (>1,600) Devon Womens Cricket League (>160), Devon Womens Softball League (>20), Youth Leagues (>2,100), National Programmes (2,800) and Regional Senior Leagues (>500) – Not including county age group cricket.

2.1 Basic Facility Needs

In the 21st century there are still clubs in the county which operate without basic facility services. This not only makes it difficult to function in today's world, but also does not assist in creating the welcoming environment needed to attract new and retain existing members. As a result, added demand is placed on volunteers to provide alternative measures to allow clubs to meet basic hygiene and comfort needs.

Historically these normally rural located clubs have been faced with very high costs to provide basic services, such as mains electricity, water, and drainage, making such improvements cost prohibitive.

With modern technology comes alternative options for provision of these essential services and treatment of waste effluents. These options, such as solar PV electricity generation, can be very favourable for cricket clubs as their activities normally take place in the summer when the sun shines longer and brighter. DCB consider it a priority to help these clubs where possible, to provide essential and basic utilities at their clubs **[5.1]**

ECB are cognisant of forthcoming challenges for all cricket clubs in the coming years. Rising utility costs, impacted through external factors including climate change, will provide a real strain on club finances and is likely to re-prioritise development plan objectives. It also has potential to cause fuel poverty. Higher costs can potentially be offset through capital investment and grant support to install self-sufficient PV electricity generation, where clubs have a suitable location to yield adequate efficiency. DCB will, wherever

possible, support energy saving and running cost reduction schemes to help clubs sustain their operations and maintain a welcoming environment. **[5.2]**

2.2 Meeting the Growth and Demand for Women and Girls Cricket

Across Devon we are experiencing healthy growth in the women and girls game. Many clubs either have established women's teams or are in an active stage of development. The newly formed Devon Women's Softball Cricket League has experienced a 20% increase in participating teams, from the season before.

With softball cricket being widely regarded as a steppingstone to the hardball game, it's expected that more hardball teams will emerge, being backfilled by other clubs forming softball teams.

Girls cricket is also on the rise, with participation now at a level permitting the formation of the Devon Girls Cricket League, allowing 38 club teams to compete in regional age group divisions, across both softball and hardball format.

The expansion of the women and girls game, places additional demand on cricket clubs, having to prepare additional playing pitches, provide suitable changing and welfare facilities, and generally making their club more welcoming in all aspects.

There is an expectation that more women players will participate in mixed, open cricket league teams eg. Devon Cricket League matches. Having a suitable environment to permit separate changing is a challenge, with many clubs exploring options how they can either convert rooms previously used for other purposes or create additional space to make this happen

ECB recognises as a primary objective, the need to support clubs to improve facilities and create additional playing capacity at their venues and this initiative is also given priority at Devon Cricket **[5.3]**

Equally at the performance end of the game, we are seeing growth in profile

of the Western Storm franchise and such higher standards of cricket placing demand on better playing facilities.

To allow the performance women's game to flourish in Devon, strong links need to be forged with Western Storm, not only for winter indoor provision but also in the form of outdoor playing facilities. With the squad coming from the wider South West region and opponents travelling from even further afield, having a quality performance venue in a central location and close to the main arterial road links is high on the priority list. : **[5.4]**

2.3 Club Needs

Consultations with a broad cross section of Devon Cricket clubs, has highlighted a raft of development plan objectives, however on closer scrutiny there are several common threads worthy of focus.

Clubs generally recognise a need to move with the times, and often find ground constraints or tired facilities are not simply adaptable to the meet the modern needs of the game. Remediation often takes the shape of renovation or alteration, but in the worst of situations, clubs are faced with a need to entirely replace their pavilion or undertake major ground works. Tight budgets and inaccessible funding can lead to high levels of frustration with clubs reaching an apparent impasse with their plans.

Funding opportunities present themselves more to clubs who have managed to establish a sound base to build on, with dynamic youth and women & girls sections. However, often to achieve this sound base, funding is needed to attract the club growth, so to a large extent, they are left in limbo, unable to move in the desired direction. **[5.5]**

In some instances there is also an essential need to protect what we have, in terms of playing and recreational facilities. So where there is threat or impact, through proposed development or other external influences, support is needed to assist cricket clubs to sustain their entity and their operations. If this cannot be achieved through alterations at their existing facility, then provisions must be made to offer alternative, localised solutions through relocation and development. **[5.6a. & 5.6b]**

Thriving cricket clubs experiencing significant growth in participation, face

the very real challenge of reaching or even exceeding capacity. The need to have good access to nearby or ideally “on site” second pitches, is identified as a major priority for many clubs. These pitches improve the overall playing experience and sustain the growth **[5.7]**

Club capacity issues can be further managed with the installation a non-turf pitch on the square, which can accommodate multiple times more use than a grass pitch and ease the burden on the volunteer groundskeeper in the process. Clubs approaching capacity are usually the ones with youth teams and a developing womens softball team, all of which can make good use of a non-turf pitch. To date, Devon Cricket has supported many, non-turf pitch grant applications and will continue to do so. **[5.8a]**

Local Authorities in Devon provide useful predictive data on expected population growth in their sub-districts, together with evidence based information on the need for playing pitches across the complete outdoor sports spectrum, via their Playing Pitch Strategies. Comprehensive PPS details from each local authority are included within Section 3.11 of this report. This information helps to identify where additional resources are required in cricket to meet specific club needs and satisfy the expected increase in participation.

Where this information identifies the location for additional pitch or facility provision to cope with demand, it assists the governing body to prioritise support to those clubs which can strategically play a part in meeting demand. Furthermore, a club that actively engages in ECB national programmes, promoting youth and women’s participation, and generally offering an inclusive club experience, will be better positioned to receive investment through grant support. **[5.5] [5.9a] [5.9b]**

The plight of smaller cricket clubs, usually rurally located, which provide an outlet for participation in their local community through either non-league or league cricket, should not be forgotten. Devon certainly has a good share of these clubs.

Such “one team” clubs often are overlooked from an eligibility for funding perspective, yet they still have plans to improve, grow and become our “focussed” clubs of the future. Without these small club aspirations, the game cannot spread geographically to make localities stronger from a cricket provision perspective. Consideration must be given to how these clubs can

obtain support to develop in the right direction **[5.10]**

From a club training perspective, many clubs see huge benefits from having both static and portable outdoor practice nets at their club and would prioritise provision of these facilities if funding was available. If players cannot partake in effective training due to lack of facilities, there is tendency to migrate to clubs that can offer it. Likewise clubs that have already have static net facilities, have identified the need to carry out refurbishment work, which can be very costly, but essential to keep the facility both safe and effective. **[5.8a]**

Further club facility development needs are included in the specific sections below.

2.4 Creating Welcoming Environments

What makes a club thrive, retain and engage its existing members, attract new members and develop new dimensions to its cricket provision?

Being able to offer opportunities for all, in welcoming surroundings is the key to success.

With few exceptions, clubs are striving to improve their social facilities to provide a better overall club experience for its members and visitors. The ECB recognise that to grow the game, recreational club’s need to create a warm and welcoming environment. Clubhouses which provide comfortable seating areas, a decent viewing perspective and continuity between indoor and outdoor leisure space, often attract more patrons who typically stay longer in comfortable surroundings, helping in the process, to increase club revenue.

Additionally, improvements to changing room features, catering provision, access routes, outside seating space, safe & accessible parking and welfare facilities, can all have a big influence on the whole club experience. Devon Cricket have supported cricket clubs to implement such improvements and will continue to do so through the County Grant Fund **[5.8b]**

Clubs with a reputation for having a welcoming environment can have a broader attraction than just their club membership. Embracing the local community can lead to stronger relationships and open opportunities for additional funding. Many clubs are quiet during the normal weekday working hours and could potentially offer their facility to other user groups for warm recreational space and hospitality. Making a cricket club more inclusive, within its own membership base and the wider community can reap benefits **[5.11]**

2.5 Disability Cricket

Existing arrangements at many clubs hamper their ability to provide playing opportunities for disabled cricketers. Additionally some clubs struggle to offer adequate access and facilities for disabled visitors, spectators, and family members.

Current building regulations and specifications for sport facilities ensure that disability access and provision is considered at the design stage for new build facilities, but this doesn't address the problem for existing cricket facilities.

Alteration plans to make club facilities more disability friendly, often require considerable cost commitment and without funding support may not be considered a priority club objective, due to other demands from the club membership. The availability of grant support to assist clubs in opening their facility up for disability access and performance is considered an essential requirement for growing the disability game, making cricket more inclusive. **[5.8b]**

Providing a local environment suitable for disabled persons to participate in cricket, is supported by the ECB Disability Champion Club initiative. With currently only one Disability Champion Club in Devon, there is a defined and immediate need to be able to provide similar facilities across the county, with the target being for a disabled cricketer to access a suitable club within a forty minute journey time **[5.12]**

Being able to host a match for a full disability cricket team, competing against another disability team is a further challenge which remains an objective

within the county. Whilst recreational cricket clubs may strive to provide a level of disability provision, it may be more difficult or perhaps impossible, for them to stage such an event. The vision is to have an easily accessible, centrally positioned county facility, fully equipped to meet specific needs of two complete disability cricket teams and be able to offer a full match experience **[5.4]**

2.6 Performance Facilities (non-club)

Consultation with a variety of performance cricket sections, has highlighted the importance of easing the burden on busy recreational clubs having to provide ALL playing and training venues for county age group, county senior sides, as well as regional women's cricket (Western Storm).

It is widely considered that the provision of a high performance, outdoor, two pitch cricket hub in a centrally located position would greatly assist the resource challenged county age group teams to establish a base and still permit a reasonable spread of fixtures across the regional locations, thus allowing cricket to continue reaching all corners of Devon.

Additionally Devon County Cricket Club and Devon Lions would have an additional cricket playing venue to help meet their growing fixture commitments. Western Storm would also see the benefits, should a suitable venue be established.

Such a facility would enable cricket to gain prominence and recognition in the county and further afield.

Having a two pitch central venue will vastly improve the ability to facilitate schools and county competitions/ festivals and will ensure that these events can be more effectively time managed, within an environment that is likely to attract more players to taking up cricket.

Focus should be given to exploring the possibility of finding and establishing such a performance outdoor hub, which for ease of reach across Devon, is most likely to be located in the proximity of Exeter. **[5.4]**

Lack of access to quality, indoor cricket facilities in certain parts of Devon has led to a noticeable drop off in participation and does not benefit clubs looking to prepare for forthcoming seasons or Youth Development programmes looking to deliver quality programmes in regional locations.

Investment is needed in these black spots to make indoor cricket more accessible and more enjoyable. Focus shall be given to areas which can demonstrate a good number of teams, whose combined activities would generate sufficient activity hours across a prolonged winter period, thus making it a more attractive proposition for investment.

Improvements can either take the form of making investment at an existing facility which can be upgraded to meet ECB standards or by making a commitment to provide a purpose built facility, widely accessible to cricket teams, which is sized adequately to permit large group participation, development of indoor cricket leagues, and multi lane nets. **[5.13]**

2.7 Specific Urban Needs

Urban fringe development in local authorities bordering Exeter, Plymouth and other larger towns is destined for significant growth over the next ten years. In real terms this can be viewed as the urban areas expanding. With that comes a need for specific focus on the cricket provision and offering, to be given to our urban zones.

Playing pitch strategies and associated planning processes identify the need for more cricket pitches in urban fringe locations. If coordinated strategically, this can benefit established city based clubs to manage their predicted participation growth and also introduce cricket in new communities with the formation of new clubs **[5.14]**

The demographics in our larger urban populations, namely Plymouth, Exeter and Torbay, presents wider ethnic groups who may view participation in sport, not necessarily linked to recreational clubs and may prefer to play within friendship groups, in environments they find more comfortable. County development officers and community coaches are actively engaged with some of these minority groups. It's widely considered that there are other groups

who may be interested in cricket participation if suitable facilities were available in non-traditional settings.

Partnerships with other governing bodies and service providers in high deprivation areas (IMD's), can provide a cricket playing provision, as part of a more widely accessible sports facility. **[5.15]**

Such facilities in strategic inner city locations, can become operating hubs for delivering community initiatives like the Lord Taverners "Wicketz" cricket programme, allowing it to potentially expand across the county, attracting new participants. Schools can also benefit from a hub that permits competitive play and organised training sessions in an enjoyable surrounding. If management can be extended to letting for community group usage, then minority groups can also realise the benefit from such a "pitch up and play" facility.

2.8 Grounds Management

With the demand on clubs to reduce their carbon footprint, there are now options to purchase electric powered grounds machinery, however the current price of an equivalent battery machine can be as much as 70% higher. Running and maintenance costs for electric machines are a lot less than the equivalent petrol or diesel engine unit, however the affordability to purchase outright, without any grant assistance, is likely to remain outside the affordability bracket for most clubs.

If a club loses a vital mower or other regularly used item, the consequences can be very evident in terms of how a pitch plays and, in some cases, it could actually prevent a pitch from being prepared.

Having grant access to assist with urgent machinery needs, along with the ability to consider an electric alternative to fossil fuel powered machines would be a real bonus for cricket clubs. **[5.16]**

Providing effective training for both new and established groundskeepers is an essential step towards building up the capability of clubs to deliver good quality playing surfaces. It also provides anyone new to the role with vital information on best practices and tips. Establishment of regular training sessions, which reflect the key stages of the cricket season, will help to provide a baseline level of experience **[5.17]**

Additionally, clubs should be encouraged to join the Grounds Management Association as a grass roots club. This will enable access to a comprehensive amount of information specifically for cricket pitch preparation. [5.18]

Having an appropriate communication channel “Groundskeeper Forum” will facilitate useful sharing of information and guidance to clubs who may require prompt support. **[5.19]**

The pending PitchPower app, will provide clubs with “remote expert” support to analyse any specific issues that a club faces (or may face in the future), and then provide recommendations to drive pitch performance improvement. Once this app is fully tested for the cricket purposes it will be rolled out to the recreational cricket community. **[5.20]**

There is a considered need from many clubs to have the ability of conducting consistent end of season pitch renovations, at more affordable prices. Obtaining access to the necessary equipment and experienced labour to provide such a service, using county groundskeeping resources, may prove to be advantageous. **[5.21]**

Many clubs struggle to obtain sufficient voluntary support to assist their club groundskeeper, and providing a means of being able to make more club members attracted to this important role would be advantageous. **[5.22]**

Hybrid pitches are now being used extensively at county cricket level and early indicators are that they can provide a good solution to getting more play on the square. Further evaluation should be given to providing similar surfaces at recreational clubs where over capacity is a real concern **[5.23]**

3.1 Devon Cricket Clubs

3.1.1 Dimensions

In 2022 there were 105 cricket clubs affiliated to the Devon Cricket Board. This includes Devon County Cricket Club, Devon Senior representative teams and also Exeter University Cricket Club.

Focussing on the recreational clubs across the large geographical landscape of Devon, there are 100 clubs ranging from small village entities playing occasional friendly matches on basic playing surfaces with limited, sometimes no changing facilities, to larger clubs which can boast up to four men's teams, women's cricket, youth cricket at well tended and prepared pitches, with modern facilities at their disposal.

To that extent, there is a broad cross section of cricket represented in the county. To further emphasise this point, approximately 70% of affiliated cricket clubs are also registered with the Devon Cricket League, meaning they play regular weekly competitive cricket matches. A further 4% of clubs are registered with a regional league only, meaning that the remaining 26% of affiliated cricket clubs provide a friendly only offering, but on the whole, still take their cricket seriously and strive to improve the cricket experience for their club members.

For the purposes of this study, it was considered important to obtain a representative view of club facility needs across this wide range of Devon cricket clubs. Additionally, it was considered of interest to invite club's to comment on accessibility and quality of indoor cricket facilities in their locality, as winter play and pre-season training provide an essential part of the overall playing experience for club cricketers.

3.1.2 Club Survey

To obtain this "club voice" on facility needs and reach out to the complete playing community, an on-line, club survey was developed and circulated to all (100) DCB affiliated cricket clubs. Club secretaries and chairs were contacted to make them aware of the purpose of the survey and the

importance of consulting with a good cross section of their membership to arrive at responses which would be representative of their club, rather than just be the opinion of the person completing the survey on behalf of their club.

Links to the survey were included in the communication to the clubs and on completion of the survey it would be routed back to the DCB for analysis purposes.

The survey was divided into four main facility sections as listed below;

- Playing
- Training
- Recreational
- Indoor

Of the 100 clubs contacted, responses from 59 clubs were received, which was considered to be a sufficiently adequate return to be able to determine a cross sectional viewpoint on facility needs and priorities. Furthermore, the responses received were reasonably well divided across the four county regions, providing a good geographical representation.

The subsequent sections below will address the key findings from each section of the survey. Full details of the Club Survey are provided as Appendix A.



Fig 3.1.1 A wicket falls in the Devon Cricket League

Fig 3.1.2 Play underway at North Devon CC

3.1.3 Playing Challenges

The survey question for Playing Facility needs was as follows:

What is the most important area to improve the PLAYING environment at your club *

- Playing pitch surface / condition
- Outfield condition / size
- Grounds machinery (improvement or enhancement)
- Environment for spectators
- Playing equipment (sight screens, covers, other)
- More pitch availability (to accommodate more teams)
- Nothing (we are satisfied)
- Other...

Provide details on your selection above

Long answer text

As can be seen in Fig 3.1.3 responses were fairly equally shared amongst six main selectable options, indicating that clubs had differing playing facility improvement needs.

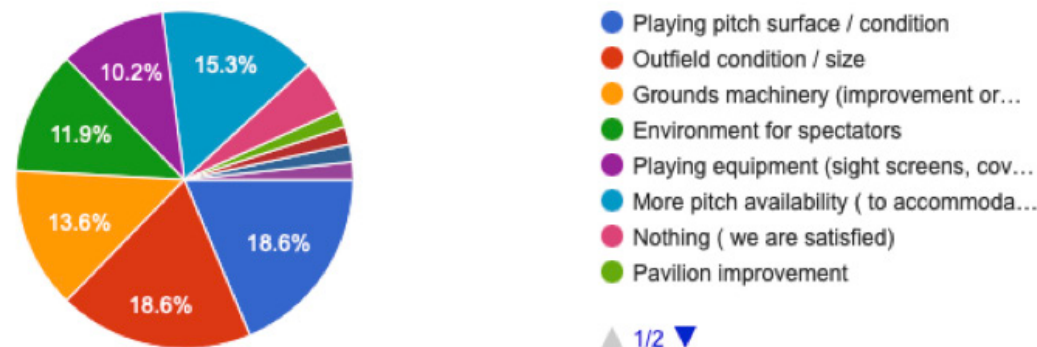


Fig 3.1.3– Club Facility Needs – Playing

Detailed comments were very wide ranging with some of the more salient points listed below:

Pitch surface / conditions:

- “We don’t have the resources to produce a high quality pitch”.
- “We would like help with expertise knowledge on how to improve playing surface”.
- “We have a lovely ‘village’ pitch but changing orientation away from the setting sun would be great but would need a larger ground to achieve this”.
- “Square is getting tired”.

Outfield condition / size:

- “Outfield could do with a bit of levelling and enlarge outfield but not currently possible”
- “We would like to make our main pitch longer at both ends”.
- “Improve outfield conditions re unevenness and undulations”.
- “We want to try and get rid of some of the weeds on the outfield, scarifying and over seeding at the end of the season is the plan at the moment”.

Grounds Machinery:

- “Our machinery is quite old and some of it is borrowed from one of our groundsmen”.
- “Currently we need a replacement roller, we also need regular maintenance of machinery”.
- “Need to replace aging outfield mowers”.
- “Equipment that we use to maintain our pitch, is second hand and getting old and struggling to maintain the ground to a decent standard”.
- “We need a new gangmower for the outfield. There appear to be no grants available, and all clubs seem to be chasing the same sponsorship/ crowdfunding solutions a time of economic uncertainty. Purchase of even a second-hand mower will wipe out club funds”.

More Pitch Availability (to accommodate more teams)

- “We are running 4 senior league teams and many junior male teams plus ladies and girls league teams. We need more pitch availability for matches and practice”.
- “Ground capacity for matches at the Club ground is full therefore if we are to expand, we need to find a permanent facility nearby”.
- “Lack of local pitches to play our 3rd XI. Waiting on Sherford update – progress is slow”.
- “We now run 4 senior league sides on a Saturday, a Ladies Team and 9 junior teams including 3 girl’s teams - we rent 2 other grounds for pitch use. Pitch availability at our main ground is to some extent restricted because our current nets face out on to the outfield so training cannot take place at the same time as a match”.
- “Our club is at capacity for both matches and training. Demand continues to outstrip supply and having a second pitch is the key to unlocking further growth for the club, the benefits it can bring to the local community and to widening the player base”.

3.1.4 Training Challenges

The survey question for Training Facility needs was as follows:

⋮

What is the most important area to improve the TRAINING environment at your club *

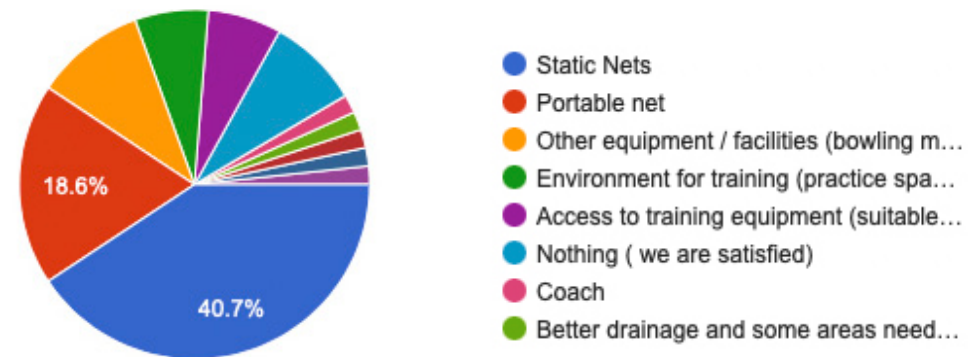
- Static Nets
- Portable net
- Other equipment / facilities (bowling machines, non turf pitch, etc)
- Environment for training (practice space, training wicket, etc)
- Access to training equipment (suitable storage space)
- Nothing (we are satisfied)
- Other...

Provide details on your selection above

Long answer text

As can be seen in Fig 3.1.4 below, nearly 60% of all clubs responding to the survey identified that practice nets, whether static or portable, were either in need of improvement or were needed as none were available at their club.

Fig 3.1.4 Club Facility Needs - Training



Detailed comments were largely associated with nets improvements as can be observed from these salient comments below:

- *“At the moment we haven’t gone for static nets, and this is a project that we hope start soon, which will help with all cricket at the club”*
- *“We’ve decided on the location of the static nets - in a field next to our pitch. Once some legal issues are resolved we can proceed in 12-18 months”*
- *“In our static net facility, the surface needs replacing within the next year as it is uneven and dangerous when wet. There is lots of mud and dirt ingrained which makes it slippery and a tripping/slipping hazard”.*
- *“We have a batting cage but the provision of hard surface static nets available for club and community use would greatly enhance our training abilities”.*
- *“The provision of static nets and an all-weather pitch is in the pipeline and will make a huge difference”.*
- *“Our current nets are open on all sides. Would like to cover these or provide purpose-built indoor nets”.*
- *“Need to relocate existing nets which open out on to the outfield so at present nets cannot be used at the same time as a match is being played”.*
- *“Static net in need of repair”*
- *“We currently have dilapidated sheds which need replacement for use as viable storage areas for cricket equipment and maintenance equipment/machinery”.*
- *“We would like a portable net to use on the main square to better prepare for match conditions”.*

3.1.5 Recreational Challenges

The survey question for Recreational Facility needs was as follows:

What is the most important area to improve the RECREATIONAL environment at your club *

- Pavilion or clubhouse overall
- Changing space
- Changing room facilities
- Social space (including bar)
- Outdoor space (including shelter areas)
- Welfare and hygiene
- General equipment storage
- Catering space or catering equipment
- Access / Egress
- Parking
- Nothing (we are satisfied)
- Other...

Provide details on your selection above

Long answer text

As can be seen in Fig 3.1.5 below, 34% of all responding clubs were of the opinion that their pavilion is entirely in need of improvement or replacement, however exploring further it can be also be identified that some clubs identify specific requirements which if improved, would contribute to creating a more welcoming environment for its members, particularly around changing room facilities and use of outdoor space.

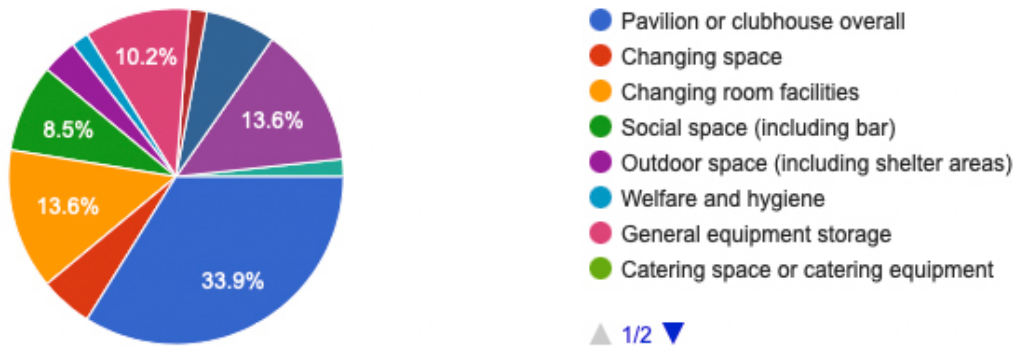


Fig 3.1.5 Club Facility Needs - Recreational

Detailed comments were quite varied in terms of specific club requirements, however several responses aligned with aspects of CWE guidelines to assist club sustainability, as can be observed from the comments below:

- “Club house and changing rooms are in need of substantial improvement/ redesign to accommodate players of all ages and genders, officials and a pleasant environment for broader social events”.
- “We’d like to extend the Clubhouse to have larger changing rooms for teams and to have a larger entertainment area indoors for fundraising activities”.
- “Pavilion replacement -We have planning, just now looking at how we can fund the project”.
- “We intend on starting a ladies team so would be helpful to have separate changing facilities for them”.
- “We have reached capacity in terms of changing facilities, especially with the growing need to cater for ladies cricketers”
- “We have a long-term objective of improving the bar and hospitality area of the Clubhouse. This involves building a new separate garage and equipment storage and incorporating the current garage/storage space into the bar and hospitality area”.
- “As previous, our pavilion is much loved and visited, but needs extensive and expensive works to update and weather proof it”.
- “Changing rooms not fit for purpose and have poor ventilation”
- “Our pavilion is outdated. It needs improvements to cater for women’s cricket (toilets, showers & decor), better kitchen and social space”.

- “Looking to provide a new opening to clubhouse and better seating inside and out”.
- “Having showers installed would be good”.
- “Our club environment does not have any female changing facilities or adequate toilets”.
- “The club house currently needs some general repairs but more importantly does not have an electricity or water supply”.
- “Our main challenge would be getting water/electric to our ground”.

3.1.6 Indoor Facility Challenges

The questions associated with Indoor cricket facilities needs were as follows

Availability and ease of booking of Indoor Practice Facilities *

Good

Quite Difficult

Very Difficult

Add more details

Long answer text

Quality of Indoor Practice Facilities

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

Response to the first question regarding access to indoor facilities, can be seen in Fig 3.1.6 below, where 68% of clubs found it either difficult or very difficult to book indoor training facilities for cricket.

Closer analysis of responses, indicates that of the 19 clubs which had good access to indoor facilities, 11 clubs were from the East region and only 2 clubs were from the West and North. Conversely of the 40 clubs finding it either quite difficult or very difficult to access indoor facilities the majority of clubs were from the West of the region, closely followed by South based clubs.

More clubs in the East indicated that they had good access to indoor facilities rather than find it difficult. This was not the case for the three other regions.

Availability and ease of booking of Indoor Practice Facilities

59 responses

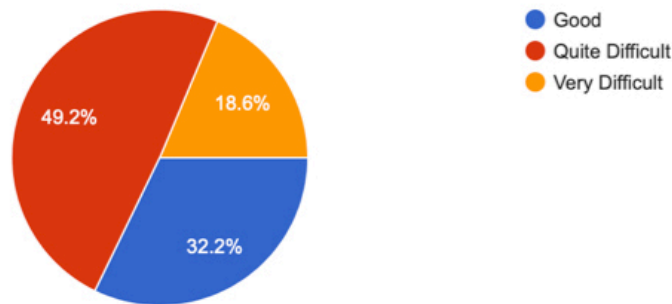


Fig 3.1.6 – Indoor Facilities – Ease of booking

Some of the comments received regarding good access to indoor facilities were as follows:

- “We have used the university in the past but are currently using a “commercial facility” in Cullompton”.
- “We currently book either Exeter University, Exeter school”.
- “Local facilities available around 8 miles away at South Dartmoor Community College in Ashburton”
- “We are lucky because have used the same place for a number of years so have a good understanding with them”.

- “Four indoor facilities in our immediate area, three schools, one sports centre”.

Some comments linked to poor access to indoor facilities are listed below:

- “Cost of the facilities are difficult to justify”.
- “Not many good venues easily accessible”
- “Not many nets available in our area”.
- “We have to travel to Exeter if we want to have good quality nets”.
- “Sports centres reluctant to offer much indoor nets time”.
- “There is a lack of local facilities and the facilities that are available (When bookable) is at a very high cost”.
- “The local gym seems to make it very difficult for us for example we booked our slot very early for this season and at the last minute they changed our day and time”.
- “We have to use local College and sometimes dates can be changed at short notice which impacts player motivation”.
- “We have to travel several miles to get to any indoor nets. Availability is not always good”.
- “Due to limited local facilities, booking any winter training is difficult as well as the ever increasing costs”.
- “No adequate facilities in the area – Nearest is 25 miles away (too far)”.

Response to the second question regarding quality of indoor practice facilities, can be seen in Fig 3.1.7 below, which would indicate that 58% of the clubs surveyed were satisfied with the quality of the indoor facilities that they use, with the remaining 42% considering that indoor facility quality was either fair or poor.

On analysis it can be established that of the 34 clubs who were satisfied with the quality of indoor facilities, approximately 50% were from the East region, with the remaining 50% of clubs fairly equally spread across the other three regions. Conversely of the 25 clubs that either considered indoor facilities to fair or poor, there were only 3 clubs located in the East region, with the majority of clubs coming from the South, closely followed by West and North.

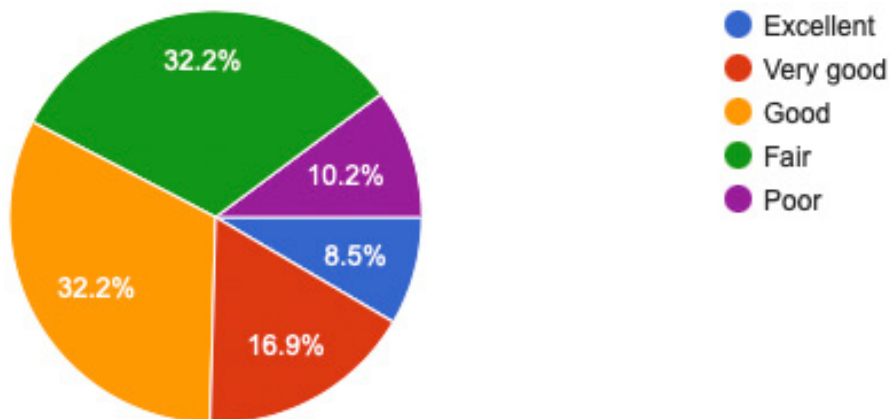


Fig 3.1.7 Quality of indoor practice facilities

Some of the comments associated with excellent or good quality indoor facilities were as follows;

- “Exeter University high quality. Exeter School only two lanes upgraded in 2021”.
- “While the cricket nets at Exeter University themselves are excellent, the supporting infrastructure is poor, e.g. there are no available showers or changing rooms”.
- “Most of the facilities are not purpose built for indoor cricket but converted sport halls”.
- “The quality both at the University Sports Centre and Exeter School are good. It is simply the availability which is the problem”.
- “Launceston College has good facilities, but Okehampton’s are poor”.
- “Some facilities are very good (University & “Commercial facility” in Cullompton) but others and general average to poor and not well maintained”.

Some comments associated with only fair or poor quality indoor training facilities are detailed below:

- “Due to local schools not teaching cricket we have lost most of our local facilities”.
- “Minimum standard - Indoor matting in sports hall - not dedicated cricket facility”.
- “Light is quite poor and the bounce is very low we think this is due to the age and wear and tear of the mat”.
- “The roll mats and unsecured netting do not offer the ultimate safe cricketing experience”.
- “Generally poor to fair standard indoor facilities at schools”
- “Local training centre lighting is very poor and limits training, the new indoor centre has better lighting, nets however has very poor bounce on the training matts”.
- “The hall is multi use, and while there are 4 nets and 4 mats ease of setting up is limited due to the school hall and multi use nature. The bounce is very low and the mats are old and not in the best condition”.
- “The nets are reasonable but not of the highest quality: the floor is not well sprung and is tough on lower limbs, especially for bowlers”.
- “Not great at nearest school and not available very often”.

3.1.7 Priority Facility Improvements and alignment with Inspiring Generations themes

The club survey yielded many diverse viewpoints on all matters associated with cricket club facilities in Devon. There were however some common themes coming from clubs, many of which aligned with the key focus areas promulgated by the ECB via their Inspiring Generations master strategy for the growth of cricket. Additionally, in certain regions there was consistency in viewpoint when it came to availability and quality of indoor cricket facilities.

Salient and consistent responses, worthy of further consideration regarding **PLAYING** facilities at clubs include:

- Having access to expert support and guidance for pitch preparation and outfield conditioning. (pitch power roll out, regular training sessions for club grounds keepers via Devon CPA’s)

- Managing with ageing and obsolete grounds machinery and the struggle to afford replacement and / or refurbished equipment. Lack of funding and grant opportunities to support clubs machinery needs. This also has an impact on attracting new grounds keeping volunteers.
- For thriving cricket clubs where playing participation has grown, the challenge of clubs reaching or exceeding capacity is very real. The need to have good quality, local, or where possible, on site second pitches is therefore a major priority for clubs to sustain their playing membership and improve the overall playing experience.
- Furthermore to assist clubs with active junior sections causing capacity issues, the provision of a non-turf pitch on the square will assist the strain on grass tracks and ease the burden on volunteer groundskeepers.

From a **TRAINING** perspective, many clubs see huge benefits from having both static and portable outdoor practice nets at their club and would prioritise provision of these facilities if funding was available. Likewise clubs that have static net facilities have identified the need to carry out refurbishment, which can be very costly.

The **RECREATIONAL** aspect of a cricket club is considered essential to promote the welcoming environment that sustains dynamic club life, retains members and also attracts new players and their families. Many clubs identify the importance to improve, or in some cases replace their pavilion social or changing facilities.

Meeting the growth in Women and Girls Cricket

There are currently 29 cricket clubs in Devon that provide womens cricket playing opportunities and several other embarking on the same. Many clubs recognise that their changing facilities are not suitable for one reason or another, to regularly accommodate women's teams. Additionally, clubs who have women playing on Saturdays' in the Devon Cricket League have real challenges providing a separate and suitable changing space for the women players, when their designated changing rooms accommodate the men players. The ECB County Grant Fund can support such improvements.

Creating Welcoming Environments

Many clubs are seeking to improve their social facilities to provide a better club experience for it's members and visitors. Creating Welcoming Environments is an identified objective for cricket clubs, as defined by a guidance document issued by the ECB. Clubhouses with comfortable seating areas and a decent viewing perspective, attract more footfall and encourage those present to stay for longer and probably spend more whilst there, to help with club revenue. Improvements to access ways, seating, parking and toilet facilities are also deemed contributory to improving the club experience.

Additionally some clubs struggle to provide acceptable accessibility and facilities for disabled persons and the elderly. Plans to make alterations to make their pavilion more disability friendly often require considerable cost commitment from clubs and funding support would greatly assist clubs to achieve success in making the improvements.

Meeting basic facility needs

With the club dynamic being equally split across urban and rural locations, the large rural expanse within the county and the high costs to provide such "mains" services, its perhaps not surprising that there are still some clubs in Devon that operate their facilities without the provision of basic services like running water, sewage disposal, heating and electricity. Modern technical developments such as solar PV electricity generation, bio-treatment plants and borehole water extraction now provide alternative options to such "off-grid" cricket facilities. Clubs without a base level of these basic service provisions should be given support to improve their facilities by exploring alternative sources and determining the viability of implementing such improvements, which often have a relatively high capital cost.

Managing running costs

The operating costs for all cricket clubs are currently rising at alarming rates. Unit costs for electricity, gas and other fossil fuels are at "all time" highs and continuing to rise, which is likely to cause clubs to defer other improvement projects in order to manage their cash flow and club budgets sensibly. Where there are options to save on energy costs, clubs will look to prioritise their investment, providing a reasonable payback can be achieved. Grant assistance for clubs intending to implement such energy saving initiatives will

greatly assist clubs to make the project viable and in turn contribute to the club seeing a prompt return on their investment.

In certain locations the provision, availability and quality of **INDOOR** playing and training facilities are considered to be unacceptable, whilst in other locations the provision is considered to be good.

Focussing on urban areas where clubs are typically closer together, the main area of deficiency of the indoor cricket provision is identified as Plymouth. This is further demonstrated by a number of South Hams and West Devon based clubs in reasonable proximity to the city who have also identified that access and quality is far from acceptable.

There are also a number of clubs located in the Okehampton area, that struggle to find suitable indoor training facilities, with local leisure centres starved of funding and applying attention to other priority aspects to align with their business direction.

From the club survey it was also determined that the majority clubs that cited their local provision of indoor training facilities to be only fair or poor, are located in the South region, meaning its really only the Exeter / East region which can be considered as providing adequate indoor cricket facilities.

The combination of either poor or unavailable indoor facilities has resulted in a significant drop off in club participation and in many cases a lack of preparedness for the start of the outdoor cricket season. Furthermore previously successful indoor cricket leagues are either lost altogether, or exist on a scaled down basis, at facilities not conducive to a quality experience for either players or supporters .

There is a defined need for improved provision of cricket focused indoor training and playing facilities for Plymouth and the surrounding area. Usage by nearby East Cornwall based cricket clubs could further extend the viability of a purpose built facility being developed. Other localities would also benefit from investment in existing, strategically positioned indoor centres, as its apparent that funding from the leisure centre / schools sector is not readily forthcoming.



Fig 3.1.8 PV installation at rear of Harberton CC



Fig 3.1.9 Cricket in play at Abbotskerswell CC

3.2 Open Age / Mixed Cricket in Devon

3.2.1 Devon Cricket League (DCL)

The Devon Cricket League (DCL) is the main provider of recreational adult cricket in Devon. Founded in 1972, it provides competitive playing opportunities for over 1,600 cricketers on Saturday afternoons over its 18-week playing season.

In line with ECB guidelines on “open age” participation, recreational cricket clubs are able to introduce their junior players to competitive league cricket, providing the individual is at a minimum of school year 8 or above.

Since 2000, the DCL has been a designated ECB Premier League, consisting in 2023 of a 10-team Premier Division with 15 feeder divisions designated A-H. The top three divisions (Premier, A Division and B Division) are county-wide, whilst the lower divisions (from C down to H) are regionalised with an East Division and a West Division from C to G Divisions; and an East, West, and Central Division at the lowest H Division.

3.2.1.1 Current Status

The DCL also offers three T20 Cup Competitions to its member clubs: the Wombat Cricket Devon T20 Cup, which is open to clubs within the Premier and A Divisions; the Ivor Dewdney Corinthian Cup, which is open to clubs within B Division and below; and the Tidball Insurance Cup, which is open to clubs within E Division and below.

League playing formats vary across the divisions. The top two divisions (Premier and A Division) play 50-over matches; teams within the B to E Divisions play 45-over matches with subtle differences between B and C/D/E Divisions; whilst F, G and H Divisions teams play 40-over matches. Each division plays win/lose matches, without any draw or declaration option.

Whilst the playing demographic has a high majority of male players, in recent years there has been a rising trend of female (girls over 14 years and lady) players competing in teams alongside male team colleagues, which can put a strain on club facilities for both changing and showering purposes.

Devon Cricket League - 2023			
Clubs	Teams	Divisions	Comment
70	156	16	Divisional structure based on performance with promotion and relegation across ALL divisions

Clubs

Clubs competing with only one team	12
Clubs competing with two teams	36
Clubs competing with three teams	16
Clubs competing with four teams	6

Teams

Number of 1 st XI teams	70
Number of clubs with an additional 2 nd XI team	58
Number of clubs with an additional 3 rd XI team *	22
Number of clubs with an additional 4 th XI team *	6

*Once a club has grown sufficiently to have 3rd or possibly a 4th team competing in the Devon Cricket League, it has to find an additional ground for these teams to play as their home pitch. It is always a desire to have any second playing ground located as close as possible to the parent club, to avoid the need for long journeys for players and team supporters. Availability of second pitches is quite sparse in many parts of the county and therefore this desire is not always satisfied.

3.2.1.2 Previous Studies and Consultations

Overall Club Sustainability

This study did not focus on facility needs and is therefore included for information purposes only.

Based on surveys, both club and desktop, undertaken in 2021 and 2022 specific data was assembled of the Sustainability of Member Clubs. The data was tabulated against the criteria set out below (this is the list shown in the text). This demonstrated what well developed clubs did. Where a club met the criteria they received a zero score. Where a club failed to meet the criteria they received a score of one or more. In the final analysis high scoring clubs were deemed to be more ‘at risk’. The end results were communicated

to clubs individually and an offer of support made to those clubs with the highest marks.

The survey included the following elements:

- The gap between the clubs' two top teams*
- Are they a single team club
- Number of club's sides relegated in the same year
- Provision of a junior set-up
- Club Mark accreditation
- Provision of Women and Girls cricket
- SHMS accreditation
- The clubs' committee – number of people involved in key roles
- Number of club provided Officials (umpires and scorers)
- Club's utilisation of the League's Loan Player Scheme **
- Has the club had to concede matches
- Number of short-sided teams has the club put out

* Where there was a gap of 3 divisions or more between a club's first XI and their second team, this was a considered weakness. Players playing 3 divisions, or more, below their first XI were likely to struggle to make the transition into first XI cricket.

** Loan Player Scheme – where this option was often adopted by a club it indicated a lack of playing members/ available playing members.

Reality League

As a further development from the Sustainability Study the Reality League was piloted in 2021 and then developed significantly for 2022. It has been beneficial in recognizing the good work within member clubs. Due to the significant differences in club sizes/activities etc across the DCL, there are three levels to the Reality League.

Scores were attributed to clubs around a host of areas of a club's activities including:

- Provision of All Stars and Dynamos Cricket

- Newly Trained Activators for the above programmes
- Provision of Women and Girls Cricket
- Number of entries into DCL Cup Competitions
- Use of Play Cricket for match scoring - Youth results reported on Play-Cricket
- Number of club coaches; new club coaches
- Number of officials; newly qualified umpires and scorers
- Pitch Marks (Level 1 clubs only) *
- Captain's Marks (Level 1 clubs only)*
- Discipline Record
- Club Mark / SHMS accreditation
- DSCT Membership

* Pitch marks and captains scores were only gathered across the divisions where DACO umpires were appointed. The League has no data on the condition of pitches in the lower divisions (from Div C down) where the majority of cricket is actually played.

As an incentive, clubs who scored highly in the assessment were rewarded with a small cash prize. The main purpose being to incentivise all clubs to make strides in the various development aspects.

Whilst the above studies do not directly focus on club facilities, they do demonstrate healthy engagement with clubs and where there is a facility deficient aspect identified e.g., consistently low pitch markings, then there is an opportunity to collaborate with the club in question, to offer guidance and support.

The Reality League will be assessed each year and adjustments made to its scoring mechanism, to better reflect increased knowledge of its impact alongside feedback from member clubs.

3.2.1.3 DCL Aspirations

There are a number of specific areas that attract DCL focus, when considering growing the league and addressing pressures experienced by its member clubs.

Each year the DCL holds post-season Divisional Meetings, where clubs can raise matters of importance to them. These can include proposed changes to Playing Rules and/or Playing Regulations, or any Constitutional /Administration amendments. The League will also raise any issues/topics it feels there is value in clubs discussing. The outcome of these Divisional Meetings is a list of changes for voting on at the AGM later in the year, by all member clubs.

Each year, the DCL also produces a set of Objectives which are presented to the member clubs at the AGM for the following year. Current DCL Objectives include actions resulting from:

- Sustainability of Member Clubs

A League sub-committee has been set up to undertake research with member clubs on their short-term and long-term sustainability.

The aim of this study is to identify common areas of support that clubs could usefully be provided with by either the DCL, the DCB or perhaps other parties, such as DSCT. Also as detailed above, it identifies the club's facing extreme challenges regarding their sustainability.

- Player Survey

The DCL will conduct another player survey in 2023 to invite players' views on their level of participation in league and/or cup matches; ethnicity; playing conditions at their club; game day factors (start / finish times etc); travel issues; and appetite for coloured clothing.

- Officials

The DCL will continue to work with DACO and DCB on initiatives to promote and encourage more clubs to have qualified umpires and scorers. In 2022 the DCL produced an Officials Strategy (with DCB and DACO) as part of its PRFP agreement with ECB. This includes the subsidizing of courses for club members.

- Financial Support for Member Clubs

There are plans to establish two new funding streams to support member clubs. It's in the early stages of consideration.

- a) Emergency Relief Fund Will offer grants up to £500 to member clubs to assist with the costs of specific emergencies.
- b) Discretionary Grant Scheme Will support the work of those member clubs wishing to create a more sustainable future.

Taking the above objectives into consideration, it is evident that the DCL aspires to grow the league by welcoming new clubs and more teams from existing clubs. It also keeps a watchful eye on how all the existing member clubs are performing from a sustainability perspective as its equally essential to maintain what we have.

The DCL continues to work closely with their member clubs to assure any specific needs are identified and where possible addressed by engaging with DCB and other relevant bodies.



Fig 3.2.1 Devon League action at Cornwood CC

3.2.1.4 Facilities needs to meet aspirations

The information received from various studies and consultation with the playing community as well as feedback from club officials, league officials, and groundskeepers has identified a number of specific facility aspects, that

if improvements were made, would create a better all round club experience. These aspects are referenced below:

- Improve and modify club facilities to ensure there is female friendly changing and toilet facilities provided.
- Two pitch facilities are in high demand to support clubs with 3rd and 4th XI teams, as well as for hosting cup competition latter stages.
 - Where possible create more two pitch sites to allow clubs to create a better sense of belonging
 - Where not possible consider the closeness of second pitches to the parent club to ensure teams are able to return to their club after matches, for socializing and match de-brief purposes.
- Clubs should be able to satisfy basic facility needs to provide functional and welcoming environments. Some clubs do not have mains electricity or running water, which not only makes it difficult to offer a welcoming facility but also presents health and hygiene implications.
- Accessible, secure and safe vehicle parking.
- Modify team changing spaces, creating additional space where possible and providing suitable shower bays.
- Improved social spaces that the whole family can enjoy.
- Raise the consistency and performance level of playing surfaces through better engagement with County Pitch Advisors and the GMA.

It should be noted that in recent years the DCL has experienced several club mergers that are worthy of consideration from a facility perspective. There could be several reasons for one club to merge with another local club, but normally the mission is to create a stronger and more sustainable entity. Dependent on the number of club teams that result from any merger, the continued need for two pitches is defined. Some grounds have been lost or are in the process of being lost, where a merger has occurred and the playing membership of the combined club only needs provision of one ground.

An additional facility need which is not directly related to the DCL but has been commented on by many players is the **lack of affordable, accessible and decent quality indoor training and net facilities**, which can support both winter competitions and also pre-season training. Often cricket clubs only want to book such indoor facilities for relatively short periods over the whole year, meaning such facilities haven't invested in the cricket playing provision.

Lighting levels, nets quality, surface performance all suffer from such lack of investment. These problems are more prevalent in certain areas of the county and clubs in those areas are desperate to have access to better facilities. Also winter indoor leagues used to be more popular than they are today. Leisure centres that used to host such competitions have withdrawn their facilities, leaving no suitable alternative and causing leagues to fold.

Better indoor facilities will allow club players to prepare for the playing season and potentially participate in more "all year round" cricket.



Fig 3.2.2 Training in progress at The Ondaatje Devon Cricket Centre, University of Exeter

3.2.2 District Leagues and Non-League Cricket

District Leagues provide additional or alternative playing opportunities for cricketers who may want to play competitively more than just once per week, or may only be able to play on midweek or Sunday afternoons.

3.2.2.1 Status and challenges

Across Devon there are the following regional leagues, who have been consulted to understand their main facility needs:

- North Devon League – play on Sundays
 - 19 teams split across three divisions
 - 7 teams are also registered with DCL (2 clubs enter 2 teams in the NDL)
 - 10 teams only play in North Devon League (typically smaller clubs)
- South Devon League – play on Sundays
 - 7 teams combined in one division
 - All teams except one are also DCL registered teams
 - No further discussions have taken place with the league regarding facilities needs, as all clubs were consulted via Devon Clubs Survey – see Sect 3.1
- Plymouth & District League (P&D) – play midweek evenings
 - 12 teams split across 2 divisions
 - 5 teams are also registered with DCL
 - 1 club registered with Cornwall League (Saturdays)
 - 6 clubs only play in P&D league – nomadic.
 - League experiences great difficulty finding venues for the nomadic teams with 4 teams sharing one facility (Roborough)
 - Heavy reliance on goodwill from other local clubs to accommodate the nomadic teams however this is becoming more challenging as clubs fixture calendar becomes more congested.
 - Numerous lost pitches in the Plymouth area over recent years and

lack of available school pitches has added to the problem

- Some matches are played at locations with limited or no changing and toilet facilities
- The league is not necessarily looking for a massive improvement in playing facilities, they are more concerned about having pitches available to play on.

Out of the 105 cricket clubs affiliated with the Devon Cricket Board in 2022, there are 24 clubs who play no form of league cricket and only participate in friendly matches. Many of these clubs have a busy fixture calendar, and therefore provide playing opportunities for hundreds of the more “casual” cricketers in Devon.

Combining the needs of the District Leagues and the “friendly only” clubs, it is known that several such clubs are actively looking to make significant improvements to their often-limited club facilities.

In many cases, due to the clubs being small and lacking in a wider cricket offering to youth and women’s cricket, they are often precluded from governing body funding to assist with improvement projects. Additionally, these same clubs often have genuine limitations as to why they cannot satisfy minimum governing body specifications for facility design, this is often down to a combination of affordability, need, space envelope and supply limitations. As a result, they may not get their planning application supported, increasing the likelihood of a planning rejection.

3.2.2.2 Aspirations



Fig 3.2.3 3D image of the new pavilion at Budleigh Salterton

Realistically in the medium term, the district leagues are more focussed on sustaining the entity they have with the current number of teams and divisions, rather than envisage growth in any capacity. All district leagues are much smaller now than they were five or ten years ago, and the risk is that there will be further reduction in club participation, unless available playing locations are retained and don't overburden certain clubs, there is a chance that a consolidation phase can occur

Smaller clubs looking to improve their facilities or at least provide the bare minimum level of comfort in terms of shelter and services, should be encouraged to press ahead with support from governing body and have access to relevant funding streams to make the plans come to fruition. If a smaller club creates a more welcoming environment, it's more likely to attract new players and families and hence create growth in the game.

3.2.2.3 Facilities needs to meet aspirations of smaller clubs

- Enable small clubs to realise their improvement plans by supporting planning applications and providing relevant grant schemes, linked to community development and active participation in sport – getting the local community moving.
- Provide help to clubs to initiate development plans and host national programmes which will in turn allow wider access to potential funding streams
- Provision of access to existing playing facilities and / or new facilities to assist with getting matches played.



Fig 3.2.4. Typical cricket ground layout

3.3 Women & Girls Cricket in Devon



Fig 3.3.1 - Girl cricketer

3.3.1 Devon Womens Cricket League

3.3.1.1 Current Status

Its exciting times for Women's Cricket in Devon. The Devon Cricket Board (DCB) and Devon Womens Cricket League (DWCL) work closely together to ensure that all women cricketers involved in the recreational game, can have access to the form of cricket that they would like to play, whether that be the highest level hardball competition or an evening of softball training at a club.

The DWCL Hardball League was formed in 2009 to create and generate a level of cricket that offers competition for all Womens' Clubs in Devon. There are currently 14 teams competing across three divisions in a 35 over competition. Additionally, a regionally based, "Super 8's" hardball tournament provides a precursor event to the league competition.

In recent years Softball womens cricket has become a very popular, social offering for women at clubs and is a great way to keep fit, learn new skills and meet friends over the summer. In 2018 the DCB arranged the first softball festivals to allow clubs who were getting softball cricket off the ground, an

opportunity to play matches against other like-minded clubs. These events proved to be successful in terms of participation and in 2021 a Devon Softball league was formed with 15 teams competing across four regionally based divisions.

During the winter months an Indoor Cricket League is played for womens' teams, with mini leagues centred in Plymouth and Exeter. Teams compete on a "round robin" basis, culminating a finals day bringing together the winners from each mini-league to determine the county indoor champion team.

Additional to the Devon cricket offerings for women cricketers, clubs can also choose to enter the ECB National T20 Competition.

Devon Womens Hardball Cricket League 2022			
Clubs	Teams	Divisions	Comment
13	14	3	Divisions based on performance
Devon Womens Softball Cricket League 2022			
Clubs	Teams	Divisions	Comment
14	15	4	Divisions based on location

Clubs competing in both formats	2
Clubs competing in hardball format only	11
Clubs competing in softball format only	12



Fig 3.3.2 - Action from the Women and Girls finals day 2022 at Exmouth CC

Image courtesy of Mark Lockett Photography

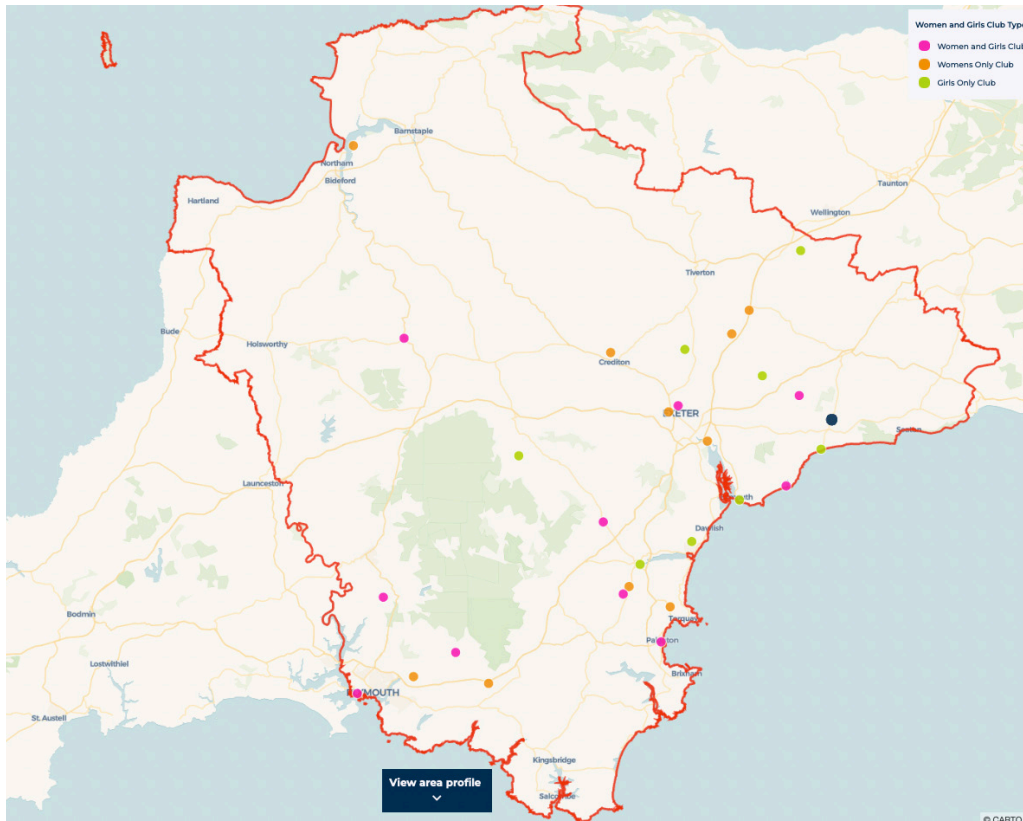


Fig 3.3.3 Women and Girls Cricket Clubs in Devon

3.3.1.2 Aspirations

The aim is to sustain and grow the Womens Hardball League. For 2023 there are 13 womens hardball teams competing in the league, across 2 divisions. The divisions will be structured on ability with a promotion / relegation format.

It is hoped with the growing number of Womens softball teams, that 2024 onwards will ultimately see a return to the 3 division Hardball League structure, with a minimum of 5 teams in each division and a true Premier division providing the high level standard needed to advance the game. The balancing act is to provide grassroots cricket across the county whilst also offering a platform for those wanting to go on to the professional / county level game. The intended 3 division structure lends itself to achieving this aspiration.

The Super'8s competition will continue in 2023 as a first step hardball entry level competition and there is also an intention to offer cricket all year round with the continuation and growth of the indoor leagues in the winter months.

3.3.1.3 Facility needs to meet aspirations

Some of the most common facility needs include:

- Provision of female friendly changing rooms
- Clean, tidy and appropriate toilet facilities which can include a suitable baby changing provision
- Affordable and decent quality indoor facilities for winter competitions and training which Devon Cricket can have some control / influence over.
- Creating female friendly welcoming environments. This can be simple changes and inclusions such as:
 - Safe areas for kids to play
 - A clean and tidy club house
 - Welcoming hosts
 - Hospitality offerings to meet all the club user needs

Having a women's playing representatives on club committees, will help integrate the needs of the women players and spectators into the general facility requirements at a club.

3.3.2 Viewpoint from the DCB Women and Girls Development Officer

The DCB actively implements new initiatives to grow women and girls participation in cricket.

A Women and Girls Development Officer has the responsibility for this key development area. In the past few years the following initiatives have been successful in achieving this objective:

- School age group competitions for girls teams
- Under 11 and Under 13 girls softball county wide league competition for clubs
- Under 13 and Under 15 girls hardball county wide league competition for clubs

- Ladies Softball county wide league competition for clubs
- Friendly monthly festivals for both softball girls and womens cricket
- Competitive tournaments for softball and hardball club cricket
- Pre-season and summer camps to continue skill development and transition to hardball

With these added commitments in either a school or a club fixture diary there are added demands on the playing and recreational facilities. Some additional facility improvements that would assist with delivering these programmes and help to create a better participation experience are detailed below;

- Having a regional or county outdoor hub facility which is easily accessible from all corners of Devon, and able to accommodate women and girls' events outside of their club fixtures, including softball festivals, girls' competitions and at the performance end of the game, county fixtures.
 - Such a central hub, not dependent on any club commitments would greatly enable event planning outside of main holiday periods.
- Provision of more two pitch playing locations would be greatly beneficial as they;
 - lead to better event planning and shorter event days
 - would allow school and county competitions to be played in more locations around the county
 - allow clubs to offer their playing facilities for womens cricket without overplaying existing pitches
- All clubs that offer female only cricket should have appropriate changing facilities
- More clubs having non turf pitches to ease capacity issues placed on grass pitches
- By the end of the facility strategy period all clubs engaged in women and girls cricket should offer both welcoming and inclusive environments.
- For Schools / Indoor locations:
 - Ideal world would provide a central location which Devon Cricket has some control over, to assist with funding such events at minimised cost
 - Schools should have better access to quality playing facilities - particularly artificial pitches

- Bigger school pitches for being able to host outdoor summer events which require multiple matches to take place at the same time.



Fig 3.3.4 - Softball competition winners at Sandford CC

Image courtesy of Chris Cottrell

3.3.3 Viewpoint from Devon Womens County Cricket Club (DWCCC)

DWCCC typically play their home matches at DCL Premier Division grounds. Consultation with the Devon Womens' team manager would indicate that generally the provision of these hosting facilities across the county are generally well coordinated, with well prepared playing surfaces and a welcoming environment for their matches. Additionally the Exeter University Indoor Cricket Centre is made available for senior side training with the quality of facility being very good. Having a central county outdoor playing facility capable of hosting high performance matches against other county Women teams, would be advantageous.

3.3.4 Western Storm (Performance Cricket)

3.3.4.1 Current Status

Overview – Senior Programme

The Western Storm region covers Wales, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall. This is a hugely expansive and diverse region, which provides both exciting implications for the recruitment and development of talented players and some logistical challenges also.

The Western Storm main squad is currently somewhat nomadic, in that it operates out of a number of locations – the respective first class counties of Somerset, Gloucestershire and Glamorgan. With the staging expectations of women’s professional cricket, so far Western Storm fixtures have been prioritised at First Class County clubs – which can deliver both a professional experience for all involved, as well as staging infrastructure that can help us develop the profile of the women’s game (live streaming capabilities as an example).

For training purposes, Western Storm are looking to identify a base – this will enable players and staff to relocate to a location with confidence that a bulk of the training activity will be on one geographical location. Moving forwards, its expected that the number of professional cricketers will grow, which increases the possibility of identifying a ‘home’ with players relocating to that location. To date, this hasn’t been possible.

Overview – Pathway (Academy & Emerging Playing Programme (EPP))

The Western Storm academy programme operates in many locations around the South West & Wales, recognising the demands on young people, the cost of involvement to parents and the geography of the region, Western Storm run a number of weekly ‘hubs’ across the region which enables players to receive a high level of support, local to their home. The location of the hubs are determined partly by the strength of talent pool in geographical areas and the suitability of facilities available. The aim is that a young person will need to travel no more than 45 minutes – 1 hour to access their local hub

Western Storm operates one hub out of the University of Exeter. In recognising some shared aspirations, a partnership has been developed with the University which entails Western Storm coaches providing delivery for the University Women’s programme and in turn, Western Storm receive key facility

access. To date, this relationship has worked very well with access to high quality gym & cricket facilities plus meeting room space enabling a high level of support to be provided to players. This has also enabled Western Storm to monitor incoming talent to the region via the University system.

From a match play perspective, the Western Storm academy plays a number of summer fixtures too. The squad takes part in a formalised ECB calendar of games, an Academy festival as well as arranging a number of friendly fixtures against universities, county women’s teams and other appropriate opposition. The nature of the opposition played, means that the Storm Academy organically plays in many different locations around the region – a principle which is intended to be maintained. Western Storm also runs a number of Talent Observation opportunities to scout potential EPP and Academy players from across the region – these are also spread across the region.



Fig 3.3.5 Western Storm run out at Taunton County Ground

3.3.4.2 Aspirations

Senior Programme

The volume of cricket played is expected to grow from 2023 onwards, with at least one of the competitions due to double in size. In 2022, Western Storm had 6 home games – in 2023 onwards we are likely to see this grow to 9 or 10. In the eventuality of the first class venues being unable to cope with the upturn in home games, there may be a need to explore top quality out-ground venues. These would obviously need to be compliant with ECB specifications. In addition, to bolster the Western Storm competitive calendar it is likely that Western Storm will approach counties in the region to play friendly fixtures against County Women teams and appropriate aged boys county team. Not only will this provide great additional competitive opportunities for players, but will also ensure Storm connects with the region.

From a training perspective, whilst Western Storm are looking to identify a 'base' it is possible that options may be explored for a pre-season trip to a location within the region where a combination of training, team build and match play activities can take place.

Opportunities – Senior Programme:

Depending on first class county capacity, the possibility of a Western Storm competitive fixture, and a Western Storm vs. Devon friendly fixture, could be based in Devon should a suitable facility present itself.

Academy

From winter 2022 onwards, Western Storm will undertake the remit of running Emerging Player Programmes across the region. This will see approximately 40 young players around the region receive coaching support – this does not currently involve a formalised match play programme, though it is likely that Western Storm will introduce some 'intra' match opportunities to help develop players. Whilst this doesn't directly change the Academy programme, it is likely to see an increase in the number of players attending each hub and in turn, a need for more hubs across the region. Its not foreseen that any additional winter hubs will be required in the Devon region in the short term, as current facility requirements meet the demands of the talent pool, though this will be kept closely under review as this may change in the future.

From an academy perspective its not envisaged that the Academy competitive schedule will grow hugely beyond its current size – though work is underway to look at developing summer 'hub' sessions to maintain semi-regular contact with players and provide a more consistent year-round training programme. Likewise, the intention is to also have 5 x middle practice days for the Academy, with locations spread across the region. Its likely that a centrally located performance outdoor hub would prove to be advantageous in supporting this programme.

An additional aspiration of the Western Storm Academy is to develop players beyond just their cricketing prowess. To that end, an 'activation' game is being explored, whereby academy players could get involved in helping / running some coaching activity around an academy match. The objective being to:

- a) lend some support to the grassroots game
- b) develop the players to understand their position as role models to younger players.

To do this there would need to be some strategic consideration to the location of the identified fixture.

From an EPP perspective, it is the intention that 3 x EPP 'South' group winter sessions will be established, bringing together players from Cornwall, Devon and South Somerset and it is also likely that 3 x summer 'match-play' days will be created between the 'North' and 'South' EPP squads that will be hosted in the 'South' of the Western Storm region – with the Exeter University Indoor Cricket Centre being the likely location.

Opportunities – Academy : Consist of the following:

- Continuation of a winter 'Devon' Academy / EPP hub.
- Hosting of summer fixtures – these could be ECB games, or friendly fixtures such as Academy vs. Devon Women and / or University of Exeter.
- Hosting of a summer training hub, hosting of 1 or 2 Western Storm Talent Observation Days.
- Hosting of EPP 'South' match-play days, hosting of 'North' vs. 'South' internal EPP games.

3.3.4.3 Facilities Needs to Meet Aspirations

The following information provides a headline list of requirements when

considering hosting a Western Storm Senior Fixture. There could be some additional ECB requirements. If playing a friendly fixture then there would be some flexibility on some of these expectations, ie. parking for team coaches may not be necessary.

Ground requirements: 2 x Grass nets – 1 per team, available 2 hours before the start of play. Fielding net on outfield for team warm up, 1 for each team.

Wickets/pitches: being to First Class County standard or suitable for County 2nd XI games.

Medical: Physio medical room (this could be an empty room that can be repurposed). A ready supply of ice.

Pavilion: Access throughout the day and open from 3 hours before the start of play. TV/screen & Wi- Fi access.

Ground staff: onsite and available.

Scoreboard: Electronic scoreboards and adequate facilities for scorers.

Sightscreens: Black screens.

Performance Analysis / Streaming: Ability to position cameras at both bowlers ends for coding.

Catering: The ability for two meals to be provided. Depending on the start time, this may be pre & post-match (T20) or interval & post-match (50 overs).

Changing Rooms: Separate changing rooms big enough to cater for 2 x female teams & separate male toilets separate from the public. Separate umpire changing facilities also.

Parking: that caters for 2 teams including space for coach access, and match officials.

Additionally, having a performance playing facility with features as detailed above, would be best located centrally in the county, with easy access to the main arterial road network to minimise travel times.

3.3.5 Girls Cricket in Devon

3.3.5.1 Current Status

In 2022, the DCB, after consultation with the junior regional leagues, formed the Devon Girls' Cricket League, which will co-ordinate and organise all the girls league playing opportunities in the county. The league currently offers playing opportunities for under 11 and 13 softball and under 13 and 15 hardball. The teams are organised into regional divisions. The divisions winners meet at the end of the season for a finals day to see which club will be league Champions. This year was the first time this happened at Exmouth CC, where a very successful finals day and reward and recognition event took place.

2022 League	2022 Number of Teams
Under 11 Countdown Softball League	14 teams across 4 regional divisions
Under 13 Countdown Softball League	7 teams across 2 regional divisions
Under 13 Powerpairs Hardball League	8 teams across 2 regional divisions
Under 15s Super 8s Hardball League	9 teams across 3 regional divisions

Alongside the more formal leagues, the DCB offers other opportunities to play. During the winter and the summer, there are 'turn up and play' festivals for softball cricket, as well as spring and summer opportunities to develop hardball skills.

The DCB also co-ordinate a competition week during the summer, which covers the Lady Taverners softball competitions. Clubs are also able to enter the T20 Lady Taverners hardball competition at the 13, 15 and 19 age group.

3.3.5.2 Aspirations

Winter;

Winter 2023 will see the provision of competitive cricket all year round with the establishment of an indoor winter league for girls. This will fall in line with the indoor leagues that will take place for the women's hardball and softball

In winter 2023 the DCB wish to run indoor hubs for those cricketers who do not access the pathway offer.

Summer;

DCB leagues will continue. It is hoped that the leagues will grow with the addition of at least one team each season and the aspiration is that an additional under 15 softball league and under 11s hardball league maybe added to the league offer.

3.3.5.3 Facilities Needs to Meet Aspirations

In the 2022 season there were 160 games recorded across the season on Play Cricket. This is only games played in the DGCL and not any additional competitions or activities, such as school competitions. With the growth of the league and participation of girls in cricket across the county, the facilities needed to accommodate that are as follows:

- Clubs that are able to accommodate teams of single and mixed sex
- Clubs that are welcoming environments to both male and female players
- Provision of more pitches as demand on club facilities grows , including non-turf pitches
- Provision of grounds that have two pitches or are able to accommodate multi game events such as finals or competition days.
- Indoor facilities that are available and accessible, preferably under the control of the DCB

3.3.6 Summary Of Facilities Needs for the Women's game in Devon

After consultation across the entire women and girls game, within the county and beyond, its evident that the facility needs greatly align. With the continued growth of the girls game and the emphasis from the ECB as a priority objective, its imperative that facility provision focuses on this aspect of the game in future development planning.



Fig 3.3.6 Girls hardball match in progress
Image courtesy of Mark Lockett Photography

3.4 Performance Cricket - Devon County Cricket Club

3.4.1 Current status

Devon County Cricket Club (DCCC) provides a perspective from the highest level of the game in the county.

High ability players from across Devon and further afield are selected to represent the county in various formats of the game. The fixture commitment for DCCC over a typical season is as follows;

- National Counties Championship - DCCC compete in Western Division 1, comprising 5 county teams who play each other once in a 3 day match. Potential for one further 4 day match if team wins their division.
DEMAND on Club pitches - 2 home games, therefore 2 x 3 Day locations
- National County Trophy - DCCC compete in this 50 over one day format which comprises 2 home matches and 2 away matches, with an additional home quarter or semi final if successful.
DEMAND on Club pitches - up to 3 home games, therefore 3 x 1 Day locations
- National Counties T20 Competition - Qualifying games are played locally in four pools - two games are played in one day against the same opposition - which produces four semi-finalists. The four pool winners go through to a finals day at a neutral venue.
DEMAND on Club pitches - 2 home locations
- An additional showcase match event is arranged each season with a local first class county, normally Somerset CCC at a nominated Devon based cricket club

Additionally, the Devon Lions squad is formed from the rising talent pool across the county, attracting players who are developing into future county cricketers. DCCC manage the Devon Lions squad and their fixture programme, which typically consists of the following :

- 4 x one day matches (2 x home and 2 x away)
DEMAND on Club pitches - 2 home locations
- 1 x either 2 day or 3 day match which can be either home or away
DEMAND on Club pitches - 1 x 3 day home location (typically alternate years)

In summary, the above playing commitments can generate up to 11 fixtures in the county per season, to be played at clubs with good quality pitches and well maintained facilities, with up to 3 of these fixtures spanning 2 or 3 days.

Clubs who are allocated a home DCCC fixture will designate prime playing pitches on their square and commit to early and thorough pitch preparation. They use their dedicated grounds staff, to provide the best possible playing surface, for what is considered as a prestigious fixture for their club.

From an indoor training and winter nets perspective, DCCC operate in parallel with Exeter University Indoor Centre and Bicton College. On balance the Exeter centre is superior in terms of facility features, however Bicton is considered more than acceptable for specialist coaching groups of up to a dozen, which is typically how DCCC conduct their training sessions. Its expected that this dual training location will continue to operate for the foreseeable future.

Main venues for the longer format matches are currently at Sidmouth, Exeter, North Devon and Sandford, as it's considered that the pitches hold up well for the prolonged playing time. Additionally the overall experience on match days at these venues is considered to be high, in terms of support, liaison, quality of facilities and provision of hospitality services. Other venues at Bovey Tracey, Plymouth, Tiverton (Heathcoat), Exmouth and Torquay provide pitches for one day and T20 fixtures, equally with good overall playing experience being offered. More recently Seaton and Cornwood have been added successfully as club venues to assist with the rejuvenated Devon Lions fixture programme.

3.4.2 Aspirations

Consultation with DCCC Chairman and Chief Executive has highlighted some observations, linked specifically to facilities, which could contribute in bringing the DCCC game closer to the wider cricket community in Devon and improve the playing experience, not only for the players but for everyone who supports and follows the county game. These are detailed below.

As mentioned above, all DCCC fixtures over the cricket season are played at club venues across the county, and whilst this model fits well with "flying the flag" across the county, there is still room for improvement to achieve a better geographical spread. Currently the standard of pitches suitable for

hosting county games are fewer than desired, which prevents being able to achieve further and wider distribution of fixtures.

Conversely, its appreciated that requesting clubs to host DCCC fixtures can occasionally put strain on clubs who may be challenged with either pitch availability / capacity issues, and / or already overworked club volunteers battling to stay on top of the playing demand at their clubs.

The option of centralising fixtures at one location is not one which is currently available to DCCC and furthermore this would not necessarily be desirable, because of the commitment to play at different county locations. Most National Counties hold this same view, however there could be some merits in having access to a high performance, central playing facility which when used in conjunction with the club locations, may assist to shoulder the burden on clubs and be particularly useful for some matches.

3.4.3 Facilities needs to meet aspirations

The following suggestions are intended to provide a vision for improvements which could benefit the experience for those engaged directly in the county game and also those who enjoy following the county game and have the same desire to see DCCC both evolve and develop in a positive way:

- Support clubs to develop their playing facilities to enable more pitches to meet the requirements of National Counties cricket. This applies particularly but not exclusively to 3 day pitches.
- Support improvement through training, guidance and funding, the knowledge, experience and capability of club groundkeepers to achieve the necessary improvement in playing surfaces at more clubs. In some cases this may require the need for financial support to obtain necessary grounds machinery to improve pitch preparation and preservation, but it may also be more simply developing better standards than can be adopted consistently by club groundkeepers.

- Further explore any possibility of having a centralised, high performance, outdoor playing ground which can be equipped with quality recreational and training facilities that satisfy all appropriate ECB specifications. Such a facility could then be used in conjunction with designated club locations to provide a more comprehensive, high quality and less demanding solution to meeting DCCC playing pitch needs.
- Provision of a de-fibrillator at each venue hosting DCCC matches and training sessions. Similarly having the confidence that a hosting club is fully equipped with first aid provisions and ideally the services of a qualified first aid practitioner would provide added reassurances for all involved in the event



Fig 3.4.1 National Counties cricket match in progress at Sidmouth CC

Image Courtesy Conrad Sutcliffe

3.5 Performance Cricket - Youth Development & County Age Group Performance Pathway

3.5.1 Current status and challenges

From September 2018 the Youth Development Cricket (YDC) Programme replaced District Cricket in Devon. The main purpose being to provide a greater and more equal opportunity to young, aspiring cricketers across Devon, enabling individuals to develop faster, better and more comprehensively as both cricketers and young people. The mission statement for the YDC programme, is as follows;

To identify talented players within a structured environment, where they are encouraged to develop as an individual and as part of a team.

Under the Youth Development Programme, a tier of cricket between club and county age group was established. By existence this has created more playing and assessment opportunities, which in turn requires more playing facilities.

The process requires clubs nominating their talented young cricketers for the relevant YDC age group, allowing the Devon Cricket Pathway team to provide a structured training programme, over the winter, at regional development centres in the county. Those individuals who display the necessary attributes, ability and potential for further development, are then selected to become part of the County Age Group (CAG) squads.

The YDC programme is open (within reason) in terms of number of participants at the regional development centres (development phase), but the next stage of CAG cricket is then restricted to a single squad dimension. Fig 3.5.1 below identifies the evolution process of the YDC Programme for boy and girl cricketers in Devon.

In order to better understand the scale of participation and demand for facilities, there are 8 YDC age groups (5 boys and 3 girls) and 9 CAG age groups (6 boys and 3 girls). This rolls up to over four hundred participants across both programmes, engaging up to 25 coaches. The number of matches played, determines the “days of cricket” consumed. The YDC programme

normally has six matches per age group, meaning 48 fixtures and the CAG fixture programme totalled 105 matches. For the purposes of this study we have worked on 150 days of cricket across both programmes during a typical summer.

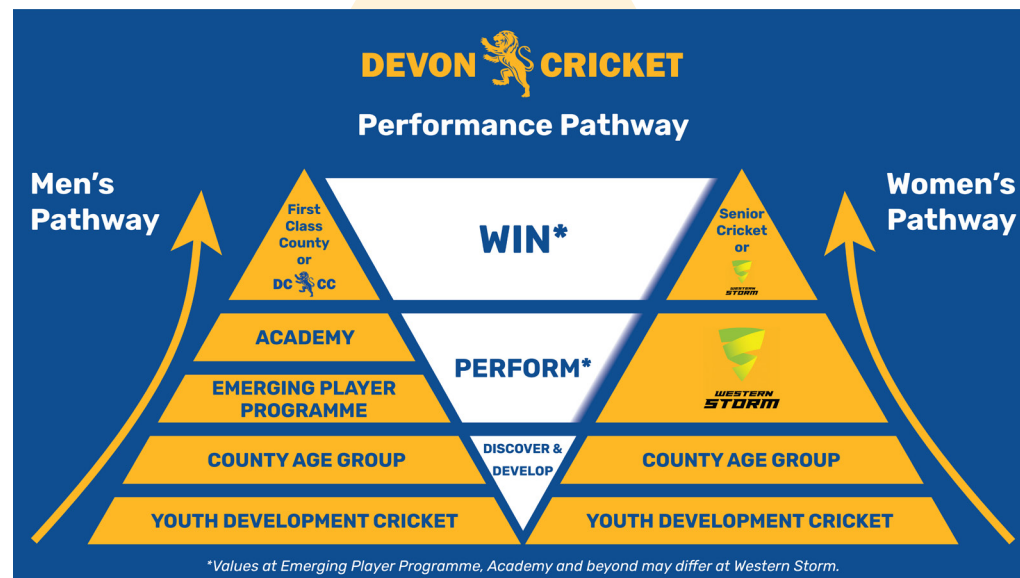


Fig 3.5.1 Devon Cricket Performance Pathway

In 2022 there were approximately 30 Devon club venues used to host player pathway matches, with several clubs offering multiple dates.

Based on the participation numbers of young cricketers engaged in both the YDC and CAG programmes it is evident that there are significant challenges in being able to deliver an effective and dynamic offering, that participants find stimulating and rewarding. Whilst these challenges can extend beyond provision of suitable facilities, the purpose of this review focusses solely on the facilities aspect.

During the winter months, the YDC programme is conducted indoors at two regional centres in Plymouth and Exeter. These are generally considered suitable for the typical performance activities conducted, particularly at the Exeter University Indoor Cricket centre, where facilities are purpose built for cricket.

The real challenge begins when the programme moves its focus outdoors from April/May. Finding, and hiring local club facilities is becoming increasingly difficult as clubs continue to develop, offering a wider cricket experience to their members. Growth in junior sides, softball teams and women's cricket are correctly seen as positive steps forward for developing cricket in the community.

However such growth also presents real pressure on cricket clubs to provide suitable playing surfaces and slots in the diary to accommodate more fixtures and events. This demand can therefore restrict access of suitable club's to the Devon player pathway initiatives, making it challenging to book adequate venues. More and more clubs are unable to offer their facilities due to priority capacity demands. It's often the bigger clubs with the better facilities that have the greatest demands on their playing facilities.

For the same reasons, finding cricket grounds that have capacity to host multi-day cricket is even more difficult. The drive from the ECB for more age groups to play multi-day cricket, adds another burden onto existing, under pressure clubs who predominantly rely on a volunteer workforce to prepare pitches.

3.5.2 Aspirations

The potential of having a good quality, outdoor facility which isn't burdened by a high level of playing capacity, would massively ease the challenge of finding suitable playing venues over the summer months.

Furthermore, if such a facility could be centrally located and within easy reach of the main transport infrastructure, this would make it more accessible from across the county and further afield for visiting teams.

If such a facility was available it could be used in conjunction with cricket clubs who are able to offer their facilities for less frequent playing events, enabling the programme to still "reach out" across the county and provide opportunities for player's to occasionally be able to perform closer to home doesn't have the pressure of multiple club side would really help.

From a summer training perspective, it would be extremely advantageous to have access to grass practice tracks, either on the cricket square, using roll-on practice nets or perhaps static nets with prepared grass tracks. Additionally access to non -turf practice nets are an essential facility for outdoor training routines.



Fig 3.5.2 County Age Group boys training in progress



Fig 3.5.3 County age group team on South Africa tour

3.5.3 Facilities needs to meet aspirations

Consultation with key members of the Player Pathway has identified that the ideal solution to ease the demand on cricket clubs providing so many playing pitches, would be to provide a central facility, not directly under the control of any one cricket club.

Establishing such a suitable and central, “outdoor performance hub” for Devon Cricket, able to host a good percentage of red ball, white ball (black sightscreens) and also multi-day cricket matches, along with offering a summer training base, would be extremely beneficial and undoubtedly raise the standard and profile of the youth game in Devon.

The intention would still be to “showcase” age group cricket across the county by playing a decent percentage of matches at well located and facilitated club venues. So as a guide it could be considered that a “Central hub” could host approximately 40% of the overall match playing commitment and a higher percentage of the training and trials requirements. In total this could equate to approximately 60 days of cricket, incorporating a split comprising:

- Mid April to mid September – Most Sunday’s
- 5 weekdays during May half term
- 3 weekdays per week during the summer holidays.

Matches played at a central hub, could include up to 30 CAG games and 20 YDC days over the season. The majority of activities would be representative matches but training days could also be hosted on a regular basis.

Regarding specific facilities needs to support County Age Group performance training and match preparation the following requirements have been defined:

- Training grass strips in the middle with roll-on, portable caged nets
- Minimum 2 lane, good quality, non-turf practice static nets
- Two pitch facilities can be extremely useful for “double-header” age group fixtures with visiting counties. More games can get played over a shorter period.
- Adequate and secure provision for parking within close proximity of the cricket ground
- Modern and welcoming club facilities, including female friendly changing rooms



Fig 3.5.4 County Age Group girls training in progress

3.6 Youth Cricket in Devon

3.6.1 Youth Leagues

Across Devon there are four district youth leagues which essentially operate in alignment with the county regional divides. It is estimated that these leagues collectively attract more than 2000 young cricketers to participate in either friendly or competitive matches each week, against other similar aged children in safe and friendly club environments.

3.6.1.1 Current Status

It is fair to say that district youth leagues are a window into the future health of the game in Devon and their success underpins the remainder of the county cricket structure and drives sustainability at the recreational cricket clubs, who actively participate in their local league.

Whilst no immediate statistics present themselves, its widely accepted that the vast majority of senior cricketers today, will have started to play at junior level at their local club, competing in the district youth league.

Generally the youth leagues in Devon are well structured and have evolved over the years to adopt a framework which works well for the member clubs and of course the parents who have to transport their children to matches.

From information received from most of the youth leagues consulted, it can be concluded that there are varying levels of participation in youth cricket, when compared to previous years. Some leagues are advising there is modest or even healthy growth in the number of participating clubs / teams, whilst one league is seeing a modest decline in participation, which is causing concern. This section of the Facilities Strategy addresses the aspirations of the youth leagues and how facility improvements can help them to develop and thrive .

Of course the number of children playing in the youth leagues is unlikely to total the overall number of juniors who participate in cricket at their recreational club. All Stars and Dynamos national programmes and other club initiatives to attract younger junior players will add more participation and lay the foundation for cricketers entering club junior age group teams.

3.6.1.2 Aspirations

The introduction of softball match playing opportunities for the younger junior age groups (up to ages 10 and 11) will help to grow participation and enable young cricketers to evolve better into the hardball game as they get older. Having both softball friendly cricket and hardball competitive playing options at Under 11 group, provides a wider choice for participation and encourages some junior cricketers who might be somewhat apprehensive of the hard ball, to build their confidence level, and prepare them for the next step.

Providing junior players with access to good quality club training facilities such as practice nets will allow team coaches to provide a better training experience, allowing the junior cricketer to not only improve their game, but also feel more fulfilled. If indoor training facilities within the locality can also be made available to cricket club's, then it allows them to extend their offering to winter indoor training and pre-season team preparation. For the older Junior age groups this should extend to indoor practice nets with good lighting levels and safe playing surface.

To make parents and extended families feel more welcome as valued club members, cricket clubs are encouraged to open their social facilities on match and training evenings. Its realised that this may put an added burden on club volunteers, but it will make the junior section more integrated in club life and may even generate some additional volunteers who would be willing to help.

With many junior matches being played on grass pitches, whatever that can be done to make it easier for groundskeepers to prepare good quality pitches should be encouraged and rewarded. Better quality pitches will contribute to a better playing experience for all.

To encourage more growth in junior cricket, resulting in more successful junior leagues, better promotion of cricket in schools is required along with the inclusion of cricket in the sporting curriculum. This will certainly have a positive influence and encourage more individuals to search out their nearest cricket club offering junior cricket.

3.6.1.3 Facilities Needs to Meet Aspirations

Whilst softball cricket can be played on a well cut outfield, clubs with good quality non turf pitches are able to offer a suitable and consistent playing surface for softball matches. These can also be used for the younger age group hardball matches. Where clubs are seeking to install a non turf pitch to enable more junior cricket to be played and consequently ease the burden on groundskeepers to prepare grass tracks, they should be encouraged and supported.

Preparing pitches for junior matches can be quite time consuming and often during the week this is an additional demand on busy groundskeepers. Having some temporary boundary ropes on reels that can be quickly deployed on the outfield and avoid disturbing the main boundary rope, will at least provide one quick gain on time.

Also marking out pitch lengths for junior games can be both confusing and time consuming. With some district leagues having junior sides at each age group, there are potentially up to seven different pitch lengths that would need changing for each age group game, when using the same track. To aid the groundskeeper with pitch preparation, consideration can be given to making better use of a non-turf pitch with multiple pitch length markings staying semi permanent on the surface. Further thought could also be given to standardising pitch lengths across more than one age group to avoid having to re-mark for every match. This would obviously entail detailed consultation with the ECB and is likely to meet resistance for valid reasons.

Clubs that have good quality practice nets at their facility, are able to offer a more rounded coaching provision which will obviously benefit individuals and help to retain talented players at their club. Clubs who aspire to have decent training facilities should be supported wherever possible. Additionally, in areas where the quality of indoor cricket training facilities is lacking or even non-existent, then clubs should combine their efforts to lobby for such a facility to exist. The challenge of limited indoor training facilities across Devon, is considered further in other sections of this report.

The evenings particularly at the start of the junior cricket

season, can be quite cold, so opening clubhouse facilities, offering warmth and comfort, together with clean toilets and changing room access on match nights will be welcomed by spectators and also participants. Having the ability to offer hot drinks and snacks will also contribute to creating a more welcoming environment. Whilst its understood that providing a level of hospitality for members and visitors is a demand on a clubs volunteer base, it may be that one or two colts parents would be prepared to offer their support after appropriate training is received.

Clubs who aspire to provide a welcoming environment for their junior players and their families, should be encouraged and supported to do so. A further way of ensuring that the interests of a clubs junior division are given a fair consideration, is to have a Junior representative on the committee.



Fig 3.6.1 Youth cricket festival at Whimble Cricket Ground

3.6.2 All Stars and Dynamos

3.6.2.1 Current Status and Growth

The ECB sponsored All Stars and Dynamos programmes run during the summer months at the majority of cricket clubs in Devon. Over the past few years almost 3000 children aged between five and eleven years have taken part in one of these programmes, with nearly 60 cricket clubs and other centres delivering the sessions.

The All Stars programme, which started in 2018, targets children aged between five and eight years, with no previous cricket experience necessary. It is designed to introduce children to the sport, teaching them new skills, helping them make new friends and have a great time doing so.

The Dynamos programme was delayed getting off the ground due to Covid, however it has been running for two full seasons up to now and has attracted approximately 1000 eight to eleven year olds across the county each year. Dynamos, being the next step up from All Stars, has more of a cricket influence built into the coaching theme, which prepares the individuals for evolving into club junior cricket.

These programmes have helped to introduce young children to a sport they may not have considered otherwise, and equally important it introduces them to their local cricket clubs, who are then able to raise the interest level for most participants and steer the children into their own youth cricket teams. For clubs to be able to run these programmes, they have to allocate “Activators” within their club to deliver the prescribed training drills and games. Activators can either be existing club coaches, parents of participants, or anyone new to cricket who is willing to assist. All will have to undertake some basic delivery and safeguarding training as well as complete a DBS check to be able to assist at the sessions.

3.6.2.2 Demand on Club Facilities

These programmes are designed to have minimal demand on a clubs facilities. Sessions can be delivered on cricket outfield, other playing fields, playgrounds, and MUGA's, with all equipment needed to run the sessions being provided by the ECB.

A well delivered session depends heavily on the advanced planning and set up, and then the engagement of the Activators with the participants. For many participants and their parents, it's the first time they have had any involvement with a cricket club and the environment may seem unfamiliar to them. Its therefore important that a participating club makes the extra effort to make their club feel welcoming and accommodating.

Opening the clubhouse during the hour session and for a short while afterwards and being able to offer a suitable level of hospitality, will allow new visitors to the club to feel more comfortable and refreshed. Such hospitality may have an influence on the continued involvement that a family has with the club after the programme finishes.

The DCB support all Devon clubs who run either All Stars or Dynamos and in many cases, both. They have also promoted the delivery of Dynamos programmes in areas with little cricket infrastructure in place, by engaging other community sports groups and training them to run the sessions. This has proven to be successful in some areas of high deprivation where cricket is not widely considered as a sporting option for many.



Fig 3.6.2 Dynamos Session in Progress

3.6.3 Education Cricket Sites in Devon

3.6.3.1 Engagement with State Schools

Devon Cricket operating in partnership with key stakeholders –‘Chance to Shine’ and the ECB have a mission to lead, develop and support opportunities for all schools and their pupils to access, participate and excel in the game of cricket. To that extent, the DCB engages with a wide number of schools in Devon to promote and deliver a cricket participation experience for hundreds of school children.

In 2022 approximately 20 indoor secondary competition events took place, engaging 111 teams from 37 participating schools. Additionally 22 outdoor secondary competition events took place. At primary school level, eight regional indoor festivals took place with one finals day bringing the successful teams together. This involved participation from 60 schools and 80 teams. Also approximately 20 outdoor local primary school festivals place over the summer months.

School events are staffed and managed by DCB appointed community coaches and women and girls development officer, as many of the events listed above are girls competitions. School Games Organisers are also engaged in officiating matches and coordinating their teams

From a facility perspective, normally schools host the indoor events in their indoor sports halls and therefore there is no control over the quality of the facility. It is a struggle to find venues with enough space to host more than one match at a time, meaning that event times can be quite long and teams not involved in the match will have a considerable amount of inactive time during the day. The indoor tennis centre at Exeter University is the best venue in the county as it offers multiple pitch availability which keeps all teams engaged more and makes for a more dynamic event.

Chance to Shine funding is regularly utilised for primary school events. The booking of venues like the indoor tennis centre can be quite expensive, and access times are well managed, meaning events must stay on schedule or run the risk of not completing. Outdoor school events are usually hosted by the local cricket club, who typically are able to offer sufficient outdoor space to run multiple matches simultaneously, however with a noticeable increase in

schools entering competitions, available space can still be an issue. Generally cricket clubs are very accommodating of school events allowing good access to their club facilities. The main reason for hosting secondary school events at cricket clubs is that schools generally aren’t well equipped with facilities suitable for hosting a cricket match. Consequently, It does have the benefit of showcasing their local cricket club to young potential cricketers.

3.6.3.2 Engagement with Private Sector Schools

Private sector schools tend to be much better equipped for cricket participation with most in Devon providing cricket participation on their curriculum. School facilities at Stover, Blundells, West Buckland, Plymouth College to name a few, are made available for wider cricket use from time to time throughout the cricket season and some local clubs are able to make use of pitches at private schools to play their 3rd 4th XI club league matches. The focus of on cricket facilities at the private sector schools is not included in this study, however its widely recognised that such schools do generously offer their facilities for the use of the wider cricket community and this is appreciated by all.

3.6.3.3 Engagement with Universities

Exeter University is heavily engaged in providing cricket facilities for the city of Exeter and further afield.

It’s indoor Ondaatje Devon Cricket Centre is not only the operational base for the Devon Cricket Board but it provides a fully compliant and equipped indoor hall, which hosts many users, mainly for performance cricket training, such as County Age Groups and Western Storm. An indoor cricket league for the Exeter area teams also operates from the cricket centre. It is the best overall indoor facility in the county and the university cooperates well with Devon Cricket and other external user groups to enable good availability. First and foremost it is a facility dedicated to the many men and women University cricket teams, with dedicated University coaches on hand to administer training for the students. The Ondaatje Devon Cricket Centre sets the standard for other indoor facilities to achieve.

The university also has a two pitch outdoor facility at Topsham on the south east city boundary. In addition to regular and frequent university usage, Topsham Cricket Club use the facility as their home base for both senior and junior cricket, along with other performance cricket teams such as Western Storm. Having two adjacent pitches can be beneficial for hosting competitions when the facility is available, with junior Under 13 and Under 15 finals days and Primary Schools softball finals being held there in recent years. The site however is located adjacent to the M5 motorway and as such there is a high level of almost continuous background noise, which can be off-putting for both players and spectators. The facility has good quality changing room space as it doubles up as a rugby facility, however there is no real social space or catering facility on site, which can prevent more prestigious cricket events being held there.

With Exeter University as the major exception, there is no other notable university engagement with cricket in Devon. Other universities at Plymouth having teams but no facility of their own.

3.6.3.4 Chance to Shine – challenges and successes

Chance to Shine is a national charity that aims to give all children the opportunity to play, learn and develop through cricket. Chance to Shine coaches work in schools to provide children with a brilliant first experience of cricket. As well as the physical benefits of regular activity, cricket is used to teach children important key life skills that will help them beyond the playground including respect and fair play.

The programme also seeks to develop skills like communication, leadership and perseverance that will benefit individuals throughout their life.

Through the “Chance to Shine” schools delivery programme, Devon Cricket reaches a larger number of schools in the urban areas of Torbay, Exeter and Plymouth. This consists of primary state school delivery and secondary school girls programmes. These programmes are delivered by DCB community cricket coaches located close to the delivery zones.

Primary schools in the inner cities tend to have facilities with a wide quality range of indoor and outdoor spaces and condition, ranging from

covered MUGA’s and large halls, to inadequately sized outdoor playgrounds and smaller halls with limited availability due to doubling up as lunch or reception areas with very few having a separate / additional sports halls. Further details on this programme and facility challenges are covered in Section 3.9



Fig 3.6.3. Chance to Shine schools training in Plymouth

3.6.3.5 Facility needs to grow participation

Generally speaking private sector schools are well equipped with cricket facilities, with dedicated and well maintained cricket pitches. Whereas state schools are quite the opposite, either lacking a dedicated playing field and/or a non-turf pitch to encourage more participation in the game.

Where a cricket club has a need for more playing space in their locality to cope with an increase in playing numbers, a solution may be their local secondary school playing field, if it could be equipped with a non-turf pitch, adequate changing space and toilet facilities. Setting up a partnership between a cricket club and their local school site could provide more cricket playing facilities and benefit the school in the process by having a means of playing more cricket without the need for additional groundskeeping work.

As a result, funding bodies should be able to look more favourably on such partnerships, without evidence of tenure from a club perspective being a road-block.

Being able to support the various DCB organised school event festivals and finals at a readily accessible, centrally located two pitch venue, equipped with suitable and spacious playing surfaces for multiple matches, together with being able to offer a welcoming social and viewing space would make a huge difference to the participation and spectating experience.

Whilst not directly a facilities matter, to attract more children into cricket, there needs to be a wider catchment. ECB should continue lobbying the state education sector to offer cricket on their sporting curriculum. Recreational clubs should be encouraged to forge better links with their local primary and secondary schools, including offering to host school events at their facility and where possible offer coaching assistance to get school programmes off

the ground. The DCB are also able to offer coaching education to school PE teachers to help get these programmes up and running.

3.7 Grounds and Pitch Management

3.7.1 Challenges Facing the Volunteer Groundskeeper

The work of the volunteer club groundskeeper is probably the most undervalued role in cricket.

A decent and consistent playing surface can make the difference between an enjoyable playing experience and not. Achieving this, takes knowledge, experience and effort. Very often a club groundskeeper is expected to perform minor miracles with limited training, ageing or obsolete equipment and unfavourable weather conditions, to prepare pitches on which players are quick to pass comment and in some cases criticism, for just having to turn up and play on it.

Many would consider the groundskeepers role to be a thankless task, but without their dedication, cricket would simply not happen.

For the purposes of this strategy, Devon Cricket invited groundskeepers from across the county to list their perception of the regular challenges faced and advise potential solutions to drive improvements. These challenges are summarised below;

3.7.1.1 Equipment

Machinery and equipment needs can be varied to suit individual club needs, however there are usually consistent items of machinery needed to effectively manage pitch and outfield preparation. Clubs will normally own the basic kit needed to perform the routine tasks (square mowers, outfield mowers, roller and scarifier), however this equipment may be in a poor or unreliable condition, even old to the extent of obsolescence, or lacking in maintenance, which affects performance.

The lack of availability of grants obtainable through the ECB and Sport England makes it difficult for clubs to own and operate a full suite of good quality groundskeeping equipment.

What is typically more lacking at clubs are the more specialist items of grounds machinery such as;

- verti-cutters - important for thatch removal from the surface throughout

the season to maintain bounce and carry.

- verti-drains - to aerate the outfields and possibly the square to stimulate healthy grass growth

If grounds equipment is not properly maintained it will either affect performance through inconsistent / erratic operation or ultimately will lead to failure, usually at time when least wanted. Few clubs have adequate redundancy of equipment, so failure of a roller or fine cut mower in the days leading up to a new pitch coming into use, can cause serious problems. Its fair to say that most groundskeepers are not mechanics , so whilst some of the basic maintenance tasks can be conducted (after training), major service and preventative maintenance needs to be outsourced and this often means added but essential expense.

3.7.1.2 Budgetting and Cost of Consumables

Rising inflation rates will mean regular consumables such as fertiliser, seed, loam and line marking, will increase considerably in price over the coming years. Groundskeepers will need to ensure their club takes this into consideration when preparing their running cost budgets. If consumable purchases are scaled back as a result of unplanned cost, it will lead to inadequate coverage, and inevitably pitch quality will suffer.

Looking at the wider budget for effective ground and pitch preparation, club groundskeepers must regularly communicate to their club committee, the justification for replacement or new equipment and the likely cost. Clubs are frequently challenged with affordability issues and therefore have to determine the most important / deserving case for expenditure, based around their limited budget. This can often lead to “patching up” grounds equipment to stretch it’s working life. Whilst this is understood at times to be a necessity, it’s important to make sure that this doesn’t lead to a compromise in safety functionality of any equipment, which may expose individuals to harm through operation.

Cost of equipment maintenance and annual end of season square renovations must also be factored into club operating budgets. From discussion, it would seem that this can get overlooked and then when a request is made it can be met with a level of unwillingness, particularly if the

committee is not fully appreciative of the importance of task.

3.7.1.3 Consistent and Good Pitch Performance

Many factors influence the ability to prepare good quality pitches and underperforming pitches can occur due to deficiencies in any of these factors. Some of these influences are detailed below:

- Good end of season renovation to clean and remove thatch, address levels and re-seeding.
- Alertness to ph and organic matter levels, phosphate, potassium and magnesium levels; sand, silt, clay composition; root breaks, layering etc. Regular soil analysis through core sampling and testing, will help “get to know” the square. This knowledge will significantly guide improvement priorities.
- Good after care and over winter maintenance practice to support good grass density. A good strong sward is essential to all that follows in the spring/summer
- Good pre-season rolling practice
- Deep watering of pitches prior to match preparation
- Preparing pitches from at least 10 days out, not in the week of play. Greater ability then to manage them to match day, according to drying conditions.
- Timely and appropriate rolling in lead up to match play.
- Routine verticutting and brushing to prevent thatch build up and encourage sward density
- Play at 7mm/9mm not to < 6mm. Leave more grass at ends.

These above examples demonstrate that to drive forward with consistently good quality playing pitches there is a need for the following elements to be in place:

- Knowledgeable and experienced groundskeepers
- Availability of suitable test and analysis equipment *
- Access to full range of reliable grounds equipment, including verti-cutters
- Availability of water supply at the square or within reasonable (hose length) distance

- Ability to dedicate the time necessary to conduct the full pitch preparation steps

*To assist clubs in assessing their pitch quality the Grounds Management Association (GMA) have Regional Pitch Advisors who are able to visit grounds and carry out inspection and testing against clearly defined criteria, backed up by an assessment report which will grade the quality of pitch, under their Performance Quality Standard (PQS) process, with recommendations provided accordingly to gain improvement.

Club groundskeepers undoubtedly obtain greater knowledge of their square from participating in this process.

The challenge however is that due to resourcing constraints, GMA pitch advisor visits are infrequent, making it difficult to access all clubs in a timely manner.

County Pitch Advisors (CPA's) in Devon are also able to assist clubs in assessing any issues that a club is experiencing. They can offer advice and assist with escalating issues to the GMA, if there is a considered need.

Additionally the weather can hamper the preparation of pitches even if the above steps are able to be implemented. Having on hand suitable pitch covers is essential to preserving the playing pitch in the lead up to matches.

Roll on covers in most cases are the preferred solution for the groundskeeper as they allow the pitch to “breathe” and are easier to deploy, particularly if there is only one person in attendance. Flat sheet covers can be a better solution in some circumstances; if the pitch has a slope or if heavy, prolonged rain is forecast. In some cases a combination of both roll-on and flat sheet covers can be used to protect a wider area of the square.

Whatever pitch cover solution that a club selects, its essential that the integrity of the cover is not compromised as full protection is necessary. Any rips or holes in the cover material will lead to ingress of water over the area being protected.

If covers are looked after, then they can last well in excess of five seasons, but they need to be correctly stowed when not in use, ideally protected from sunlight, and removed for internal storage during the winter months.

During the season, the clubs in the top divisions of the Devon Cricket League receive pitch marks, from appointed umpires, who assess the performance of

the playing surface against defined criteria. Whilst this is considered to be a useful tool to assist the groundskeeper in knowing areas for improvement, there is little, if any, access to assist clubs in driving forward with remedial improvements. Furthermore there is concern over the interpretation of criteria and the consistency in the pitch scoring, which can lead on some occasions to de-motivation for a groundskeeper who may have battled against all odds to deliver a playing surface, only to receive a low score. Generally the pitch marking assessment process is welcomed but it is considered that there could be improvements to drive consistency and factor in external influences.

3.7.1.4 Experience and Gaining Proficiency

Normally in a voluntary capacity, groundskeepers can vary in their knowledge levels, with experience being gained by time in the role.

Any one new to the role can easily feel like they've been thrown in at the deep end, which can be daunting. It can be very comforting, particularly in the early stages of getting to grips with the role, to know there are others more experienced, who can offer guidance and there is some structured training available.

County Pitch Advisors are available to clubs in Devon to provide voluntary grounds management support.

It is generally felt however that more training could be provided to a wider groundskeeping audience, to help prepare individuals for pitch preparation tasks and to share best practices.



Fig 3.7.1 Demonstration of new equipment



Fig 3.7.2 Soil testing in progress

3.7.1.5 Essential End of Season Pitch Renovations

Experienced groundskeepers will say that you can predict to a large extent how a pitch will perform in the summer, by the level of work and activity on the surface over the winter.

Unless adequate budgets are available to conduct the end of season renovation tasks of stripping all thatch, dressing with loam, addressing levels and re-seeding, performance the following season will suffer with pitches likely to play slow with irregular bounce.

As this work is intensive, it is often outsourced to grounds maintenance contractors who can charge significant fees for provision of labour, materials and machinery to conduct the work. Many clubs are not able to fund such activities and therefore attempt the work themselves with varying levels of success

More strain is exerted on outfield these days due partly to high participation numbers in national programme sessions (All Stars and Dynamos) which are typically performed on the outfield. Due to prolonged dry spells, as experienced in the recent 2022 season, added wear on the surface affected grass coverage and growth. Off season verti-draining and seeding may be necessary to reinstate healthy grass cultivation of the outfield.

3.7.1.6 Storage Space

Each club has its own specific storage needs, but invariably there are many clubs who have to operate with cramped or undersized storage facilities, which in some case can lead to safety risks having to climb over equipment, or being restricted from exiting in an emergency.

Some storage facilities are well laid out with adequate protection from the elements, however others are quite the opposite, with limited access, space and weather protection, which can lead to frustration of having to move equipment like a chess exercise to get to the unit at the back of the shed.

3.7.1.7 Volunteer support

The role of the groundskeeper can often feel solitary and whilst some prefer to work autonomously there are also occasions where workload and timing deadlines demand additional support.

Whether its because the role of groundskeeper is not fully understood and appreciated by club members or perhaps because they feel inhibited for one

reason or another, there is often a reluctance to offer assistance at times when its needed the most. This can have de-motivational consequences or in fact lead to a groundskeeper deciding to call it a day. Clubs which can integrate other willing volunteers as part of a grounds team have the best chance of achieving success and retaining key volunteers.



3.7.2 Improvements to Assist Groundskeepers

Some suggestions for improvements which would assist club groundskeepers perform their duties more efficiently and competently are listed below in no particular order:

3.7.2.1 Equipment

- Lack of grant accessibility to support clubs needing to source essential grounds machinery and equipment, causes real strain and leads to club groundskeepers having to regularly struggle to prepare pitches with inferior or unsuitable equipment. Having access to a small grant fund specifically to help clubs, perhaps via match funding, to source essential grounds equipment, would enable clubs to improve the quality of pitch preparation and greatly assist with groundskeeper morale. The Devon Cricket League are currently considering methods to help

clubs to source equipment that may have failed and need replacing urgently. This is a recognition that the financial hit to clubs who may not have budgeted for such an expense can be significant.

- Provision of training to assist Groundskeepers to maintain equipment and get prolonged good service out of their machines.
- With the phasing out of fossil fuels, comes the introduction of electric propelled e-mowers and other machinery. Market prices of this equipment, currently at least 50% more than an equivalent petrol machine, makes it prohibitive to most clubs to afford to purchase the preferred option, which also vastly reduces likelihood of failure and increases lifespan. Grants for tackling climate change should extend to machinery that will reduce a club's carbon footprint.
- Specialist machinery used only once or twice over the year is difficult to justify purchasing for most recreational cricket clubs. Other counties in England used a "shared kit" provision for end of season renovations, with a trailer used to move equipment between grounds. Groundskeepers in the county who have availability after the playing season ends could be enlisted to create a small team who could offer the service to clubs. Further investigation into the feasibility of providing this service and the interest level from clubs would be required but fundamentally this may provide a solution for more clubs being able to complete the essential renovations.



Fig 3.7.6 Equipment Training and evaluation

3.7.2.2 Budgetting and Cost of Consumables

- Other counties have successfully implemented buying groups to yield better pricing of normal grounds consumables. This could be explored further amongst clubs and potentially a group could be formed
- To ensure the equipment and consumable priorities of the grounds team are presented and justified to club committees, the Groundskeeper or a nominated deputy should be represented on the committee.
- Groundskeepers to have influence on club development plans, so that future replacement equipment purchases, can be planned into spending budgets with as much visibility as possible.

3.7.2.3 Consistent and Good Pitch Performance



- Extend GMA Regional Pitch inspector visits to reach more clubs. If quarterly visits to each region were implemented then up to six clubs per region could receive this valuable assessment each year.
- Provide more exposure of County Pitch Advisors (CPA's) to their nearby clubs and ensure that new groundskeepers at clubs are aware who they can approach within Devon to obtain advice on any pitch related concerns.
- Promote the need for effective end of season renovation work on club squares
- Provide clubs with best practice guidelines on pitch preparation and the optimum timeline for each step – Promote the training and reference material available from the GMA website.
- Encourage all Groundskeepers and their assistants to join the GMA. Grassroots clubs can join at a reasonable annual premium, which allows access to all materials, for multiple users.
- GMA are planning to roll out an app called “PitchPower”, which has been used in football circles for a few years already. Target for roll out is ahead of 2023 cricket season. Purpose is to use modern technology to initiate a professional assessment of the pitch quality at clubs, without the need for a pitch visit. Clubs will be able to easily submit the necessary information,

upload relevant photos and request the assessment, which will then be processed by an allocated pitch advisor and a report promptly issued with recommendations. Ultimately this process is intended to replace the need for pitch inspection visits.

- Ensure that DCB and CPA's become champions for implementing this process across the county and that appropriate training is received, to be able to roll out the programme and assist clubs to make it successful.
 - Provide training to clubs on “PitchPower” and maintain records of clubs who engage in the process
 - Once PitchPower is operational for cricket, clubs may have access to some funding via the Football Foundation to assist with essential machinery needed to make the improvements identified in the assessment. At the time of preparing this report, more details are pending on the PitchPower roll out and associated funding scheme.
- Further develop the pitch marking process currently adopted in the top Devon League Divisions, to achieve a more value added, accurate tool, which can be used to drive improvement. Include training for those allocated to conduct the scoring exercise (umpires), with intention of creating a consistent, repeatable approach.

3.7.2.4 Experience and Gaining Proficiency

- The preparation of an annual programme to train both new and existing groundskeepers in a forum that can share ideas and best practices. The basis of this training information exists as part of the GMA suite of training material and could be further developed into “seasonal” training courses with defined material that covers pre-season, in-season and post-season grounds activities.
 - Maintain training records for individuals to allow for continuous professional development
 - Conduct training days at clubs across the whole county to ensure all regions get similar exposure, making it consistent for clubs to be represented
- GMA affiliation provides its members with access to a wide variety of informative training material, specifications and guidelines for effective pitch management. Clubs should be encouraged to join the GMA and

have best access to this material

- Develop a local level Groundskeeper forum, using either website or chat group to provide quick response information and best practices to overcome any issues being experienced by a club groundskeeper. This can also provide support of there are immediate and urgent machinery needs
- Increased usage of Grounds Management page on Devon Cricket website to post new and topical articles, conduct surveys, and promote training events and seminars.
 - Appoint a Groundskeeping champion to ensure the website is maintained current and topical.
- Forge stronger links with Somerset Cricket Foundation grounds team and attend their annual training / showcase events
- Coordinate visits to Saltex, other trade shows and seminars to build the knowledge base

3.7.2.5 End of Season Renovations

- Explore possibility of acquiring the necessary equipment to conduct end of season renovations along with the labour resources necessary to be able to offer a service to Devon clubs at more affordable rates.
 - To determine feasibility of this initiative, a work group would need to be formed, consisting of groundskeepers who would have the available time and commitment necessary to extend this service to more clubs that are prepared to invest in the treatment of their square.
 - Full costing process would be required
 - Feasibility study will need to include provision of a suitable trailer and storage solution for all equipment.

3.7.2.6 Storage Space

- Clubs planning cricket facility new builds or renovations, should engage with their groundskeeper to ensure the need for effective equipment storage is factored into the design.
- Remote storage for grounds equipment can be a challenge in terms of finding the suitable space and making it sufficiently secure to protect the contents. Often these facilities are also without essential services. Innovative

solutions are more readily available these days for rainwater harvesting and solar “off grid” power supplies, which can be supported through sustainability grant schemes

- Where rainwater harvesting is a potentially viable option it should certainly be explored. Having the added ability to pump out from storage to the square at a decent pressure can ease the workload of the volunteer grounds keeper during dry spells.

3.7.2.7 Volunteer support

- Clubs are encouraged to raise the profile of their groundskeeper and provide recognition for their services. Making club members more aware about the essential nature of the groundskeepers work, can only help in attracting more support.
- Encourage a **grounds team** to be formed to provide the additional manpower often needed both during pre and post season but also during the season. Seek direct sponsorship of the grounds team and arrange occasional social events which double up as planning sessions for all encouraged to contribute.
- Reduced membership fees to encourage support could be a decision that a club takes to attract more volunteers in various roles including groundskeeping.
- Understand the skill set of the club membership, including parents of All Stars and Dynamos. The next club groundskeeping assistant could already be at the club and just need asking to get involved.



Fig 3.7.8 Aeration of the square

3.8 Disability Cricket In Devon

3.8.1 Current Status

Currently the majority of delivery sites for disability cricket in Devon are established indoor sports halls which are owned and operated by others. These facilities are selected, not only because of their suitable geographical location but also because they provide suitable access and amenities to coordinate and deliver the session. All these sites are already risk assessed (by others) and are then checked for appropriateness prior to delivery of each session by the responsible coach. The majority of indoor venues are either schools or community centres so they will already satisfy a minimum standard. Its not expected that any improvement needs will be required for these facilities.

The current delivery programme for Disability cricket in Devon includes the following;

- **Super 1's**

This is the main participation offer for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) cricket in the county. The programme is funded by Lords Taverners and offers free weekly cricket sessions that are community available to young people with a disability. These are hub sessions that don't just focus on cricket but also the skills such as communication and teamwork that sport engages. Also workshops are delivered around life skills such as employability and healthy eating. Additionally, festivals are held, which permit hubs to combine to play cricket and provide engagement through group activities.

Super 1's sessions in Devon are currently provided at the following facilities:

- **Exeter**

- Indoor at St Lukes Sports and Science College, Pinhoe
- Outdoor – No suitable location to date

- **South Devon**

- Indoor at South Devon College
- Outdoor at Dartington & Totnes CC, and occasionally at South Devon College MUGA

- **Plymouth**

- Indoor at the YMCA Centre, Honicknowle
- Outdoor at the Manadon Sports Hub

Super 1's Festivals are planned to be held at Teignmouth & Shaldon CC in 2023.

- **Table Cricket**

This is another Lords Taverners initiative with most of the delivery being school coaching on the SEND programme. Devon Cricket supports promotional events in schools and hosts a central county competition on an annual basis. The Devon Indoor Cricket Centre hosts this event and also the next phase South West Regional final.

- **School Festival Days**

Devon Cricket have organised and managed SEN schools festival days with the last one taking place at Bovey Tracey CC. Additionally regional SEN events have taken place in South Devon at Coombe Pafford school and the Paignton Hub. Further regional events are being organised for 2023 with a venue currently being sought for West Devon



Fig 3.8.1 Super 1's hub session

The ECB supports cricket club's to open their facilities and deliver cricket opportunities for those with disabilities, through the **Disability Champion Club programme**. This provides guidance, resources and equipment, which enables clubs to welcome and support individuals with additional needs and varying abilities to support them to participate, follow, officiate and volunteer in cricket. The intention is for Disability Champion Clubs to run their own disability cricket sessions, with Devon Cricket offering a support role.

Currently there are two officially recognised Disability Champion Club's in Devon;

- Teignmouth and Shaldon CC. Whilst this has proven to be a very supportive site for development of the disability game, there are known facility challenges from an access and mobility perspective. The club has plans to deliver a new pavilion which would include the necessary improvements to allow disability cricket at the club to develop and thrive.

- Budleigh Salterton CC. A new facility is currently being built at East Budleigh which should satisfy access and mobility issues with ground floor changing equipped to suit disability cricket

Other Disability Champion Club's are pending in the East and West of Devon.

3.8.2 Aspirations

In order for outdoor disability cricket to gain momentum and grow in Devon, access must be gained to facilities which are purpose built or suitably lend themselves to active participation by either complying with governing body guidance for accessible sports facilities. As a minimum, a facility shall meet compliance in most circumstances, and be working towards achieving compliance in other aspects.

To meet the expected future demand for Devon, after consultation with those responsible for disability cricket, its considered that a minimum of four Disability Champion Clubs are identified and supported, strategically located to provide the necessary geographical spread across the four county regions. The ideal target shall be that no-one has to travel more than 30 minutes to attend their nearest Disability Champion Club.



Fig 3.8.2 Table Cricket Festival at Exeter University

hard of hearing participants, and the other providing a more pan-disabled offering at another club.

For all designated Disability Champion Clubs, a “virtual tour video shall be compiled and made available to all potential visitors to the clubs. This would provide advanced information to help participants prepare for the experience. Clubs should be encouraged to post such video's on their website to ensure new visitors can have easy access to the material.

With the disability provision growing countrywide, its anticipated that future demand will exist for a Disability County XI team to compete against other counties and performance teams in the disability game.

In order to meet this likely increase in demand, it is considered that at least one facility in Devon should be capable of hosting a full county representative disability match against similar opposition. In order to welcome disabled players and spectators from our own county and others, the facility should be equipped with appropriate changing and playing



3.8.3 - Disability Champion Club training

provisions, easy access and adequate parking. The playing experience should provide all participants with a quality surface with easy access to changing rooms. Preferably, this facility should be centrally located within the county.

3.8.3 Facility Needs to Meet Aspirations

Clubs looking to host disability specific cricket activity should meet the below minimum standards or be working towards them. Devon Cricket will endeavour to support clubs to help meet these standards, by supporting Grant applications where there is a considered justification and benefit to promote disability cricket:

The minimum requirements will include the following criteria:

- Car Parking area to be easily accessible from a main road and have a disabled bay.
- The journey from car park to pavilion allows for ease of access
- Doorways, social spaces, changing areas and corridors should allow access and be wide enough for a wheelchair or mobility frame to fit through

- A disabled toilet/ changing area with relevant supports
- The pitch and playing area in close proximity to the clubhouse and changing
- There should be adequate pitch side spectator space
- Any two storey facility should have lift or ramp access to the upper level

Additional factors should also be considered to cater for any specific disability requirements, which may include provisions such as:

- Handrails in changing rooms and shower cubicles
- Gaps in seating runs to accommodate wheelchairs
- Private changing space for modesty purposes and space for a carer to assist with changing
- Clear and bold signage for partially sighted
- Lighting at the right height level for wheelchair mobility
- Hearing loops for any facilities which specifically cater for the hard of hearing

3.9 Cricket in Urban Areas

3.9.1 Current Status

Devon Cricket Board (DCB) and Lords Taverners combine to provide an urban delivery programme called Wicketz. This currently operates in Plymouth only, with intentions to expand to other high deprivation urban areas. Comments from those responsible for delivering this programme would indicate that many participants lack confidence when trying something new. Fear of embarrassment when in the “public eye” often leads to shying away from attempting to play. This can be exacerbated if sessions are conducted outdoors or in locations where an audience can congregate.

The Wicketz programme is conducted at four different hub locations in the city. Facility quality to deliver the training is lacking in several aspects. Two locations have sessions conducted outdoors on MUGA's all year round, due to lack of suitable indoor space. The necessity to play outdoors has contributed to a decline in participation at these hubs. In the winter the surfaces of MUGA amenities can become very slippery, preventing certain activities being conducted, and making the experience less enjoyable.

A further Wicketz hub site is conducted indoors all year round as there is no suitable outdoor space and this hall can become extremely hot and unpleasant in the summer. There is one Wicketz hub that provides effectively the best provision scenario, which is a suitable indoor location in the winter, moving outdoors to a cricket club facility in the summer months, which permits parents to sit and spectate in welcoming surroundings.

Through the “Chance to Shine” schools delivery programme, Devon Cricket reaches a larger number of schools in the urban areas of Torbay, Exeter and Plymouth. This consists of primary state school delivery and secondary school girls programmes. These programmes are delivered by community cricket coaches located in the delivery zones.

Primary schools in the inner cities tend to have facilities with a wide quality range of indoor and outdoor spaces and condition, ranging from covered MUGA's and large halls, to inadequately sized outdoor playgrounds and

smaller halls with limited availability due to doubling up as lunch areas with very few having a separate / additional ‘sports hall’.

In Plymouth and the surrounding area, the DCB has links with the Plymouth Argyle Community Trust and provide support with the organisation of community All Stars and Dynamos programmes as well as working together on school engagement.

A communal use non turf pitch exists at the Central Park Sports Hub in Plymouth. It is located a short distance (approx. 3 minute walk) away from the Hub. There are no welfare facilities in the immediate vicinity and it is located in a sector of the park where dog walkers are freely allowed to roam. These factors alone, means that the use of this facility for either junior cricket or community use is very limited.

DCB also run's some successful outreach projects for recent refugees and asylum seekers in Torbay and Exeter with the ambition to expand into Plymouth. Sessions take place at local leisure centres and have been set up by working with local partners and accessing specific grant funding. There is a general understanding that certain minority ethnic groups have a passion for cricket and would be keen to participate, but may find it difficult to integrate within existing clubs. By providing these outreach programmes, a local opportunity has been created for enthusiastic individuals to come forward.

Current and further planned expansion of housing in the urban fringe zones of Plymouth and Exeter will lead to considerable population growth over the next ten years for our cities. The provision of more sports facilities, features in the form of local plans for these development schemes. With that will come new cricket pitches at Sherford (Plymouth fringe) and Cranbrook (Exeter fringe). Other sizeable housing developments proposed for towns like Cullompton and Bideford will also need to provide for the increased participation in cricket.

The DCB have engaged actively with Cranbrook Town Council to help introduce cricket to the town and encourage participation on the prepared cricket pitch at Ingrams Playing Field. The pitch has undergone winter renovation work using an experienced cricket groundskeeping services and currently the

installation of the site pavilion in progress. A club has been established who will use the Cranbrook pitch as their home ground for the 2024 cricket season, with the ground likely to have further capacity to host other matches and events. This will ease the burden on other cricket pitches in the Exeter / East Devon area.

Sherford is the new town being built on the Plymouth and South Hams council boundaries. A cricket pitch has been sculpted in the designated area in the town and some ground drainage has been laid, however progress is generally slow. Devon Cricket are working alongside Plymouth and South Hams Councils to press the developer to commit the necessary resources to have the pitch and associated pavilion ready in time for the 2024 cricket season. This will ease the shortfall of pitch availability in the Plymouth area for 3rd and 4th XI teams.

3.9.2 Aspirations

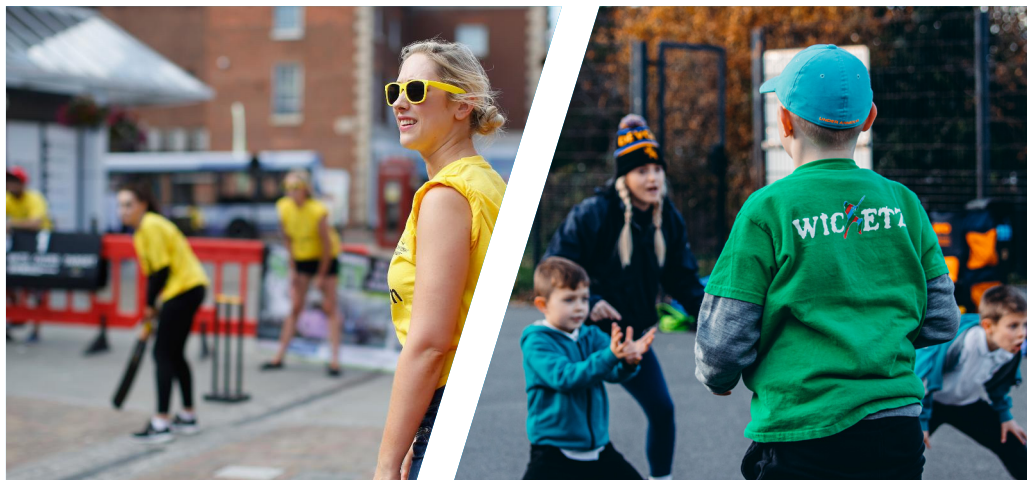


Fig 3.9.1. Urban Street Cricket

Fig 3.9.2 Wicketz coaching session

There are aspirations to expand the urban cricket offer through Chance to Shine “Street” Projects. These are indoor cricket sessions that deliver a fast paced version of the game for young people who often face barriers to participation. The provision would run all year round with the aim of promoting social cohesion and increasing participation in diverse communities and areas of deprivation.

There is also an intention to expand the successful community outreach projects to Plymouth where there are significant minority groups who would stand to benefit.

There is no doubt that the lack of suitable and accessible local facilities is a barrier to increased playing opportunities. To assist with year-round provision of certain programmes, indoor spaces tend to work best and for some groups, adding to their feeling of safety and privacy.

Where outdoor playing facilities do exist in the inner cities, they should be made more secure with adequate “on hand” welfare facilities to enable wider use. Consideration should also be given to providing shelter at some outdoor facilities to permit longer periods of access

For Chance to Shine programmes, making use of the better school facilities would be ideal for delivering more cricket outside of normal school hours, however experience indicates that such ‘community use’ in primary schools has many issues due staffing constraints and running costs whilst the facility is open.

It is widely considered that we may have reached a point where it is very difficult to see bespoke or high quality ‘cricket’ facility provision within the state school sector. Therefore a change in attitude is needed to be able to adapt the game to make use of what is actually available.

From a playing pitch perspective, to cope with expected participation growth rates at city based clubs, the introduction of new pitches either in the city or within the urban fringe, will be essential to meet the demand.

3.9.3 Facility Needs to Meet Aspirations

City based secondary schools tend to offer managed indoor and outdoor facilities for wider community use. Establishing partnerships with nearby primary schools may provide a means of increasing participation by providing the suitable playing facilities needed to support urban engagement programmes.

Additionally if these same secondary schools can develop a partnership with urban based cricket clubs, experiencing growth in playing members,

then the provision of a non-turf pitch on a secure school playing field, may provide a suitable solution to cope with additional team growth. This could also significantly reduce travelling distances for players. School - Club partnerships can also be extended to enable clubs to reciprocate with use of their facilities for school matches and festivals which may benefit from being held in different surroundings.

Pressure must be maintained on developers to meet their commitments for timely completion of new playing pitches and associated clubhouses at the urban fringe developments. At the correct time, local recreational clubs must then be engaged to ensure that such new facilities are put to use as soon as the facility is ready and operational responsibilities defined.

Equally in other planned development areas, influence must be exerted on the Local Authority Playing Pitch Strategies, in good time, to ensure that, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, the need for appropriate cricket facilities are included in any Section 106 agreements. Devon Cricket Clubs shall be provided with guidance to ensure they maximise their opportunity to obtain such funding to help them evolve to meet increased demands for participation.

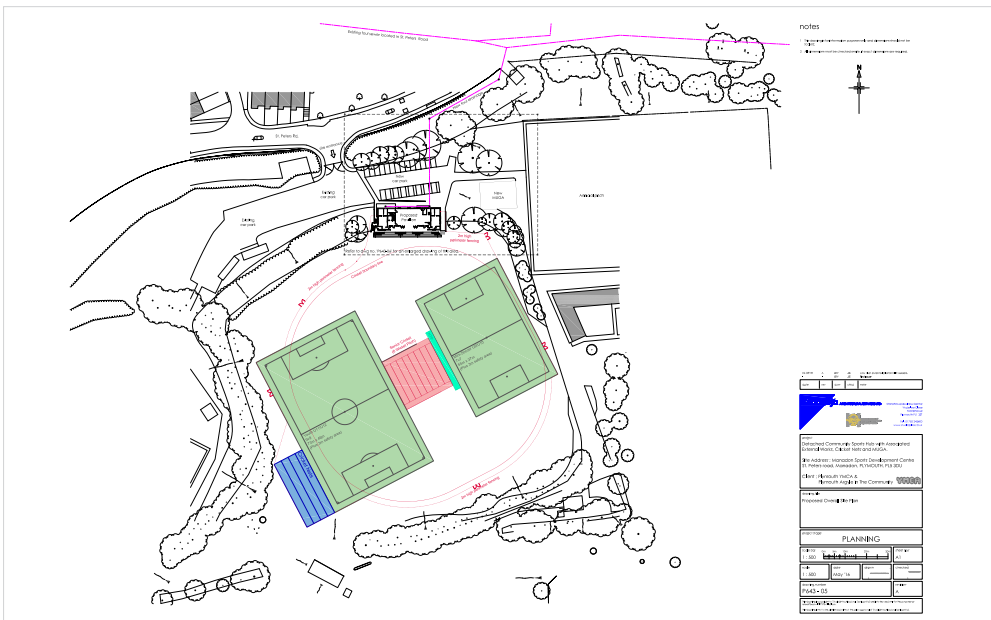


Fig 3.9.3 Plans for multi sports facility at Manadon, Plymouth

3.9.4 Future Communal (non – club) Facilities



Fig 3.9.4 Afghan community drop in session, Exeter



Fig 3.9.5 Junior nets training

Developing the current communal non-turf pitch at Central Park, Plymouth, to enable use for schools events and local inner city evening league cricket for largely nomadic cricket clubs, would help to address the lack of suitable playing facilities in the city. This would however require further investment and coordination to create a cricket pitch which is equipped with adjacent welfare facilities and restricted access to permit uninterrupted play.

In order for cricket to become more accessible and available for minority ethnic groups and others in inner cities, partnerships will need to be established with other NGB's, City Councils and community sport providers (eg. Plymouth Argyle Community Trust) to ensure that specific requirements for cricket are incorporated into any new communal facility.

Plymouth has been potentially targeted for a “Playzone”, multi sports outdoor MUGA which would be led by the Football Foundation. Devon Cricket would need to work with the Foundation to ensure cricket needs are factored in, and that management of such a facility is coordinated effectively. The location of a Playzone should be determined amongst other factors by the proximity to potential users who may not be able to drive or even afford to pay for public transport.

A floodlit PlayZone would help to facilitate the roll out of outreach participation projects for asylum seekers, refugees and other community user groups in the Plymouth area. Additionally it could become a suitable location to support Chance to Shine programmes and school softball competitions. If successful it could be used as a model to repeat in other urban spaces across Devon.



Fig 3.9.6 Typical inner city PlayZone

Early discussions with Exeter City Council and the Exeter City Community Trust have indicated that there may be potential communal “pitch up and play” nets facility as part of a city park regeneration scheme. Such communal practice facilities have been installed successfully in other similar sized cities and have been well utilised by a broad cross section of its city population. For similar reasons to the PlayZone, such as a community nets facility could also attract interest from minority ethnic groups who aren’t necessarily confident enough to join an established club. Further engagement will be required to determine if a “pitch up and play” nets facility could fit well into the park regeneration programme.



Fig 3.9.7 Practising in the nets

3.10 Wider Recreational Cricket Viewpoint

3.10.1 Protecting Clubs at Risk – Common Issues and Concerns

This study focusses on the facility needs for cricket in Devon with a strong focus on the evolving shape of the game and resultant new facility requirements to meet demand. Of equal importance, however, is to protect what we currently have and to ensure that our club facilities remain sustainable and safe over time.

Clubs can face threats in various ways, which can either be of immediate concern, requiring prompt resolution or more protracted, often taking considerable time to resolve. In this section we will consider some of the external influences which can contribute to facility risk.



Fig 3.10.1 Lower Otter Estuary, Budleigh Salterton

- Environmental issues in immediate proximity of a cricket club can lead to studies that may have a major influence on whether the continued operation of the club is sustainable. There are recent and current examples within Devon of clubs who either face relocation or losing valuable space as a result of tidal defence improvements. Generally these instances are well defined and communicated via the local authority resulting in governing body engagement and support.
- Planning applications for residential developments adjacent to cricket grounds may have an impact on club operations or at worst could result in a club being compulsory acquired and subsequently relocated.
- For large proposed developments, Sport England and the ECB will normally become engaged in any planning consultations which may have impact on the adjacent cricket club and may oppose such a scheme unless there is no perceived impact or if extenuating circumstances may result in the impacted club obtaining a beneficial outcome. Of course planning decisions can still go against the recommendation of the governing body and as a result may cause impact for the club.
- For smaller developments adjacent to a cricket club, its unlikely that Sport England or the ECB will be consulted, so the club will be responsible for understanding the intent and implications of the planning application and making the appropriate representation. In such circumstances the club should contact the DCB for support and guidance.
- Where new large scale housing developments are proposed across Devon, Sport England and the ECB will become engaged when, as part of the proposed scheme, there is a need to provide or extend the sports infrastructure either on site or in the neighbours community. With increase in population, comes an increase in participation and therefore additional playing facilities will be needed. The DCB/ECB will champion the need for cricket and campaign for adequate playing facilities. Communication with nearby established clubs will assist to determine the best outcome scenario.
- Complaints from near by neighbours due to facilities related issues, primarily ball strike risks, can result in difficult discussions and decisions for clubs to take. When new developments border existing cricket facilities these ball strike risks can present themselves. The level of engagement of the governing body and cricket club in any planning application consultation often has a bearing on whether these risks are captured at planning stage, with suitable mitigation factored into any planning consent. Retrospectively resolving these issues, after the planning process is complete, can be both expensive and time consuming for club volunteers to manage. If such risks

are highlighted during the planning application process, then potentially funding to support any mitigation requirements, can be obtained.



Fig 3.10.2 Ball Strike Assessment

- All clubs are faced with spiralling energy costs and little change expected for some years to come. Where consumption can be reduced through innovative energy saving schemes and self sufficient generation, then clubs should be supported to implement such measures, thus reducing their running costs.
- The cost of maintaining a cricket facility can be a considerable strain on the club finances. In addition to normal upkeep and running costs there is also the need to conduct essential tasks to ensure the facility remains justifiably safe. Some of the more common essential tasks include periodic inspection and testing of electric wiring, portable appliance testing, gas safety checks, boiler servicing and fire extinguisher checks.

It's essential that adequate budgeting is in place for the above and ideally a nominated person at the club should be appointed the "facility responsible person" on site with a link into the club committee to ensure that facility needs are communicated and prioritised. A good practice is to incorporate all routine maintenance and compliance tasks into a timeline schedule which is clearly understood, managed and executed consistently year on year.

3.10.2 Viewpoint of Officials

The Devon Association of Cricket Officials (DACO) were consulted to provide details of common issues experienced at cricket facilities when it comes to either umpiring or scoring matches. Comments received are consolidated below:

It's important that umpire changing rooms are a sufficient size for both umpires to change and sit at the same time. The room should include a table sufficiently large enough to prepare for the game by laying out all necessary kit and be able to write the match reports. Additionally floor space should be adequate for ever increasing size of kit bags.

The umpires changing room should be lockable with the umpire able to have their own key to the room for the time they are at the facility. Coded keys are not preferred, as these have led to thefts from changing rooms in the past.

Umpires' rooms and scoreboxes should not be used as overspill storage areas, and they should be kept clean and tidy.

Whilst not specifically a facility related issue, it is becoming more common for the umpires and the scorers to communicate using handheld radios. This is useful in the event of any uncertainty in an action, or a signal given. When such devices are used, they are normally provided by the officials, however in the future perhaps this could be a considered feature to be provided at clubs.

Scorers should have an easily accessible rooms or scorebox to allow for those whose mobility is limited. It should be able to maintain a warm temperature, be comfortable and kept clean. Quick and easy access to toilets during the match is beneficial to avoid any match delays. Good quality WiFi access for electronic / online scoring and plenty of power sockets is essential to maintain all electrical devices powered for the duration of a match.

Consideration should be given to the length of time a scorer can spend sat in the same chair without being able to stand up and move around, hence comfort is essential. Chairs must be comfortable with adjustable height and preferably a footrest.

Scorebox windows must permit vision of the whole pitch by both scorers and they should enable both scorers to be able to open the window directly in front of them, rather than a sliding window arrangement, where only one scorer has the open window and the other scorer has two panes of glass to look through. The room or scorebox should accommodate a stable table or worktop, large enough to accommodate all scoring equipment.

Where possible the scoreboard should incorporate a fully functional electronic display with the ability to signal to the umpires and indicate powerplays. The electronic scoreboard should be able to communicate directly with the live scoring application in use, to avoid the need for the scorer to have to update the scoreboard, as it would happen automatically.

Where a scorebox can be exposed to direct sunlight at some stage in the day, there should be blinds provided to act as a sunshade and prevent impaired vision while the match is in progress.



Fig 3.10.3 Perfect scorebox vantage and fit out - Courtesy of Bridgwater CC

3.10.3 Plight of Rural Cricket Clubs

The Inspiring Generations master strategy gives focus to urban areas, population growth and diverse communities and this has been given specific attention in Section 3.9 of this report. It is however important to recognise the demographics of Devon and that rural communities play an essential part in the cricket model for the county. The IG strategy is very much aligned with cricket connecting communities, improving lives and making a positive difference in society.

Many small cricket clubs in rural locations are in the heart of their community, however to achieve this mission, they need to create more welcoming environments to attract the local community to their facility.



Fig 3.10.4 - Typical Rural cricket ground in Ermington Devon

Consultation with small, rurally located cricket clubs has provided a consistent message of frustration over the fact that there is little support to assist with club improvements, so development plans are often stymied by lack of funding support.

Appendix D provides an anonymous voice from the rural cricket community and covers many of the frustrations experienced when a club has aspiration's to improve its facilities and attract a wider community participation in cricket.

The DCB will continue to support small rural cricket clubs and offer guidance where possible to assist with club facility development.

3.10.4 Ownership & Management of Playing Sites

Devon based cricket clubs have variations in tenure agreements ranging from freehold ownership to short term leases. Duration and stability of tenure can contribute to vulnerability when it comes to having confidence that a clubs' home can remain their home for years to come.

In this section we consider factors associated with a cricket club's tenure arrangements;

- For clubs to have access to grant funding, evidence of tenure is normally required to demonstrate that any investment is likely to provide benefit over time. The majority of cricket clubs in Devon have landlords and lease agreements in place. Many only operate on an annually renewable lease, leaving them very restricted, in terms of being able to make significant facility improvements.
- A clubs relationship with their landlord, can have a significant bearing on how the club derives confidence in its ability to safeguard its facility. Where the landlord is more embedded with the club and supportive of its operations, its more usual for that club to have a stronger sustainability factor.
- Facilities which are under Local Authority ownership tend to have lease agreements with either a cricket club directly or through multi sports associations, with the cricket club represented on the association. There

have been recent examples of councils exploring relinquishing their assets, in a drive to reduce their operating costs. Some clubs have been giving consideration to obtaining freehold tenure from their Local Authority, however it is essential that appropriate legal and professional guidance is sought to understand full implications of such an asset transfer. Some facilities may not necessarily be in the best of condition, or may have covenants and access rights in place, which may potentially restrict opportunities for development and / or require significant investment. Additionally when considering an opportunity to acquire freehold ownership, the actual cost of completing the legal process of transfer must be considered as conveyancing can be an expensive process.

- For clubs relying on educational facilities for their home playing location, with no lease in place, then a Community Use Agreement or similar document should be in effect, to provide some confidence in access and use of the facility for the cricket club.

3.10.5 Pitch Quality Evaluation

Only the higher divisions in the Devon Cricket League (Premier, A & B) have pitch markings conducted by the appointed umpires for the match. Whilst this is considered a viable exercise over the course of a season, it can be challenging to achieve consistency in scoring amongst those who are assigned to perform the task. On occasions this can lead to disappointment and de-motivation for a grounds keeper who may possibly have performed minor miracles preparing the pitch over a week which had suffered considerably from unpleasant weather conditions.

Over the course of the 18 week cricket season it is expected that pitch marks will "average out" and become more of a true reflection of how a particular pitch plays, however to avoid a pitch being marked down heavily due to external factors having a big influence, it could be a considered improvement to include details of the weather leading up to the match and this could even have a weighting on the score awarded. The use of modern weather apps could make this additional step relatively easy to incorporate into the pitch marking process.

Additionally to allow other clubs outside of the top three divisions to receive some indication on how their pitch plays, it may be an option for both team captains to have the ability to provide some feedback on pitch condition on the day. Captains could choose to consult with standing umpires on the day and of course their team mates to arrive at a fair reflection on the score. This approach could also be extended to the DWCL with women's team captains offering a similar evaluation of pitch performance on the day.

Further discussion with the DCL and DWCL would be required to assess whether these options are viable.

Where a club does consistently receive lower than average pitch quality scores, assistance should be provided to the club to assess any potential root causes and offer remedial solutions where possible. Visits by County Pitch Advisors and / or GMA Regional Pitch Advisor should be arranged to enable an in-depth analysis to be conducted of the square and the preparation methods. This should be carried out in a nurturing and supportive capacity to enable the club groundskeeper to fully engage in the process and therefore achieve the best outcome for improvement.



Fig 3.10.5. Umpires confer at Devon Womens Cricket League match

Image courtesy of Mark Lockett Photography

3.11 Local Authorities Perspective

3.11.1 Overview

3.11.1.1 Geographical Landscape and Dimensions

Devon is essentially a rural county consisting of hilly landscapes, coastal cliffs and sandy shores. There are two National Parks in Devon; Exmoor and Dartmoor, with the latter being the largest open space in Southern England.

Although we consider Devon as a rural county, 45% of the population live in the three main urban centres of Torbay, Exeter and Plymouth. This has risen considerably over the past approx 20 years when the urban population formed only 33% of the county population, so there is a similar trend to other parts of the country which is driving the need to consider improving cricket facilities and the type of facility offerings for cricket in urban areas. The ratio of urban to rural cricket clubs aligns similarly to the population spread at approximately 50:50

The population of Devon is very unevenly distributed with 8500 people per square mile in Plymouth compared to 130 people per square mile in West Devon. As would be expected with a county that has approximately 26% of its overall area occupied by National Parks and an even greater area taken up by pasture and arable farming landscapes, its population density is much lower than the country average. In fact, Devon's population density is <30% of the country average of 1300 people per square mile.

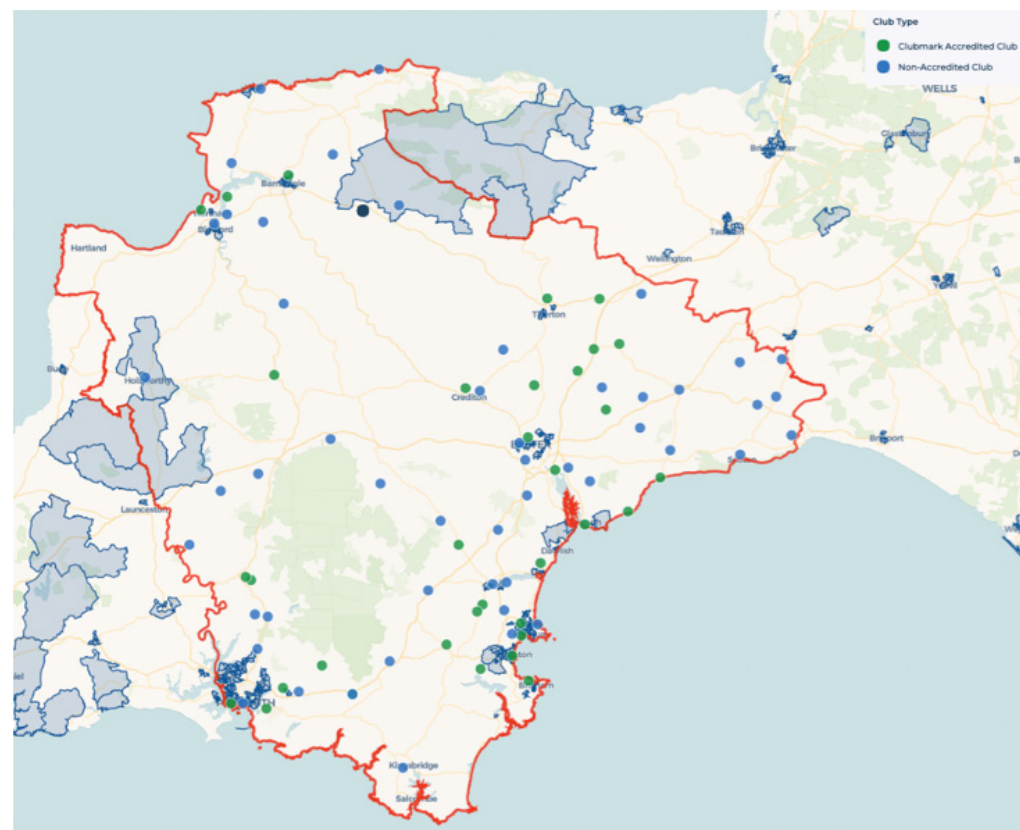


Fig 3.11.1 – Affiliated Devon Cricket Clubs with shaded areas representing top 30% of deprived areas in England.

Overall levels of deprivation in Devon are considerably lower than the national average, however there are still some locations which fall within the top 20% of most deprived areas.

The inner cities of Plymouth and Torbay have the highest number of most deprived areas, with figures slightly worsening between 2010 and 2020.

Levels of deprivation in other areas such as North Devon, West Devon and Teignbridge are relatively low, however pockets of deprivation exist in these areas, particularly in some market towns, including Ilfracombe, Barnstaple, Bideford, Tiverton, Exmouth, Dawlish and Teignmouth.

As the average level of deprivation is relatively low in the county, we have used the top 30% of deprived areas as our baseline for this study.

Devon has 105 affiliated cricket clubs within its borders, of which 40 clubs have attained the ECB Clubmark accreditation, as of 2022 and the remaining 65 clubs are non accredited.

Fig 3.11.1 shows the location of all the recognised Devon cricket clubs who affiliate to the Devon Cricket Board. Additionally, it identifies areas within the county (light blue shading) which fall within the top 30% of deprived areas in the country, based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

This helps us to see that only 11 cricket clubs (5 Clubmark and 6 non accredited), are located in areas of notable deprivation, which equates to only 13% of all Devon clubs.

The population spread across Devon is referenced in Table 3.11.1 below, with data taken from the ten local authorities 2021 Census survey (pop – first release)

Authority	2021 Census - population
East Devon	150,800
Exeter	130,800
Mid Devon	82,800
North Devon	98,600
Plymouth	264,700
South Hams	88,600
Teignbridge	134,800
Torbay	139,300
Torridge	68,100
West Devon	57,100

Table 3.11.1 – Population of each Local Authority (2021)

Details of population growth projections to 2034 are provided in the next section. Upward population trends and locations targeted for highest increase in housing, shall be factored into the needs for cricket facilities in this Strategy.

When determining the future needs for improved or new cricket facilities in a particular location, its important to know amongst other factors, the sporting landscape in an area and if there is a real demand for such a facility. Appreciating population growth forecasts and having a decent level of confidence in their accuracy will greatly assist in confirming such a need.

3.11.1.2 Calculating Future Population Growth

The population of each local authority in 2034 is presented in two different ways in Table 3.11.2 below. Column 6 shows the population according to the Office of National Statistics (ONS) projection to 2034 from the 2018 basis.

Column 8 has been calculated from the ONS base of 2021 (with the addition of household growth on an annual basis (shown in Column 7). The actual and percentage difference between the two is shown in Columns 9 and 10. All but Mid Devon show a higher population growth (when household growth is included) than the demographic model IF all housing is built as expected.

For the purposes of this Strategy a population growth range is considered appropriate. Thus, within the Table below, the population for East Devon would be between 172,179 to 175,774, noting that demographic projections do not always show the impacts of new development. This allows decision makers to use either high, low or mid point numbers.

For those authorities where the original PPSs are out of date and/or the end date varies significantly from 2034 (East Devon, Plymouth and Teignbridge) the Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator has been used to estimate the number of cricket pitches required in addition to those suggested in the PPSs (and used the higher figure for the estimate of population). In this instance a number of assumptions around the underlying Team Generation Rates have had to be made, as there was no access to all the original figures; but its felt this is a reasonably robust model.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Authority	Main new development areas	PPS Status	PPS Period	2021 Census (pop – first release)	(Demographic model) ONS pop projection to 2034 ¹	Appx homes per annum STD method ²	Pop. 2021 + hhld growth 2021 to 2034	Difference between Demographic model (6) & hhld growth (8)	% Difference between Demographic model (6) & hhld growth (8)
East Devon	Cranbrook, Exmouth, Exminster, Sidmouth, Honiton	Adopted PPS 2015	2015-2025	150,800	172,179	946	175,774	3,595	2.1%
Exeter	City centre redevts, Pinhoe/Clyst Heath	Stage C/D (belap)	2022 - 2040	130,800	142,431	650	147,960	5,529	3.9%
Mid Devon	Crediton, Cullompton Tiverton	Adopted 2022 (belap)	2020 - 2033	82,800	93,231	358	92,251	-980	-1.1%
North Devon	Barnstaple, little at Braunton	Adopted 2017	2017-2031	98,600	106,324	340	107,576	1,252	1.2%
Plymouth	Northern/Woolwell, Sherford, City Centre	Adopted	2018-2021	264,700	270,358	700	283,180	12,822	4.7%
South Hams	Sherford, Ivybridge, Totnes,	Adopted 2022 (belap)	2021 - 2034	88,600	95,427	354	97,946	2,519	2.6%
Teignbridge	Matford/Alphington, Newton Abbot, Teignmouth/Dawlish	Adopted 2018	2018-2023	134,800	153,309	764	154,970	1,661	1.1%
Torbay	Torquay/Paignton	Stage C/D (belap)	2021 - 2040	139,300	147,644	600	155,140	7,496	5.1%
Torridge	Bideford, a little at Holsworthy/ Gt T		2031	68,100	75,866	419	79,162	3,296	4.3%
West Devon	Okehampton & Tavistock		2034	57,100	60,214	224	63,014	2,800	4.6%

Table 3.11.2 – Future population estimate for Devon Local Authority regions (belap ltd)

1 Projection from ONS 2018 basis; update expected in autumn 2022

2 April 2022 Standard Method for Housing Need Assessment, DLUHC

1 Projection from ONS 2018 basis; update expected in autumn 2022

2 April 2022 Standard Method for Housing Need Assessment, DLUHC
In order to calculate the percentage growth rates for each Local Authority district, the value in column 9 (difference between demographic models in columns 6 & 8) has been halved and then

added to column 6 model value to arrive at an “moderated” increase value, which was then compared against the 2021 census population value in column 5.

Using this approach the following projected population increases are shown in descending order:

1. East Devon	15.3 %	6. South Hams	9.0 %
2. Teignbridge	14.2 %	7. Torbay	8.6 %
3. Torridge	13.1 %	8. North Devon	8.0 %
4. Mid-Devon	12.0 %	9. West Devon	7.8 %
5. Exeter	10.8 %	10. Plymouth	4.5 %

This demonstrates a considerable range of percentage growth across the Local Authorities, however this does singularly capture the changing demographic.

For example, Plymouth has by far the highest local authority population and therefore despite seeing the lowest projected population percentage rise, it still equates to approximately 700 new homes having to be built each year, which is actually the third highest projected housing increase across the county.

3.11.1.3 Supply and Demand Model for Cricket in Devon

In the following sections each local authority is assessed for its future cricket needs compared to the current extant provision. This will identify locations which may have a shortfall in projected playing capacity, to allow town planners, local authorities and governing bodies to be cognisant of community needs for cricket.

The tried and tested method for determining a future need for cricket playing facilities includes the following steps:

- Know the locality (information gathered forms part of the PPS study)
 - what playing provisions exists within a local authority – clubs/ community
 - condition of the extant playing facilities – site survey and consultation
 - clubs within a locality – development plans for growth
 - sustainability – clubs with healthy junior section promotes sustainability
- Use future population increases to identify likely growth in cricket teams, and number of pitches, using dedicated software “Sport England Pitch Calculator”.
- Factor in assessment of numbers of teams through latent and displaced demand, combined with club aspirations/trends, to get an overall figure and then use this as a basis for the Strategy.

Where a local authority has a potential shortfall in cricket playing facilities to meet the projected future demand, this is identified in the relevant Local Authority section below, along with any priority actions as identified through the Playing Pitch Strategy.



Fig 3.11.2 – Devon showing its Local Authorities



3.11.2 East Devon District Council

Playing Pitch Strategy – Extracted Data

Adopted June 2015; period covered 2015-2025
New PPS scheduled to commence in 2023

NOTE

Full details of all PPS data for this local authority can be found in Appendix B

3.11.2.1 Future Population Growth (refer to 3.11.1.2)

Under the existing local plan for East Devon the most significant locations for development will be at Axminster and more so Cranbrook, noting much development has already happened in recent years and has also occurred elsewhere close by on the western side of the District. Cranbrook will continue to grow and under the new emerging East Devon local plan (as set out in the consultation draft of Nov 2022) Axminster also see substantial growth planned with comparatively lower housing levels at other existing towns. The new plan does, however, plan for substantial overall housing development, close to 950 homes per year, and a substantial amount of this is identified being at a proposed 2nd new town also in the western side of East Devon close to Exeter.

The 2021 Census identified a district population of 150,800. Should this additional number of houses be built, the population of East Devon will grow substantially.

3.11.2.2 Vision (from currently prepared PPS)

To ensure that sufficient pitches are provided of a good quality and which support the needs of each sport and club around East Devon and take account of cross-border issues within the city of Exeter. This provision should be sufficient and flexible to deal with current and projected increases in demand.

3.11.2.3 Issues (from currently prepared PPS)

Ground Needs

- Conservative estimate from 2015 Strategy, given the basic trend of greater participation for women and girls and junior teams, the requirement is for two to three cricket grounds within East Devon:

- One at Cranbrook: new ground achieved 2019, expected to be in use 2023
- Cricket grounds in Exmouth sub area at capacity – need additional ground for Exmouth CC: no new ground provided to date.
- Explore additional ground for Ottery St Mary CC (or using grounds with spare capacity at Feniton, Clyst Hydon and Tipton St John): no new ground provided to date, indications are that its still required
- Explore additional cricket ground within Sidmouth Sub Area: no new ground provided - unknown if still required, as Newton Poppleford has taken up local slack

3.11.2.4 Risk and Actions (from currently prepared PPS)

- Winslade Park cricket pitch at risk; now safe and currently in use for Devon League Cricket. Potential to further develop site as a hub facility for County Age group performance teams
- Loss of cricket facilities at Bicton College and former Rolle College playing fields at risk; these have gone now and no apparent replacement. Newton Poppleford has taken up local slack
- Replacement facility for Budleigh Salterton CC: achieved – Club is now relocated to East Budleigh Rd, with 2 pitches in operation for 2023 season and a new pavilion in build
- Withycombe Common – no cricket club uses; reassess at next review
- Mountbatten Park – plan in 2015 was to move football from this site to a new site to (amongst other things) free up space for cricket; this has not happened

PROTECT	ENHANCE	PROVIDE
All cricket pitches in the district unless suitable equivalent or better replacements are provided. Particular emphasis on the protection of the cricket square at Winslade Park	The quality, availability and carrying capacity of existing cricket pitches to meet current and future needs of clubs	New cricket pitch provision commensurate to new housing development in line with the strategic need for facilities in that location. Particular emphasis on securing additional cricket pitches in the Exeter Fringe, Exmouth, Sidmouth and Ottery St Mary sub areas.

Additional requirements (from last Strategy review in 2015)

- belap estimates c 1.66 cricket pitches (13/14 wickets) required to meet additional increase in demand from growth in population 2025 – 2034 in East Devon, i.e. in addition to that set out in the 2015 PPS.



3.11.3 Exeter City Council

Playing Pitch Strategy – Extracted Data

Currently being prepared period covered to 2040

Note

Full details of all PPS data for this local authority can be found in Appendix B

3.11.3.1 Future Population Growth (refer to 3.11.1.2)

The main city centre re-development areas are at Pinhoe and Clyst Heath. 2021 Census identified a district population of 130,800. Demographic and household growth modelling indicate a significant population growth of up to ~ 145,000 by 2034. To sustain this rate of growth ~ 650 new homes to be built per year up to 2034

3.11.2.2 Vision

For Exeter’s playing fields and related outdoor sports facilities to lie at the heart of Active Communities, supporting Exeter to become the most physically active city in England. Facilities are to be protected as Active Environments and to provide accessible and sustainable opportunities for everyone who lives, works in, or visits Exeter to take part in the pitch sports at whatever level they require.

3.11.2.3 Issues (from currently prepared PPS)

The strategy for cricket is based around:

- Protecting the existing playing provision
- Ensuring security of access and tenure and appropriate maintenance of pitches on public open space sites and education sites
- Creating greater capacity by improving existing grounds (only realistically possible at Exwick Playing Fields)
- Upgrading the non turf wicket (NTW) at Coaver (Devon County Council) to cater comfortably for growth in midweek cricket and informal formats of the game
- Establishing a permanent secure home for growth in adult men’s

teams (i.e. when 3rd and 4th XIs need a pitch for Saturday fixtures) This could (partly be) met by Winslade Park (outside Exeter)

- Opening up facilities for cricket – mainly NTWs on school sites particularly at St Peter’s School and St Luke’s CoE School - but quality may need to be addressed
- Developing a site for community cricket for ‘pitch up and play’ – proposed site at King George V Playing Fields

3.11.2.4 Risk and Actions

PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR CRICKET IN EXETER – SITE SPECIFIC

LOCATION	PROJECT
Coaver Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider replacement of strip within next 3 years.
Exwick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect site for cricket. • Investigate changes to maintenance regime and remedial work to help improve quality of the cricket wicket. • Provision of on site pavilion to serve football and cricket (could be met through provision of new rugby changing rooms)
The Chronicles, Aliphington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cricket is operating at peak time capacity on a restricted site. Enhanced maintenance regime essential to successfully manage this level of use. • Upgrade showers and WCs (support club grant applications)
University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect security of tenure within the licence agreement for Topsham CC.
King George V	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to support a community cricket nets facility to provide a ‘pitch up and play’ option within Exeter to complement existing club based provision
Winslade Park (outside Exeter)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to develop site as a hub facility for County Age group performance teams (and also to meet need for 3rd & 4th XIs in the city). • Pavilion is in need of improvement or possible replacement.

Additional requirements (2022 Emerging PPS)

There is very little capacity for accommodating any further growth in Exeter. Analysis points to the need for an additional cricket provision. Assessment to 2040 shows that teams generated by the growth in population, club aspirations and local trends and initiatives could require up to 16 wickets. Thus, it is likely that an additional ground will be required in Exeter.

NOTE

Full details of all PPS data for this local authority can be found in Appendix B

3.11.4.1 Future Population Growth (refer to 3.11.1.2)

The main development areas are at Cullompton, Cullompton and Tiverton. 2021 Census identified a district population of 82,800. Demographic and household growth modelling indicate a significant population growth of up to ~ 93,000 by 2034. To sustain this rate of growth ~ 358 new homes to be built per year up to 2034

3.11.4.2 Vision (from currently prepared PPS)

To help guide the provision of playing pitch facilities in Mid Devon in relation to current and future needs to 2033, irrespective of ownership and operation, and to support the retention and enhancement of facilities that are appropriate, of high quality, and which are sustainable. Provision should promote inclusivity, encourage sporting excellence and community development and cohesion and help to enhance physical and mental wellbeing.

3.11.4.3 Issues (from currently prepared PPS)

- A number of overplayed grounds or grounds with little spare capacity in the Tiverton area (e.g. Heathcoat Cricket Ground, Sampford Peverell & Tiverton CC and Thorverton CC). Little room to accommodate growth in Tiverton.
- Poor quality changing facilities at e.g. Thorverton CC, Kentisbeare CC
- Several rural grounds underplayed
- Potential relocation of Cullompton CC due to Relief Road – need for new ground.
- Lack of cricket facilities in Cullompton for Cullompton Community College

3.11.4.4 Risk and Actions

PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR CRICKET IN MID DEVON

LOCATION	PROJECT
Tiverton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of new cricket pitch. Potential sites are as follows. Additional feasibility work required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern urban extension • Feasibility of securing community access to cricket pitch at Blundell's • Petroc College playing field
Cullompton area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement ground for Cullompton CC. Club is earmarked for relocation due to Relief Road. Support for minimum of 12 wicket facility to address current shortfalls and to help meet future growth in demand – proposed to be met at new facility at Horn Lane. Further consideration to be given to scale of ancillary facilities, management structure and funding. Co-ordination of development of facilities at the new site with Kentisbeare CC (at Rectory Park) to ensure sustainability of both sites and clubs.
East Cullompton/ Culm Garden Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision for cricket as part of pitch sport hub site (one pitch), generated from predicted population growth. Potential site, size of ground and ancillary facilities, management structure and funding sources to be further discussed/agreed.
Cullompton Community College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of new non-turf wicket. • To protect provision of cricket facilities within Cullompton Town. Could be met by reinstatement of redundant non turf wicket at Meadow Lane playing fields, Cullompton Community College.
Crediton area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of additional cricket pitch to meet growth in demand to 2033. • Sandford CC would appear most appropriate site.

Additional playing requirements From population projections, the 2022 PPS estimated that the equivalent of at least 3 cricket pitches required up to 2033:

- Need up to 8 wickets in Tiverton to meet current demand
- Up to another 10 wickets to satisfy future demand in Tiverton and the wider sub area
- Up to 6 wickets needed to meet future growth in demand in Cullompton
- 8 wickets (one pitch) needed to meet demand in East Cullompton Culm Garden Village as the settlement grows
- 7 wickets (one pitch) needed in Crediton area to meet future demand. Work is underway.

3.11.5 North Devon District Council

Playing Pitch Strategy – Extracted Data

Adopted 2017: Period covered to 2031

NOTE

Full details of all PPS data for this local authority can be found in Appendix B

3.11.5.1 Future Population Growth (refer to 3.11.1.2)

The main development areas are at Barnstaple and Braunton. 2021 Census identified a district population of 98,600. Demographic and household growth modelling indicate a significant population growth of up to ~ 107,000 by 2034. To sustain this rate of growth ~ 340 new homes to be built per year up to 2034.

3.11.5.2 Vision (from currently prepared PPS)

To fully understand the quantity and quality of our current stock of playing pitches and changing provision to ensure that we:

- Protect the facilities that are used and valued by our current population
- Provide new facilities in the right locations to cater for increased demand and population and
- Enhance facilities to ensure that quality meets 21st century expectations and attracts new and existing users

3.11.5.3 Issues (from currently prepared PPS)

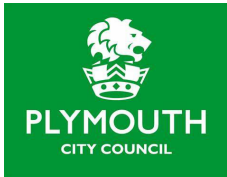
- In the Barnstaple sub areas, three out of the five grounds (Barnstaple & Pilton CC, North Devon CC and Westleigh CC) are operating at the level the sites can sustain; Bratton Fleming CC and Newton Tracey CC have spare capacity. There is a cricket ground at The Park School which has accommodate cricket teams in the past but is currently not being used by a community team. West Buckland School cricket pitches are available for community use, subject to the requirements of the school.

- The one cricket ground in the Braunton sub area (Braunton CC) is a well used ground, but because of the high number of wickets (11) has spare capacity midweek and on Sundays
- In the Ilfracombe sub area, the only accessible ground is the non turf wicket at Brimlands which is just sustaining one team at present and has considerable spare capacity
- There is spare capacity at peak time at all 4 sites in the South Molton sub area, other than Filleigh CC.
- Need to support cricket pitches which are being underused in rural areas
- Several sites in need of new or upgraded nets and some pavilion upgrades (Chulmleigh (now achieved) and Newton Tracey (now achieved) and Westleigh CC

3.11.5.4 Risk and Actions

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- The number of new teams being projected to 2031 suggested the need for access to two new cricket pitches in North Devon:
- Access to at least one additional cricket pitch in the Barnstaple sub area. This could be met by enhancing the existing cricket pitch at The Park School, with appropriate community access secured, and may also involve installing a grass square and upgrading the changing pavilion. To date, this has not been actioned and/or progressed (2022)
- An additional new cricket pitch depending on how demand develops geographically; a likely location was suggested as Ilfracombe. (In 2017, the cricket club played on the non turf wicket at Brimlands (there is no grass pitch) and had submitted plans for the site. It was proposed that if the cricket club grew further and required a grass pitch it would need to find an alternative site and it was recommended that provision for cricket be built into pitch provision within the Southern Extension, as a shared facility with football pitches, possibly within the primary school.) This no longer seems to be required as the club is now well embedded at Brimlands (2022).



3.11.6 Plymouth City Council

Playing Pitch Strategy – Extracted Data

Adopted 2017: Period covered to 2021 – (currently under review)

Note

Full details of all PPS data for this local authority can be found in Appendix B

3.11.6.1 Future Population Growth (refer to 3.11.1.2)

The main development areas are on northern boundary at Woolwell, Sherford in the east and also in the city centre. 2021 Census identified a district population of 264,700. Demographic and household growth modelling indicate a significant population growth of up to ~ 277,000 by 2034. To sustain this rate of growth ~ 700 new homes to be built per year up to 2034.

3.11.6.2 Vision (from currently prepared PPS)

To be a city that provides a good supply of well managed and maintained playing pitches and ancillary facilities, which are fit for purpose, meet identified needs and encourage residents to maintain and increase their participation in sport and active recreation.

3.11.6.3 Issues (from currently prepared PPS)

- Only 4 cricket pitches available for club use – Delgany Sports Ground (Plymouth College); Harewood House (Plympton CC); Mount Wise (Plymouth CC) and Deans Cross (Plymstock CC). Most in south and west of city.
- Subsequently Manadon Hub Sports Park (Plymouth Civil Service & Roborough CC) new pavilion and playing facility came on stream in 2020/21 making a fifth playing pitch in the city.
- Strong and clear evidence of unmet demand from existing clubs within the city. Plympton CC and Plymouth CC both have to use second grounds outside of the city to meet the needs of all their teams. In addition, Plymstock CC have suggested a desire for a second ground also. Need to establish security of tenure at suitable sites for each of the clubs' 3rd and 4th teams.
- The starting point for achieving this is to explore asset transfer in the case

of Deans Cross and Harewood House. Both these sites require an element of pavilion refurbishment. Work has commenced on improvement projects at these facilities with support from ECB County Grant fund.

- Indoor cricket playing provision in the city is poor, both in terms of availability and quality of facility. Clubs struggle to find suitable locations and previous indoor winter league when the Derriford Hospital Leisure Centre ceased to offer its decent sized hall for indoor cricket use (after Covid). Possibly revisit cricket facilities at Tor Bridge School
- P&D Evening (Summer outdoor) League also struggle to find suitable venues in the city to host matches which include several nomadic works and social teams.

3.11.6.4 Risk and Actions

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- Provide a minimum of 2 additional cricket grounds with grass squares (8 12 wickets) to cater for usage by league-based clubs within the city with a view to add a third pitch over the medium to long term future (5-10 years)
 - Addition of Manadon Hub has reduced this to one immediate need cricket pitch with another to follow on
- Provide 1 additional non turf pitch for less formal cricket opportunities within the city. This can be achieved through the provision of new facilities in parks and playing fields. Non turf pitch has been installed in Central Park and is under control of Plymouth Argyle Community Trust (PACT). Unfortunately it's open and public environment location prevents any significant usage.
- Protect existing dedicated cricket venues within the city, because of the small supply and their importance to the future of cricket locally
- Improvements to facilities in the South Hams at Roborough Recreation Ground and the new cricket facility being provided at Sherford will help to address these requirements.
 - Roborough has recently been used as home ground for Plymstock 3rd XI, however there is concern that this will be an available facility in 2023. Work is ongoing with the Roborough Playing Field Trust to make this happen.
 - The latest vision is for Sherford's new cricket ground being ready for 2024 cricket season

- Explore prospects for reinstatement of Peverell Park for community cricket use. A feasibility study has already been carried out. Options for the site will be discussed inline with the Joint Local Plan.
- PACT are investigating the delivery of an urban community “Playzone” facility which may be able to offer a softball cricket playing facility in a high deprivation zone which may attract minority groups to participate. PACT already offer All Stars cricket from their Central Park hub.

Additional playing requirements

- The 2017 PPS estimated that an additional need for 4 junior and 2 adult teams would form in next 10-15 years. Belap have calculated that access to the equivalent of c4 wickets (0.43 of an 8 wicket pitch) will be required to meet growth in population between 2021 and 2034 i.e. in addition to that set out in the PPS.



Fig 3.11.6. Land sculpted for new cricket pitch at Sherford, Plymouth

3.11.7 South Hams District Council

Playing Pitch Strategy – Extracted Data

Adopted 2022: Period covered to 2034

Note

Full details of all PPS data for this local authority can be found in Appendix B

3.11.7.1 Future Population Growth (refer to 3.11.1.2)

The main development areas are in Sherford, Ivybridge and Totnes. 2021 Census identified a district population of 88,600. Demographic and household growth modelling indicate a significant population growth of up to ~ 97,000 by 2034. To sustain this rate of growth ~ 354 new homes to be built per year up to 2034.

3.11.7.2 Vision (from currently prepared PPS)

To protect, conserve and enhance playing pitch facilities as active environments in partnership with local stakeholders and communities so that they make a positive impact on the lives of local people. Provision should be sustainable and easily accessible to all, encourage greater participation and sporting excellence and help to improve people’s physical and mental wellbeing, by strengthening the links between physical activity, sport and health

3.11.7.3 Issues (from currently prepared PPS)

- 18 cricket pitches in South Hams: 7 rated as good quality, 8 standard and 3 poor
- Out of seven NTWs (non turf wickets) in South Hams, five are alongside grass pitches, and three are well used. Two are standalone facilities and not currently used (at Malborough Playing Fields and KEVICC in Totnes.
- Aveton Gifford Playing Field (previously recorded as being used for cricket) has been lost to sport. The Action Plans highlight pitches where there is

spare capacity and/or where quality could be improved to enable them to continue to cater for formal cricket (such as the NTW at Malborough Playing Fields, Ermington Playing Fields; Jubilee Meadow, Marlton and East Prawle Cricket Pitch

- There are a number of itinerant teams with no home grounds (e.g. Ugborough CC); and some would like a home base (e.g. Modbury CC which trains on nets at Modbury Sports Ground).
- In summary, whilst current demand can be said to be effectively met in all areas (apart from a few clubs who play their 3rd XIs at other grounds), there is very little spare capacity to accommodate growth, particularly at those clubs serving the main towns, especially Ivybridge and Kingsbridge. Pitches which are particularly underused are at Holbeton Cricket Ground and Yealmpton Recreation Ground but these are not in locations which can easily cater for ‘overplay’ from other grounds.
- Poor quality cricket ground and NTW at Roborough Sports Ground, used by Plymstock CC’s 3rd XI. There is spare capacity; current demand can be met.

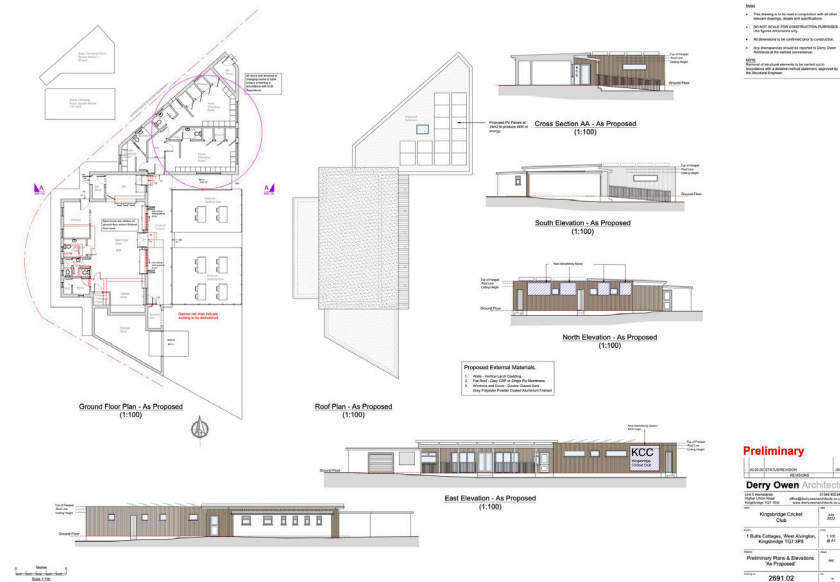


Fig 3.11.7 Pavilion expansion plans for Kingsbridge Cricket Club

3.11.7.4 Risk and Actions

PRIORITY PROJECTS

LOCATION	PROJECT	NOTES
Dartmouth Sub Area		
Dartmouth	Provision of cricket facilities in the town	To keep provision of non turf wicket at Coronation Park under review.
Ivybridge Sub Area		
Ivybridge	Additional pitch space	Second pitch within Ivybridge to accommodate increase in demand for cricket, to support youth cricket and to accommodate Ivybridge 3 rd XI.
Ivybridge area	Additional pitch space	Pitch provision within Modbury area (possibly non turf wicket) to accommodate itinerant teams and home base for Modbury CC. Enhancements to cricket pitch and facilities at Ermington Playing Fields.
Kingsbridge Sub Area		
Kingsbridge	Additional pitch space	Expansion of capacity at Kingsbridge CC through, for example, NTW, artificial nets and/or increase in number of wickets. Improvements to pavilion facility.
Kingsbridge area	Additional pitch space	Enhancement and promotion of non turf wickets at Malborough Recreation Ground and Belle Hill. Additional ground somewhere for itinerant teams?
Totnes Sub Area		
Totnes	Replacement of cricket facilities	Protection and enhancement of NTW at KEVICC upper site (Redworth).
Totnes area	Cricket development	Further youth development and consolidation at Dartington & Totnes CC and Stoke Gabriel CC. Stoke Gabriel CC – keen to install solar panels
Urban Fringe – Woolwell		
Roborough Down	Enhancement of provision for cricket	Off-site contribution to enhancements of clubhouse and changing facilities, access to the site and quality of the ground at Roborough Down Sports Ground.
Urban Fringe – Rest of Sub Area		
Sherford	As per Masterplan	The current allocations for Sherford are: Western side: Cricket pitch to north of main road Eastern side: One cricket pitch, two adult and two youth football pitches.

Additional Playing Requirements

- Based upon Sport England's Playing Pitch Calculator, latent and unmet demand and conservative figures for aspirational growth, projections for the growth in the number of teams to 2034 was estimated as 10 adult and 6 youth. According to the Playing Pitch Calculator, this would require access to c24 wickets (3 pitches). However, most of the increase can be accommodated at spare capacity on existing grounds or through the provision of NTWs but it is likely that new cricket grounds will be required in Ivybridge and possibly Kingsbridge.
- This is in addition to the new cricket pitch currently in the process of being installed on the western side of Sherford and the cricket pitch allocated for the eastern side in due course. This pitch is due to become available for 2024 cricket season.
- The increase in population in Woolwell to 2034 will generate demand for 4 wickets (0.5 of a cricket pitch). According to the 2022 Strategy, this demand is to be met through an off-site contribution to enhancement of the poor quality ground and ancillary facilities at Roborough Sports Ground (including the clubhouse and changing facilities, social space etc, plus improvements to pitch quality and machinery to maintain this, provision of ball stop netting and practice nets and improvements to site access).
- Possibility of a non turf wicket to be provided on the sports pitch plateau (Woolwell) – this was talked about in earlier site discussions but not now included – need to clarify with SHDC.

3.11.8 Teignbridge District Council

Playing Pitch Strategy – Extracted Data

Adopted 2018: Period covered to 2023 (Review required)

Note

Full details of all PPS data for this local authority can be found in Appendix B

3.11.8.1 Future Population Growth (refer to 3.11.1.2)

The main development areas are Matford, Newton Abbot, Teignmouth/Dawlish.

2021 Census identified a district population of 134,800.

Demographic and household growth modelling indicate a significant population growth of up to ~ 154,000 by 2034.

To sustain this rate of growth ~ 764 new homes to be built per year, up to 2034.

3.11.8.2 Vision (from currently prepared PPS)

To encourage more people to be more active and to improve social coherence and the quality of life for people in Teignbridge.

3.11.8.3 Issues (from currently prepared PPS)

- Main issue – accommodating games on the sites with highest demand, highest growth but limited room for physical expansion.
- Successful clubs in the district are now at or beyond capacity. Investment needs to be made in additional and/or replacement non turf pitches at these sites i.e. Kenn CC, Ipplepen CC, Bovey Tracey CC and Ashburton CC
- The enhancement of a number of cricket clubhouse facilities – six clubs have highlighted the need for refurbishment, re-siting or rebuilding facilities

- There is a key requirement of enhance aged practice facilities at a number of clubs in the area.
- Additional practice nets needed at overused sites e.g. Ipplepen.
- Consideration to expanding facilities for indoor cricket practice.
- Clubs that have 3rd or 4th XIs are in need of more secure tenure to enable long term planning. Most currently only have short term agreements.
- Additional sites or suitable land for expansion need to be identified to accommodate ‘overspill’ from successful clubs such as Bovey Tracey
- Emphasis needs to be on improving quality of experience at all levels.
- Forecasted growth in population will see small growth of 3 junior boys teams and a potential fall of 2 adult men’s teams. Strategy does not seem to recommend a new pitch.

3.11.8.4 Risk and Actions

PRIORITY PROJECTS – Taken from Action Guide

- Rebuild of pavilions at Ipplepen CC.
- Resite and rebuild of pavilions for Shaldon Optimists (now Teignmouth & Shaldon CC) and Stokeinteignhead.
- Access to extra pitch for Ipplepen 3rd XI.

Additional requirements

- Belap estimates access to the equivalent of 9 – 10 wickets will be required to meet the increase in demand from growth in the population 2023 – 2034, ie. in addition to that set out in the PPS. Some of this may be met from spare capacity at existing pitches, but additional new provision may also be required.
 - (The small second pitch at Hazeldown Oval, Teignmouth is already included in the 2018 PPS and so there is still need for additional provision).

3.11.9 Torbay Council

Playing Pitch Strategy - Extracted Data

Adopted 2021: Period covered to 2040

Note

Full details of all PPS data for this local authority can be found in Appendix B

3.11.9.1 Future Population Growth (refer to 3.11.1.2)

The main development areas are in Torquay and Paignton. 2021 Census identified a district population of 139,300.

Demographic and household growth modelling indicate a significant population growth of up to ~ 151,000 by 2034. To sustain this rate of growth ~ 600 new homes to be built per year, up to 2034.

3.11.9.2 Vision (from currently prepared PPS)

In Torbay, playing fields and related outdoor sports facilities will:

- provide high-quality, accessible and welcoming facilities and opportunities to enable those who live, study, work and enjoy visiting and staying in Torbay become more active and take part in sport, to whatever level they aspire, for the benefit of their physical and mental health;
- be protected for physical activity and be planned for, provided and managed in partnership in a co-ordinated way with a wide range of stakeholders; and,
- be placed at the heart of a network of active environments and designed and delivered in ways that respond positively to and help address climate and environmental challenges, help address the issues for deprived communities, engender a sense of personal and community pride and contribute to the Bay's social and economic well-being.

3.11.9.3 Issues (from currently prepared PPS)

The Strategy for cricket is based around the following:

- Improving the quality of grass cricket pitches if possible at Wall's Hill and Cockington Court and major renovations to Torre Valley North (if cricket remains on the site for the long-term).
- Enhancing ancillary facilities (changing facilities and clubhouses) at Torquay Recreation Ground, Queen's Park Paignton and Cricketfield Road, Torquay to create more welcoming and age and gender appropriate provision.
- Reinstating non turf wickets (NTWs) or grass squares on education sites and securing community use. If a ground is only required for junior play, then a smaller site could be sufficient.
- Easing pressure on shared sites (cricket and rugby) by reducing rugby use through provision of additional capacity on alternative sites (for example, providing rugby pitches at Clennon Valley to accommodate some demand from Queen's Park in Paignton and/or Torquay Recreation Ground/Torre Valley North in Torquay).
- Providing another cricket ground in the Bay for future demand later in the Strategy period. The location of a new ground will be challenging with few flat or level pitch locations. Bearing this in mind, an existing strategic site may provide the opportunity to act as a reserve site for cricket to be considered if demand emerges towards the later part of the strategy period. If this is not feasible then a new cricket site should be allocated within the next iteration of the Local Plan, subject to demand. This will be in addition to improving or replacing the pitch at Torre Valley North or providing a good quality non turf wicket elsewhere, possibly on a school site.

Key sites for cricket are:

- In Torquay: Cricketfield Road, Torquay Recreation Ground, Torre Valley North
- In Paignton: Clennon Valley and Queen's Park
- In Brixham: Churston Ferrers Grammar School

3.11.9.4 Risk and Actions

PRIORITY PROJECTS – KEY SITES

LOCATION	PROJECT
Cricketfield Road, Torquay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing facilities/pavilion upgrade as community sport, health and wellbeing hub • Pitch improvements – drainage to football pitch which will help improve cricket outfield.
Torquay Recreation Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and clarify situation re: potential flooding of this site due to rising sea levels and impact on cricket season (for example from flooding at the start of the season and need for additional maintenance if flooding continues during rugby season). • Major upgrade of pavilion, ideally provision of clubhouse/changing facilities jointly with rugby club.
Torre Valley North, Torquay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebuilding of changing rooms/clubhouse • Major renovation of square required. Explore option and feasibility of removing cricket from the site to an alternative location (either new ground or additional capacity at a new square/pitch at Clennon Valley).
Clennon Valley, Paignton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration to be given to provision of a cricket ground to provide additional capacity for Paignton 3rd XI's and / or and to meet demand for new provision to 2040. Enhanced pitch maintenance programme now being adopted by Torbay Council at Clennon Valley. Masterplanning and feasibility work required to establish possible pitch layouts, ground conditions (including work to establish suitability for a new cricket square), timetable and costs for drainage and other works etc
Queen's Park, Paignton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase capacity of ground for cricket by provision of pitch space elsewhere. • Upgrade to changing rooms/pavilion (shared with rugby).
Churston Ferrers Grammar School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of cricket facilities proposed on field with two football pitches. However, currently no square laid and further dialogue and feasibility work is required by all parties to determine if cricket could be a viable option on the playing field. Any future changes including cricket must not affect the football outcomes for the site in line with the terms and conditions of the FF grant.



Fig 3.11.9. Queens Park Sports Ground, Paignton

Additional requirements

- If a new cricket pitch cannot be provided at Clennon Valley to replace that lost at Torre Valley North (if it moves) and to cater for additional future demand, a new ground will be required over the life of the Strategy.



3.11.10 Torrige District Council

Playing Pitch Strategy – Extracted Data

Adopted 2017: Period covered to 2031

Note – Full details of all PPS data for this local authority can be found in Appendix B

3.11.10.1 Future Population Growth (refer to 3.11.1.2)

The main development areas is Bideford, with some smaller developments in Holsworthy and Great Torrington.

2021 Census identified a district population of 68,100.

Demographic and household growth modelling indicate a significant population growth of up to ~ 77,000 by 2034.

To sustain this rate of growth ~ 419 new homes to be built per year, up to 2034.

3.11.10.2 Vision (from currently prepared PPS)

To fully understand the quantity and quality of our current stock of playing pitches and changing provision to ensure that we:

- Protect the facilities that are used and valued by our current population
- Provide new facilities in the right locations to cater for increased demand and population and
- Enhance facilities to ensure that quality meets 21st century expectations and attracts new and existing users

3.11.10.3 Issues (from currently prepared PPS)

- In the Bideford sub area, Bideford, Littleham & Westward Ho! CC is effectively at capacity given the poor condition of ancillary facilities.
- King George V Playing Fields cricket in Bideford has considerable spare capacity. The non turf wicket at King George V Playing Fields in Bideford

- requires replacement. (KGV is no longer an available facility for cricket)
- The four rural grounds in the Torrington sub area all have considerable spare capacity
- The one ground in the Holsworthy sub area at Stanhope Park has spare capacity, although the proximity to housing restricts their number of usable wickets for matchplay.
- Number of new teams being projected to 2031 suggest the need for access to one new cricket pitch in Torrige. The need has already been established for a replacement facility with enhanced facilities for Bideford, Littleham and Westward Ho! Access to an additional cricket pitch is likely to be required; this could, ideally be addressed through the provision of a double cricket pitch site.

3.11.10.4 Risk and Actions

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- King George V Playing Fields Bideford is a large public recreation space in the town that caters for many pitch sports. The cricket pitch had considerable spare capacity and facilities were acknowledged as requiring upgrading. Establish whether this site can remain viable as a cricket venue.
- New ground for Bideford, Littleham & Westward Ho! CC. Long established cricket club running a range of teams and hosting senior and junior representative matches. Ground's ancillary facilities are poor and there are insurance risks through balls being hit into adjacent properties. It is a priority for Devon Cricket and the club to relocate to a new site and provision new, enhanced, high quality replacement facilities to accommodate the full range of activities.

Additional Requirements

- The 2017 Study found that there was a need for an additional cricket pitch in Bideford to 2031. It was proposed that if/when a new replacement ground was found for Bideford, Littleham & Westward Ho! CC, this could become a double pitch site, to cater for future demand.



3.11.11 West Devon District Council

Playing Pitch Strategy – Extracted Data Adopted 2022: Period covered to 2034

Note – Full details of all PPS data for this local authority can be found in Appendix B

3.11.11.1 Future Population Growth (refer to 3.11.1.2)

The main development areas are Okehampton and Tavistock. The 2021 Census identified a district population of 57,100.

Demographic and household growth modelling indicate a significant population growth of up to ~ 61,600 by 2034.

To sustain this rate of growth ~ 224 new homes to be built per year, up to 2034.

3.11.11.2 Vision (from currently prepared PPS)

To protect, conserve and enhance playing pitch facilities as active environments in partnership with local stakeholders and communities so that they make a positive impact on the lives of local people. Provision should be sustainable and easily accessible to all, encourage greater participation and sporting excellence and help to improve people’s physical and mental wellbeing, by strengthening the links between physical activity, sport and health

3.11.11.3 Issues (from currently prepared PPS)

- 15 cricket pitches in West Devon: 4 rated as good quality, 10 standard, and 1 poor. Out of nine NTWs in West Devon, two are standalone facilities on school sites, only one of which has community use (the NTW at Simmons Park, Okehampton, home ground of Okehampton CC). None of the others, on shared sites, are well used.
- Two sites (Walkhampton Memorial Playing Fields and Lydford Sports Ground) previously recorded as being used for cricket are no longer marked or used as cricket pitches. The Action Plans highlight pitches where there is spare capacity and/or where quality could be improved to

enable them to continue to cater for formal cricket (such as Milton Abbot Cricket Pitch, Lifton QEII Playing Fields; and the Elephant’s Nest Cricket pitch near Mary Tavy).

- In summary, whilst current demand can be said to be effectively met in all areas (apart from a few clubs who play their 3rd XIs at other grounds), there is very little spare capacity to accommodate growth, particularly at those clubs serving the main towns, especially Okehampton and Tavistock. Pitches which are particularly underused are at Spreyton Cricket Club but this is not in a location which can easily cater for ‘overplay’ from other grounds.

3.11.10.4 Risk and Actions

LOCATION	PROJECT	NOTES
West Devon North Sub Area		
Okehampton	Provision of grass pitch	Provision of grass cricket pitch within Okehampton to be kept under review to provide greater capacity and meet future demand.
Okehampton	Enhancement of facilities	Upgrade/better maintenance and protection of non turf wicket at Okehampton College for Okehampton CC.
West Devon South Sub Area		
West Devon South	Enhancement of facilities	Replacement/upgrade of non turf wicket at Tavistock College. Improvements to pavilion at Tavistock CC.
West Devon South	Additional pitch space	To meet future demand – investigate potential for community use of cricket pitches at Mount Kelly (private school)

Additional requirements

- Based upon Sport England’s Playing Pitch Calculator, latent and unmet demand and conservative figures for aspirational growth, projections for the growth in the number of teams to 2034 was 7 adult and 5 youth teams. According to the Playing Pitch Calculator, this would require access to c20 wickets (2.5 pitches) in West Devon. Most of the increase can be accommodated at spare capacity on existing grounds or through the provision of NTWs but it is likely that new cricket grounds will be required in Tavistock and Okehampton (to expand capacity there from the non turf wicket at Simmons Park).
- Whitchurch Wayfarers planning to upgrade pavilion and provide a replacement NTP
- Buckland Monachorum CC are planning to install static nets and a NTP

4.0 Conclusions and Devon Cricket Board Interpretation

The outcome from a broad consultation with the complete cricket community across Devon has resulted in a multifaceted Action Plan to steer the facility needs for cricket in the right direction for the next ten years.

Its interesting to note that some of the identified needs from one sector of the game, not only align well with the needs from other sectors, but also with that of the ECB Inspiring Generations key areas for focus in the game. Some good examples of this are detailed below:

Engage children and youth cricket.

In order to provide a better playing experience and boost the level of interest in junior and girls cricket, more effective and entertaining school competitions result from being able to host events at two pitch locations and certainly where finals are concerned, having a central county outdoor location makes it easier for all participants. Similarly the County Age Group structure, increasingly struggles to find suitable venues to host their many matches as clubs are becoming more burdened with their own fixture programme. Having a centrally located outdoor performance hub would not only provide a high-quality playing facility, but it would ease the capacity issues at already busy clubs. The disability cricket sector is also looking to find a location that would be accessibly suitable to host full disabled team fixtures and such an outdoor hub can be designed to provide that function.

Make cricket more accessible.

The Inspiring Generations strategy aims to make cricket more accessible by broadening the demographic of participants. This study has identified the need to provide more cricket playing opportunities in urban areas of high deprivations as well as supporting rurally located clubs who are seeking to improve their facilities and attract more players. The urban offering need not follow the more traditional means of cricket provision as it's been established that certain minority groups may prefer to play in a more community style environment.

Transform women and girls cricket.

To increase the level of participation at every level of the game, a club needs to be capable of hosting more cricket matches and training sessions. Often the volunteer groundskeeper already operates under continual pressure to prepare batting tracks and not risk over playing any particular pitch. Provision of non-turf pitches on a cricket square can alleviate some of the pressure and provide perfectly adequate playing surfaces for younger age group girls and womens softball cricket matches.

Many clubs have also been quick to indicate that their changing facilities and social space within the pavilion do not necessarily lend themselves to being a suitable environment for women and girls to enjoy. With the recent growth in the women and girls cricket, more clubs are rapidly realising the need to make such facility improvements. Availability of the county grants scheme has already provided and will continue to provide, support to clubs to enable such improvements.



Fig 4.1 Space converted to women and girls changing at Bovey Tracey CC

Grow and nurture the core.

Recreational cricket clubs are the lifeblood of the whole cricket community. Retaining and attracting new members is essential, not only for growth and development, but also the survival of a cricket club. Creating a more welcoming environment and engaging with the wider local

community are certainly ways in which this can be achieved and once again, where a club is able to demonstrate its progress in delivering and growing new programmes at its club in line with Inspiring Generations themes, there are county grant opportunities available to support. Of course attracting more sport minded participation at a cricket club, normally leads to greater success for the club but also it helps to strengthen the standard at the performance end of the game, by attracting more players. Everything is related.

The challenges facing **groundkeepers** at cricket clubs has been well documented in this study with the two overarching concerns being;

- the lack of volunteers, prepared to devote the necessary amount of time and training to become proficient in the task. Being able to offer a consistent and adequate training package to support both the new groundskeeper at a club as well as the existing one who may still need refresher training, should significantly help towards driving up the pitch standards at cricket grounds.
- having to manage with either old, obsolete or in some cases, malfunctioning machinery to perform all the necessary pitch preparation steps, is a common frustration at most cricket clubs. Lack of funding support and the very high cost of good quality machinery can often mean that clubs simply can't afford to equip themselves adequately.

The current economic climate and alarming **energy costs** are creating additional challenges for cricket clubs, who cannot simply just raise membership fees to meet likely shortfalls.

There are still clubs across more rural locations in Devon which are operating without **basic service provisions** like water, power and drainage. It is considered within the Devon Cricket Board that in this day and age, with more modern solutions available, that all clubs should be able to have these basic facility needs at their club. Where possible these clubs should have accessibility to county grants to assist in providing such essential services. There are certain areas in Devon where access to acceptable quality **indoor training facilities**, without the need for long journeys, is very difficult to find. This situation has worsened in some areas, leading to loss of indoor leagues and training facilities. Feedback from cricket clubs, has identified the pressing need to make improvements to such indoor cricket provision, particularly, but not exclusively,

in Plymouth where previously suitable facilities are no longer accessible and Okehampton areas where quality of the only suitable facility is poor.

Like many counties in England, Devon is experiencing massive growth in house building developments which in turn, leads to significant population rises in certain areas. Engagement with local authorities via their **playing pitch strategies**, provides a useful insight into how cricket facility provision will cope with expected growth in participation. Where inadequate provision is likely this is identified, along with recommendations for any additional requirement. Section 3.11 of this study addresses the needs for each of the ten Local Authorities in Devon and highlights the main issues and concerns, which greatly assists the formation of priority actions for our cricket facilities.

The Devon Cricket Board “core team” assigned to conduct this Facilities Strategy have found it very rewarding to engage with so many different individuals, clubs and organisations, who have all been extremely proactive and cooperative. It is therefore hoped that the outcome of this study will be both purposeful and beneficial to the whole cricket community in Devon over the next decade.



Fig 4.2 Creating the welcoming environment at Plymstock CC

5.0 Recommendations - Action Plan

After extensive consultation and evaluation the Executive Summary in Section 2.0 provides the main findings of this study and addresses the principal facility requirements to both satisfy the evolving needs of cricket in Devon and the key themes from the ECB Inspiring Generations Strategy.

The Executive Summary contains number references at the end of many paragraphs. Those reference numbers correlate to the relevant Action Plan item listed here. Additionally, there is consideration to who would be the most appropriate Action lead and the timescale required to achieve implementation.

It should be noted that whilst a recommendation is assigned with a lead responsible person, in most cases its likely that a project team will need to be formed to drive forward all the necessary elements of the task, in the correct sequence and with appropriate funding in place.

The Strategy Core Team have reviewed the Action Plan items below and consider them to be adequately “SMART” (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely), however it is considered that refinements will often be necessary during any action plan lifecycle and subsequently regular monitoring and reviews will be required to ensure that the objective remains necessary and accurate to meet the needs of cricket.

Action Plan Guidance

(1) Action number items are cross referenced in Section 2 - Executive Summary

- (2) Inspiring Generations Themes key
- | | |
|------|--|
| TWGD | Transforming women, girls, and disability cricket |
| CWE | Creating welcoming environments |
| URB | Urban areas, population growth and diverse communities |
| TCC | Tackling Climate Change |
| P&P | Pathway and Performance |
| P&I | Protect and Improve (linked to existing facilities) |
| IND | Indoor Playing |
| GND | Grounds |
| OTH | Other |

Some action items will overlap more than one eligible theme

(3) Delivery timescales can either be:

- | | |
|--------|---------------------|
| SHORT | < 1 year |
| MEDIUM | < 3 years |
| LONG | > 3 years <10 years |

(4) Action owners – lead responsible role is listed first with other stakeholders listed after.

- | | |
|------|---------------------------------|
| DCB | Devon Cricket Board |
| DCCC | Devon County Cricket Club |
| PP | Player Pathway |
| WS | Western Storm |
| ECB | England and Wales Cricket Board |
| LA | Local Authority |
| GMA | Grounds Management Association |

(5) Outcome & Comment – More details are provided here on a successful outcome and any additional comments that provide clarity on the objective. It should be stated that to date, no costing exercise has been carried out for any action point in this section.

Devon Cricket Facilities Strategy – Action Plan

Action No. (1)	Strategic Theme (2)	Recommendation	Objective / Action / Tactic	Delivery Timescale (3)	Action Owners (4)	Outcome and Comment (5)
5.1	CWE	Assessment of club facilities	<p>Visit all Devon cricket clubs and complete the club facilities checklist.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make facilities checklist self-prompting to support easy completion • Develop a template cricket facility maintenance schedule, assisting clubs to maintain safe and compliant facilities 	Short	DCB Clubs	Establish a detailed status of club playing, recreational and grounds facilities to determine common deficiencies and trends. Identify clubs that are without basic facility services and target for priority support where cost effective solutions are presented.
5.2	CWE TCC	Reduction of energy consumption and subsequent cost saving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support viable solutions for clubs to become more self-sufficient regarding their electricity and water supplies. • Explore options for rainwater harvesting to mitigate increasing risk of drought and flood protection schemes. 	Med	DCB Clubs	Utilise County Grant Scheme to support funding under Tackling Climate Change theme. This will become a priority objective for recreational cricket clubs as cost of energy continues to rise at alarming rates.
5.3a	TWGD CWE	Provide adequate changing space for clubs offering women and girls cricket	Support clubs to make necessary conversions in their clubhouse to accommodate additional changing space	Long (ongoing)	DCB Clubs	Utilise County Grant Scheme to support funding under transforming women and girls cricket theme. Long duration as its expected that changes across all clubs will take time.
5.3b	TWGD	Enable greater pitch playing capacity to accommodate more matches being played by women and girl's teams	Support clubs to improve, replace or fit new non-turf pitches (NTPs) to increase playing capacity and ease burden on volunteer grounds keepers. Influence Junior Leagues to make more use of NTPs.	Med	DCB Clubs	Utilise County Grant Scheme to support funding under transforming women and girl's cricket.
5.4	TWGD P&P CWE	Introduce a new centrally located, two pitch, outdoor performance cricket venue with playing, training, and recreational facilities appropriate for hosting junior and senior county cricket matches, Western Storm matches, and full disability team matches	Work with stakeholders and partners to locate, develop and deliver a high quality, outdoor performance cricket hub with all associated cricket facilities, which is easily accessible not only within the county but also from other counties in the region. Ensure incumbent cricket clubs retain their access and use of the same facility and enjoy the benefits from the site improvements	Med	DCB DCCC PP WS ECB	Proposed location at Winslade Park, Exeter. Within 1 mile of the M5 motorway, set in pleasant parkland environment, with adequate parking and nearby amenities. Will require development of a new purpose-built cricket pavilion, training facilities and laying of a second pitch adjacent to the current pitch. Develop facility in conjunction with site owner and operate in accordance with a specific Community Use Agreement. Possibly linked in with other sports to generate wider use of facility.

Action No. ⁽¹⁾	Strategic Theme ⁽²⁾	Recommendation	Objective / Action / Tactic	Delivery Timescale ⁽³⁾	Action Owners ⁽⁴⁾	Outcome and Comment ⁽⁵⁾
5.5	P&I CWE	Support clubs to improve their eligibility criteria and visibility for funding to develop improved facilities across the recreational game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Participation team to support clubs looking to commence National Programmes / W&G sections. Input via Playing Pitch Strategy Steering Committees to influence and communicate the needs for cricket in each local authority 	Long (ongoing)	DCB LA	<p>Improved facilities standards at recreational clubs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure early engagement with Local Authorities to leverage support from any available S106 and CIL investment.
5.6a	P&I	Protect clubs where there is threat or potential impact due to external or environmental influences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early engagement with relevant organisations to ensure club needs are defined and understood. For ball strike risks – work with all interested parties to achieve a swift and suitable outcome. Request clearer guidance from ECB on managing ball strike risks 	Long	DCB ECB LA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clubs facing relocation through local environmental, or housing schemes achieve the best possible outcome. Engage with LA, developers, and ECB to determine funding solutions for clubs who find themselves faced with ball strike risks due to changes in environment surrounding their facility
5.6b	P&I	Assist vulnerable clubs to extend tenure at their facility or explore options to achieve a more robust term of occupancy at a facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with landowners and landlords to negotiate extended tenure periods at lease renewal time. Where LA's are considering asset transfer, liaise with clubs to obtain freehold tenure after fully understanding risk versus benefit. Develop guidance on asset transfer process to assist clubs 	Long	DCB Club LA	<p>Improved security of tenure will allow clubs to invest in their own club development plans and create better opportunity for grant eligibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long term as club lease renewals will be ongoing over the 10-year strategy period Some clubs operate on an annually renewable lease or other low security of tenure agreements
5.7	P&I	Support clubs to obtain additional playing pitches Successful clubs are becoming challenged due to lack of playing capacity at their grounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback via PPS to ensure that clubs operating at overcapacity are listed and solutions identified. Campaign for additional playing pitches in areas identified as being short due either to population growth or general shortfall in a particular area 	Long	Club DCB LA	<p>Allow clubs working hard to provide all aspects of cricket at the club, to be able to do so. This will lead to more successful, fully inclusive cricket clubs in Devon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long term as additional club playing pitch demands will evolve over 10-year strategy period. Campaign for additional cricket pitches in areas of large housing developments liaise with LA's to yield Sect 106 and CIL investment where available. Work with clubs to develop suitable second playing pitch options in locations close to home.

Action No. ⁽¹⁾	Strategic Theme ⁽²⁾	Recommendation	Objective / Action / Tactic	Delivery Timescale ⁽³⁾	Action Owners ⁽⁴⁾	Outcome and Comment ⁽⁵⁾
5.8a	TWGD P&I	Support clubs to provide improved playing and training facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the addition of more non-turf pitches on cricket squares to allow more matches to get played with less strain on club groundskeeper. Assist clubs to improve static and portable practice nets to ensure that players can adequately train in safe and suitable environments. Assist clubs to “open up “their facility for improved disability access 	Long	Club DCB	<p>Inclusion of non turf pitch on the cricket square will greatly assist over capacity issues at clubs as identified in 5.7 above, with growing youth and ladies softball sections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> County Grant Fund opportunities exist if the need is to support the growth in women, girls, or disability cricket. Long term as playing and training needs at clubs will evolve over the 10-year strategy period.
5.8b	CWE P&I	Allow clubs to offer the “whole club experience” by improving their social and recreational facilities to retain existing and attract new members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and advise on improvements to various aspects such as catering provision, access and parking, outdoor seating, changing room features. Assist clubs to determine their priorities using the ECB CWE guidance / tools 	Long (ongoing)	Club DCB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County Grant Fund opportunities exist if the need is to create a more welcoming environment at clubs which offer women, girls, disability cricket along with national programmes. Provide a de-fibrillator at each club
5.9a	P&I	Analyse PPS data to determine areas in the county where demand will determine a need for more cricket playing provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align predicted needs for the county with strategically located clubs having project plans that could assist with meeting the demand. Where there is no obviously suitable match, work with suitably located clubs to identify a suitable solution for growth 	Long	DCB LA Club	<p>Providing playing opportunities for the growing game as populations rise across Devon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular dialogue with LA’s and involvement of PPS Action Plans to maintain accuracy. Coordinate LA & Club communications to ensure that future playing pitches are fully utilised
5.9b	P&I	Protect playing locations when clubs merge or vacate a facility for any reason.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that any pitch vacated by a club merger is not lost to cricket if it can offer improved facilities or assist with over capacity at nearby clubs 	Long	DCB Club LA	<p>Making full use of the playing provisions within a locality.</p>
5.10	P&I CWE	Lobby to support smaller clubs striving to develop and improve their facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide small / rural clubs with the ability to gain support for their club improvement projects, even if they fail to meet certain specification / criteria. Develop a lower tier, acceptance criteria to allow planning applications from smaller clubs to be supported by ECB. Ensure smaller clubs are able to have basic facility services on site, via access to funding schemes where appropriate. 	Long	Club DCB LA (planning)	<p>Enable rural and smaller clubs to create more welcoming environments, attract new members, develop youth sections, and become our “focus” clubs of the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with LA to ensure the club receives appropriate support and where available funding to develop their project. Allow the game to spread further and allow rural clubs a chance to attract new players from their community.

Action No. ⁽¹⁾	Strategic Theme ⁽²⁾	Recommendation	Objective / Action / Tactic	Delivery Timescale ⁽³⁾	Action Owners ⁽⁴⁾	Outcome and Comment ⁽⁵⁾
5.11	CWE	Help clubs to embrace their local community and become a stronger entity as a result	Assist clubs with welcoming environments to open up to the local community, leading to potentially wider membership base and opportunity from broader funding streams	Long	DCB Club	Making a cricket club more inclusive within its own membership base and the wider community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiating engagement between cricket club and other local clubs and societies.
5.12	TWGD	Enable more Disability Champion clubs across Devon, by supporting plans to become more disability friendly playing and recreational environments	Provide guidance and support to enable Disability Champion clubs to be based in all four regions in the County, ultimately to achieve a maximum travel time of 40 mins to reach a suitable club for a disabled cricketer.	Med	DCB Club	Enabling cricket participation for disabled cricketers without having to travel long distances. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise County Grant funding for club improvements to become more accessible and enjoyable from a disability perspective
5.13	IND	Make indoor cricket more accessible and enjoyable across the county	Provide quality indoor cricket centres in areas currently deprived of such facilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with suitably located schools and leisure centres to ensure facilities are of a suitable quality and made available to clubs and youth development programmes. Campaign for a suitable indoor cricket centre to service the Plymouth / South Hams /West Devon area where access to quality facilities is currently very difficult. 	Med	DCB PP Club LA	Improve cricket standards by providing access to fully compliant indoor training facilities which can lead to wider participation through indoor league competitions and increased usage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply pressure through LA's at new town developments in strategic locations eg. Sherford, Bideford, to ensure that cricket facilities are adequately provisioned. Consult with all interested parties to develop a demand case that can be used to justify the need in specific locations
5.14	URB	Provide adequate cricket facilities in Devon urban fringe locations	Provide necessary evidence to ensure developers, LA's and NGB are aligned in the cricket needs resulting from new housing developments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local clubs to engage with LA and developer to be at the forefront of new facility developments. Provide input to urban plans to justify the need for increased cricket provision in city and urban fringe locations. Drive developers to complete new playing facilities in line with planning schedules and avoid delays. 	Short Med Long	DCB LA Clubs	With additional playing facility needs, established city-based clubs can help manage the predicted participation growth in urban locations. In some cases new clubs can be formed in new urbanisations eg. Cranbrook. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short term for completion of Sherford cricket pitch and pavilion to enable an additional pitch for Plymouth based clubs. Medium timescale for other projects underway, long-term timescale for new developments in their early planning stages

Action No. ⁽¹⁾	Strategic Theme ⁽²⁾	Recommendation	Objective / Action / Tactic	Delivery Timescale ⁽³⁾	Action Owners ⁽⁴⁾	Outcome and Comment ⁽⁵⁾
5.15	URB	In partnership with other governing bodies provide non-traditional cricket playing provision as part of a more widely accessible sports facility in areas of high deprivation in Devon.	Engage with other stakeholders to deliver non-traditional participation facilities in the inner cities which can be used by community initiatives such as Wicketz, minor ethnicity groups, schools and social cricket groups not necessarily looking to associate themselves with a recreational club. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide at least one “Playzone” facility incorporating cricket, in central Plymouth. • Consider a community “pitch up and play” community practice nets facility in Exeter. • Evaluate viability of other similar facilities in Torbay or other high deprivation areas in Devon • Establish management plan in consultation with other key stakeholders to enable cricket to be played in these facilities 	Med	DCB LA ECB	Provision of alternative cricket playing centres in areas of high deprivation, driving growth, competition and engagement within communities which can often feel segregated. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with minor ethnicity groups, schools, other potential user groups to determine their needs. • Collaborate with the Football Foundation and Plymouth City Council to develop a Playzone which can incorporate a softball cricket playing provision
5.16	GND P&I TCC	Support priority club needs for grounds machinery	Provide support to clubs with any urgent ground machinery needs due to equipment failure or obsolescence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on replacing fossil fuel equipment with electrically driven equivalents to help reduce carbon footprint. • Campaign for funding assistance to clubs in need of support to purchase new and used grounds machinery 	Long	Clubs DCB	More sustainable, energy efficient, environmentally conscious cricket clubs with safer and more efficient machinery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Grants Tackling Climate Change theme can now offer support towards e-machines.
5.17	GND P&I	Provide an effective training programme for both new and existing groundskeepers	Establish a regular training programme that offers training to align with the stages of the cricket season. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up annual training programme which includes three seasonal sessions, based on GMA pitch preparation guidelines. 	Short	DCB Clubs	An essential step towards clubs being able to deliver good quality and consistent playing surfaces. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link with other regional CCB’s to build an effective programme which encourages participation.

Action No. ⁽¹⁾	Strategic Theme ⁽²⁾	Recommendation	Objective / Action / Tactic	Delivery Timescale ⁽³⁾	Action Owners ⁽⁴⁾	Outcome and Comment ⁽⁵⁾
5.18	GND	Provide club groundskeepers with more information on effective pitch preparation and ground maintenance	Encourage clubs to join the Grounds Management Association (GMA) as grass roots club to make full use of the professional guidance available. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain records of clubs who register with GMA and provide regular bulletins to club groundskeepers to demonstrate useful learning material 	Med	DCB Clubs	More consistent and better quality playing pitches with more knowledgeable club volunteer groundskeepers.
519	GND	Set up more effective communications channel for club groundskeepers	Being able to share good practices and reach out for guidance when specific problems are experienced will make a club groundskeeper feel less exposed and vulnerable. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up a Groundskeepers chat group with open membership to all DCB affiliated cricket clubs. Allocate a County Pitch Advisor to be the chat group champion 	Med	DCB Clubs	Greater unity amongst club groundskeepers by using modern communication tools. Ability to share knowledge and assist those in distress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forge stronger link with the Somerset Foundation grounds team and encourage regular attendance at grounds forum days.
5.20	GND	Provide clubs with “remote expert support” to analyse any specific pitch related issues they may face and offer solutions to drive improvements	GMA will roll out PitchPower in 2023 to support clubs with fine turf surfaces. Promote the roll out campaign and provide clubs with assistance to put the system into use. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide clear guidance with visual aids to assist groundskeepers in adopting. Allocate a PitchPower County Groundskeeper to act as champion for the process. Target 10 clubs to have undertaken PitchPower assessments during 2023 and a further 20 clubs for 2024. Explore funding opportunities for clubs requiring improvement programmes resulting from a PitchPower assessment. 	Short	DCB Clubs ECB/GMA	Using modern “app” based system to assist clubs improve their fine turf pitches. Will be challenging to widely generate acceptance across the County. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare and roll out PitchPower training seminar and ensure that County Pitch Advisors are suitably briefed to be able to provide clubs with assistance. Consider appointing new CPA’s who are keen to embrace and promote PitchPower.
5.21	GND	Provide clubs with groundskeeping services and machinery to support end of season pitch renovations	Explore possibility of providing a lower cost solution for pitch renovations, using a county team and shared specialist machinery. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a volunteer working group to explore viability of a portable range of equipment and necessary labour 	Med	DCB Clubs	Many clubs struggle to afford a full end of season pitch renovations. This would initially be a viability study to determine if there could be a portable equipment solution for clubs at a lower cost than engaging professional services.

Action No. ⁽¹⁾	Strategic Theme ⁽²⁾	Recommendation	Objective / Action / Tactic	Delivery Timescale ⁽³⁾	Action Owners ⁽⁴⁾	Outcome and Comment ⁽⁵⁾
5.22	GND P&I	Support clubs to attract more volunteer groundskeepers and to retain those who are currently engaged in the role	<p>Provide incentives to raise the profile of the club groundskeeper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular features on Devon Cricket website • Encourage clubs to form a Grounds Team to share the burden of work. • Clubs to invite a sponsor for their Grounds Team to assist with recognition and provide support with equipment or consumable costs. • Encourage promotion from within clubs, analyse the skill set amongst club membership and target individuals who may be interested in performing grounds duties. 	Med	Clubs DCB	<p>To drive consistency in pitch performance its essential to have well trained and committed groundskeepers, who are driven to yield good playing pitches.</p> <p>Providing suitable recognition will assist with motivation to succeed and will help to sustain knowledgeable individuals in their position.</p>
5.23	GND	Evaluate performance of stitched Hybrid pitches as a means of managing playing capacity on cricket squares	<p>Provide clubs with the necessary detail to allow an informed decision to be made on whether a Hybrid pitch is worthy of investment at their facility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer support to clubs who are prepared to commit to installing a hybrid pitch and assist with any developmental planning and sourcing of funding streams. • Target having minimum of two clubs in Devon with Hybrid pitches on the square within 2 years 	Med	Clubs DCB ECB/GMA	<p>Provision of Hybrid pitches can permit much greater use of a “grass” track over the playing season and can be used over several seasons. In order to fully evaluate how a Hybrid performs in recreational cricket there needs to be some installed and put into service.</p> <p>The introduction of Hybrid pitches will ease burden on the groundskeeper as pitch preparation duties will be reduced.</p>

6.0 Implementation and Review

6.1 Delivering the Strategy

The Devon Cricket County Facilities Strategy (CFS) has engaged with many stakeholders in the game and therefore it is important that they are notified of the final study report ahead of general release. Effectively this would be considered as a final draft review of content.

Roll out to stakeholders is expected to occur by 31st May 2023, with a one-week period to review and submit comments back. With comments returned by 7th June, there would be a further one-week period to permit any final amendments, prior to general release of report on 14th June 2023.

Promotion of the CFS would involve a notification email to each DCB affiliated cricket club chair and secretary making them aware of the Strategy release and also a feature article on the Devon Cricket website. Any visits to cricket clubs and any Local Authority Playing Pitch Strategy meetings attended by Devon Cricket Board representatives would draw reference to the Strategy, to raise awareness amongst the wider sporting community.

The final version CFS would also be issued to the ECB Facilities Planning team on 31st May 2023.



6.2 Monitoring and Review

On completion and roll out of the CFS, a sub-committee shall be formed with the following responsibilities:

- Effectively manage the Devon CFS
- In conjunction with ECB Facilities Planning team, prioritise and manage any investments meeting the requirements of the CFS and any budget constraints.
- Support costing exercises and project development activities linked to objectives within the strategy
- Maintain accuracy and effectiveness by conducting an annual review.
- Report on progress for all objectives and alignment with allocated time limits
- Review the suitability of the CFS to meet the changing needs of cricket

The Strategy sub-committee shall comprise of a minimum of three designated Core team persons, plus representatives from the following stakeholder groups;

- Devon Cricket League
- Devon Women's Cricket League
- County Pitch Advisor or Groundskeepers representative.
- ECB Facilities Planning Manager
- District Council (Planning and Infrastructure) representative from any of the Local Authorities

It would not be expected to have full representation from those listed above at every progress meeting or annual review, however as a minimum it would be expected that at least two non-core team persons will attend.

All progress reports shall be circulated to the ECB Facilities Planning team for their review.

Any successes resulting from the CFS will be shared with the wider cricket community in Devon.

7.0 Acknowledgements and References

The Devon Cricket Board would like to acknowledge the many individuals, who have either provided statistical information and data, offered opinion, or recommended facility improvements to meet the changing dimensions of cricket. This input has been invaluable in the compilation of this Strategy.

In general, every person and organisation who has contributed in any capacity to the County Facilities Strategy are sincerely thanked for their commitment and support. In no specific order, the main consultees and contributors are recognised below:

CORE TEAM

Devon Cricket Board - Facilities & Funding	Nick Goodliffe (Strategy Lead)
Devon Cricket Board - Managing Director	Matt Theedom
Devon Cricket Board - Clubs & Programmes	Alex Jopling
Devon Cricket Board - Women & Girls	Ann-Marie Presswell
Devon Cricket Board - Advisor	Dick Holifield

OVERSIGHT TEAM

Devon Cricket League	Dave Sheppard
	Nick Rogers
	Ed Leverton
	Jon Goulder
Devon Regional Leagues	Geoff Willcocks (P&D League) Graham Moore (North Devon League)
Devon Women's Cricket League	Kirsty Hambley
Devon Cricket Board – Disability Cricket	Lewis Fountain
Devon Cricket Board – Pathway & Programmes	Sandy Allen
Devon Cricket Board – Community Coaching	Vicky Reeve
ECB Facilities Planning	Neil Higginson
Regional Junior Leagues	Andy Alford Dick Holifield Richard Hussey
Devon County Cricket Club	Nigel Mountford (Chief Executive) Neil Gamble (Chairman)

EXTERNAL SUPPORT

Active Devon	Matt Evans
Chance to Shine	Stuart Priscott
Lord's Taverners - Wicketz programme (urban)	Katie Holland
North Devon District Council	Richard Slaney
Torrige District Council	Adrian Avery
West Devon & South Hams District Council	Jon Parkinson
Plymouth City Council	Rachel Penfound
Teignbridge District Council	Fergus Pate
Torbay Council	Catherine Williams
Exeter City Council	James Bogue
East Devon District Council	Matt Dickins
Mid Devon District Council	Tristan Peat
Devon Cricket Clubs	59 DCB affiliated cricket clubs who completed the club survey
ECB Disability Cricket	Edgar Herridge
Sport England (Planning)	Gary Parsons
Grounds Management Association (Pitch Advisor)	Phil Jeggo
Devon Association of Cricket Officials	Chris Shelton (Chairman DACO) Paul Dawe (DACO Umpire) Lynne Whitfield (Scorer)
Western Storm (Womens Franchise)	Lisa Crampton
Graphics & Report Compilation Services	Anna Rutter (Design 11)
Sport & Leisure Consultancy Support	Kevin and Jackie Bennett (Belap)

IMAGE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Images from the following individuals and companies have been used in this strategy	Conrad Sutcliffe
	Mark Lockett Photography
	Pinnacle Photo Agency
	Chris Cottrell
	ECB Publications
Images from the following Devon cricket clubs have been used in this strategy	Abbottskerswell CC
	Bovey Tracey CC
	Budleigh Salterton CC
	Cornwood CC
	Ermington CC
	Exmouth CC
	Harberton CC
	Hatherleigh CC
	Honiton CC
	Ipplepen CC
	Kingsbridge CC
	North Devon CC
	Paignton CC
	Plympton CC
	Plymstock CC
	Sandford CC
	Sidmouth CC
	Stoke Gabriel CC
	Tavistock CC
	Topsham St James CC
	Whimple CC
	Yelverton Bohemians CC
Images from cricket clubs outside of Devon	Bridgwater CC

REFERENCES

The following information was used for reference purposes in the development of the Devon County Facilities Strategy:

- Inspiring Generations – ECB publication
- Creating Welcoming Environments - ECB publication
- Strategic Document for Women and Girls - ECB publication
- Devonomics (Devon County Council) reports and publications on the Devon economy
- Devon Community Foundation – Poverty and Deprivation
- How to Reduce Your Energy Consumption - ECB Guidance Document
- Accessible Sports Facilities – Sport England publication Oct Rev02 2012
- Club Matters – Facilities Development – Sport England – Web based.
- Creating a County Facilities Strategy ECB Publication Dec 2021
- Club & Facilities Management – ECB Website
- County Mapping Tool – ECB Web based application.



Image courtesy of Pinnacle Photo Agency