

Club Development Pathway

Thriving clubs, connected communities

Club Development Guide



FOR YOUR
CLUB

The
Cricket
Collective

Making cricket happen





Section 1

INTRODUCTION: SHAPING THE FUTURE OF YOUR CLUB

Purposeful Development, Rooted in Community

Thriving clubs do not just run well, they plan well. They know who they are, what they stand for, and where they want to go. But no club can do this alone.

Whether you are a volunteer leading your club forward, or a professional supporting multiple clubs through a Recreational Cricket Board (RCB), this guide is the first of its kind designed to help you facilitate development conversations that lead to meaningful action. It's a practical, flexible resource for setting direction, making decisions, and creating lasting impact.

Club development is not linear – it is shaped by **Playing Offer**, **People**, **Places** and **Practices**. This guide provides structure to make sense of that journey and move forward with confidence.



This guide is designed for both volunteers and professional support staff to set clubs up for success. It will support by empowering clubs to create strong foundations, deliver positive experiences, and inspire purposeful planning that opens the game to more people.

WHY CLUB DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

Recreational cricket clubs are more than just places to play, they are:

- ★ Hubs of community connection and pride
- ★ Launchpads for lifelong sporting journeys
- ★ Homes for volunteers, leaders, and changemakers
- ★ Safe, welcoming spaces for people of all backgrounds
- ★ Places where memories are made, friendships are formed, and life skills are developed

Intentional, inclusive club development helps you:

- i. Attract and retain more players, volunteers, and members
- ii. Create a stronger identity and clearer direction
- iii. Support inclusion, wellbeing, and community impact
- iv. Access funding and partnerships more successfully
- v. Build sustainability and resilience in an ever-changing world

THE INGREDIENTS OF A THRIVING CLUB

Whilst there is no single way to be a thriving club, at the heart of such clubs are **four essential ingredients**. When aligned, these underpin thriving clubs that connect their communities:

PLAYING OFFER

Inclusive, accessible, and appealing cricket for all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

PEOPLE

Effective leaders and empowered volunteers who shape club culture and drive progress.

PLACES

Welcoming, well-equipped facilities fully utilised to serve the community year-round.

PRACTICES

Shared vision, values, and strategic planning enabling governance, inclusive processes, and confident decision-making.

WHAT THIS GUIDE COVERS

This guide provides structure and support across core building blocks:

1

Vision, Mission & Values

Define what your club stands for and why it matters.

2

Strategic Planning

Practical plans to guide priorities and decisions.

3

Membership Engagement

Build connection and shared ownership across the club community.

4

Playing Offer Development

Deliver cricket that meets current and future player needs.

5

Community Engagement

Strengthen relationships locally and beyond.

6

Facilities & Spaces

Maximise the use, accessibility, and impact of your club's physical environment.

Each section includes:

- **Why it matters**
the impact of doing it well
- **Questions to ask**
to guide reflection and conversation
- **Tools & prompts**
to support decision-making
- **Practical strategies**
to help you take action
- **Real examples**
to learn from other clubs

GUIDED BY A NATIONAL VISION

Set clubs up for success

Equip clubs with strong governance, inclusive practices, and confidence to grow.

Support clubs to deliver

Inspire clubs to plan purposefully, lead confidently, and welcome more people to participate.

Recognise club progress

Celebrate the role clubs play in growing the recreational game.



SHARED PRINCIPLES FOR CLUB DEVELOPMENT

The approach to supporting clubs is as important as the actions themselves:

Club-Led Development

Empower clubs to shape their own future, starting with people, purpose, and vision.

Game-Connected

Align with leagues, RCBs, and the wider game to drive consistency and progress.

Inclusive by Design

Guidance that works for clubs of all sizes, locations, and structures.

Built to Flex

Support clubs to adapt without losing identity.

Learning Together

Share real-life examples and prompts to encourage reflection, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Use it in ways that work best for you:

- ★ As a facilitator's toolkit for RCB staff supporting multiple clubs
- ★ As a planning aid for club committees and leadership groups
- ★ As a conversation starter when reviewing progress or setting goals
- ★ As a resource for funding applications, membership recruitment, or impact evaluation

Clubs may use it as part of an annual development process or focus on one section at a time. **The key is to make it your own.**

SUMMARY

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to club development. But there is a shared belief that clubs, led by passionate people, can create extraordinary impact.

Whether you are building from the ground up, scaling something that already works, or navigating change, this guide is here to support you.

Strong foundations. Clear purpose. Thriving Clubs. Connected communities.

Every club holds the power to shape cricket's future.



Section 2

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Leading with Intention

At the heart of every thriving club is a strong sense of purpose - a clear understanding of why it exists, where it is heading, and how it wants to get there. When clubs unite around a shared purpose, long-term vision, and a set of lived values, they create environments where people feel connected, inspired, and proud to belong.

This section will guide you through how to articulate your club's "why," define your long-term vision, and embed values that are truly reflected in everyday club life.



Task: Run a "Why Workshop" - gather players, parents, volunteers, and committee members. Use guided questions and breakout groups to co-create a shared Why Statement. This builds ownership and alignment from the start.

Discussion Prompt: Do our current club activities reflect the purpose we want to stand for? What would we stop, start or do differently?

WHY IT MATTERS

A clear purpose, vision, and values help your club:

- ✓ Create shared direction across players, volunteers, and leaders
- ✓ Align decisions, plans, and priorities with what matters most
- ✓ Strengthen identity, connection, and belonging
- ✓ Inspire action, leadership, and long-term commitment
- ✓ Build trust within the club and across the community

When your purpose and values are lived, not just written, your club becomes a place people want to stay and contribute.

Discussion Prompt: How do your members currently describe what your club stands for? Is there a shared understanding?

CRAFTING YOUR CLUB'S WHY STATEMENT

Your "Why" is your reason for being - the deeper purpose that motivates your club beyond simply playing matches.

Start with these questions:

- Why does our club exist beyond cricket?
- What positive impact do we want to have on our members and community?
- What would be missing in our community if we did not exist?

Example Why Statements:

- "To bring people together through cricket, creating lifelong friendships and opportunities for all."
- "To be a home for local cricket that champions inclusion, belonging, and community pride."

DEFINING YOUR LONG-TERM VISION

A vision describes what your club aspires to become in the future. It provides direction, ambition, and clarity.

A Great Vision Is:

- Aspirational – something to strive toward
- Relevant – rooted in your club’s purpose and community
- Clear – easy to understand and communicate



Example Club Vision:

“By 2030, we will be a thriving, inclusive cricket hub, welcoming players of all ages and backgrounds, with strong junior pathways, sustainable facilities, and deep roots in the local community.”

Task: Create a vision map to consider what would success would look like for your club in five years and how you would know you had achieved it. Each member writes 1-3 ideas of what success for the club in five years looks like. Share your ideas, group similar ones, identify one simple way to measure each, and agree on the top 2-3 priorities to focus on first.

Always refer back to your vision when prioritising new initiatives, funding applications, or development plans and ask does it move us closer to where you want to be?

EMBEDDING VALUES INTO CLUB CULTURE

The ECB’s Cricket Core Values have been created to guide how we work, play, and make decisions on and off the field and they can offer an inspiring framework for clubs to reflect on their own culture. These values - **Run on Respect, Embrace Enjoyment, Build Belonging, and Progress with Purpose** - describe what thriving, inclusive environments look and feel like.

As you develop or revisit your club’s own values, consider how these principles are brought to life in your day-to-day activities. Is **respect** consistently shown across every part of the club - from the way players treat umpires, to how volunteers and members are valued? Do people **enjoy** their time at the club, and do you create space to celebrate that joy? Does your club **build belonging** by actively including people of all backgrounds, abilities, and ages? And are you making decisions that help your club **progress with purpose**, aligned to a shared vision for the future?

When values like these are truly lived, not just written down, they create the kind of environment where people feel connected, proud, and motivated to contribute.

Examples:

Value	What it looks like in practice
RESPECT	Players thank volunteers; mechanisms for everyone to feel heard
INCLUSIVITY	Girls’ cricket is prioritised equally to men’s
COMMUNITY	Clubhouse is used for local events year-round
AMBITION	Juniors are supported to progress into adult teams



DEFINING YOUR LONG-TERM VISION

Start by asking:

- What behaviours do we expect from everyone involved with our club?
- What do we want to be known for in our community?
- What principles will we never compromise on?

Bring Values to Life

- Discuss values at team talks, AGMs, and committee meetings
- Recognise and celebrate behaviours that reflect your values
- Use values in volunteer recruitment and onboarding
- Display them around your ground or pavilion

Tool: Use the [ECB Cricket Core Values Guide](#) to support the development of your club's values. The included workshop is designed to help you not only define your values, but also embed them into everyday club life.

Discussion Prompt: In what ways do we already live our values? Where might we be falling short?

SUMMARY

Your club's purpose, vision, and values are more than just words - they are the foundation for everything you do. When clearly defined and actively lived, they bring direction, connection, and meaning to every corner of the club. Whether you are planning your next season, welcoming a new volunteer, or deciding how to grow, these tools will help you lead with intention and thrive for the long term.



CASE STUDY NETTLEHAM CC (LINCOLNSHIRE)

“The biggest lesson is not to focus solely on the 1st XI. A thriving club needs a safe, enjoyable offer for everyone, supported by a sustainable coaching model and volunteers. Having people with integrity making key decisions and a clear vision has created a transparent, developing club community that people want to return to. Start with what is coming through the door - are people wanting to come, and if not, why not? Growth takes time; it has taken nearly 10 years to reach strength, so stay with it and don't panic.”



Section 3

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOUNDATIONS

Building a Clear Picture to Plan With Purpose

Effective planning starts with understanding where your club is now, where it wants to go, and how to get there. This section provides clubs and professional staff with practical tools to assess their current position, identify opportunities, and develop focused, purposeful plans for growth and sustainability.

WHY IT MATTERS

Robust strategic planning helps your club:

- Make informed, evidence-based decisions
- Identify strengths to build on and challenges to address
- Allocate resources effectively
- Align goals with real needs and opportunities
- Build credibility with funders, stakeholders, and partners

When clubs take time to reflect and plan with intention, they create a stronger foundation for future success - on and off the field.

KEY PLANNING TOOLS & AREAS

1 SWOT Analysis: Understand Your Starting Point

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis helps you assess both internal factors (what your club does well or struggles with) and external influences (trends, risks, and opportunities).

Use it to:

- Spot areas to protect, improve, or grow
- Inform funding or development bids
- Guide short- and long-term goal setting

Task: Undertake a SWOT analysis to allow your club to reflect on its current position and future opportunities:

Strengths

Internal advantages or assets

Weaknesses

Internal limitations or challenges

Opportunities

External trends or factors to leverage

Threats

External risks or obstacles

2 Membership Profile & Demographics

Understanding who is part of your club - and who is not - is key to making inclusive, data-led decisions.

Key Questions to Explore:

- How many active members do we have (by age, gender, playing status)?
- What does our membership trend look like over the past 3 years?
- Are we attracting and retaining underrepresented groups?
- How well do our programmes reflect the needs of our community?

Tip: Consider how you can better understand your current membership:

- Membership Form Review/ Update - could you include optional demographic questions to improve data quality and identify gaps in information.
- Map Your Members - plot member postcodes on a simple map to see you geographic reach, spot clusters or areas with high/ low engagement, and assess local community alignment.
- "Who's Missing?" discussion with your committee or volunteer group to understand who currently is part of your club and who could. This will allow you to identify underrepresented groups, untapped audiences, and potential barriers to inclusion.

3 Workforce: Volunteers and Staff

Your people are your greatest asset. A sustainable and supported workforce - whether volunteers or paid staff - is essential to delivering your club's vision and keeping operations running smoothly.

Workforce Planning Should Include:

- A clear list of roles and responsibilities
- Identification of gaps or over-reliance
- Plans for recruiting, training, and recognising volunteers
- Succession planning for key positions
- Oversight of any paid roles (contracts, funding, expectations)

Task: Undertake a simple workforce audit to map who is doing what, where support is needed, and how to plan for the future.

[Volunteer Matrix](#)

4 Facilities and Equipment Audit

A clear view of your physical assets helps prioritise investment and maintain safe, welcoming environments.

- Audit Should Cover:
- Playing surfaces (squares, outfields, nets)
- Clubhouse and changing facilities
- Equipment (e.g. match balls, kit, coaching gear)
- Accessibility and inclusivity of spaces

Discussion Prompt: What condition are our key facilities in? What upgrades will we need in the next 2–5 years? Use the [ECB Facilities review checklist](#) to help.

5 Financial Overview

Strong financial management underpins everything - from matchday operations to major development projects.

Checklist for Phase 1 Review:

- Income and expenditure summary (past 2 years)
- Breakdown of funding sources (subs, bar, sponsors, grants)
- Key liabilities and financial risks
- Fundraising and reserves strategy

Tip: Involve a treasurer or accountant to help interpret financial data and identify sustainability challenges early.

6 Setting Purposeful Goals

Effective goals are realistic, focused, and aligned to your club's purpose and vision (see Section 1). Avoid vague goals like "get better" - make them clear and measurable.

Use the SMART Framework:

Specific

What exactly do we want to achieve?

Measurable

How will we know it's done?

Achievable

Can we realistically do it?

Relevant

Does it align with our vision?

Time-bound

When will we complete it?

Example: "Increase junior girl registrations by 25% by April 2026 through targeted school engagement."

7 Action Planning: Timeframes, Responsibilities, and Resources

A plan without action is just a good idea. Break your strategic goals into deliverable actions.

Action Plans Should Include:

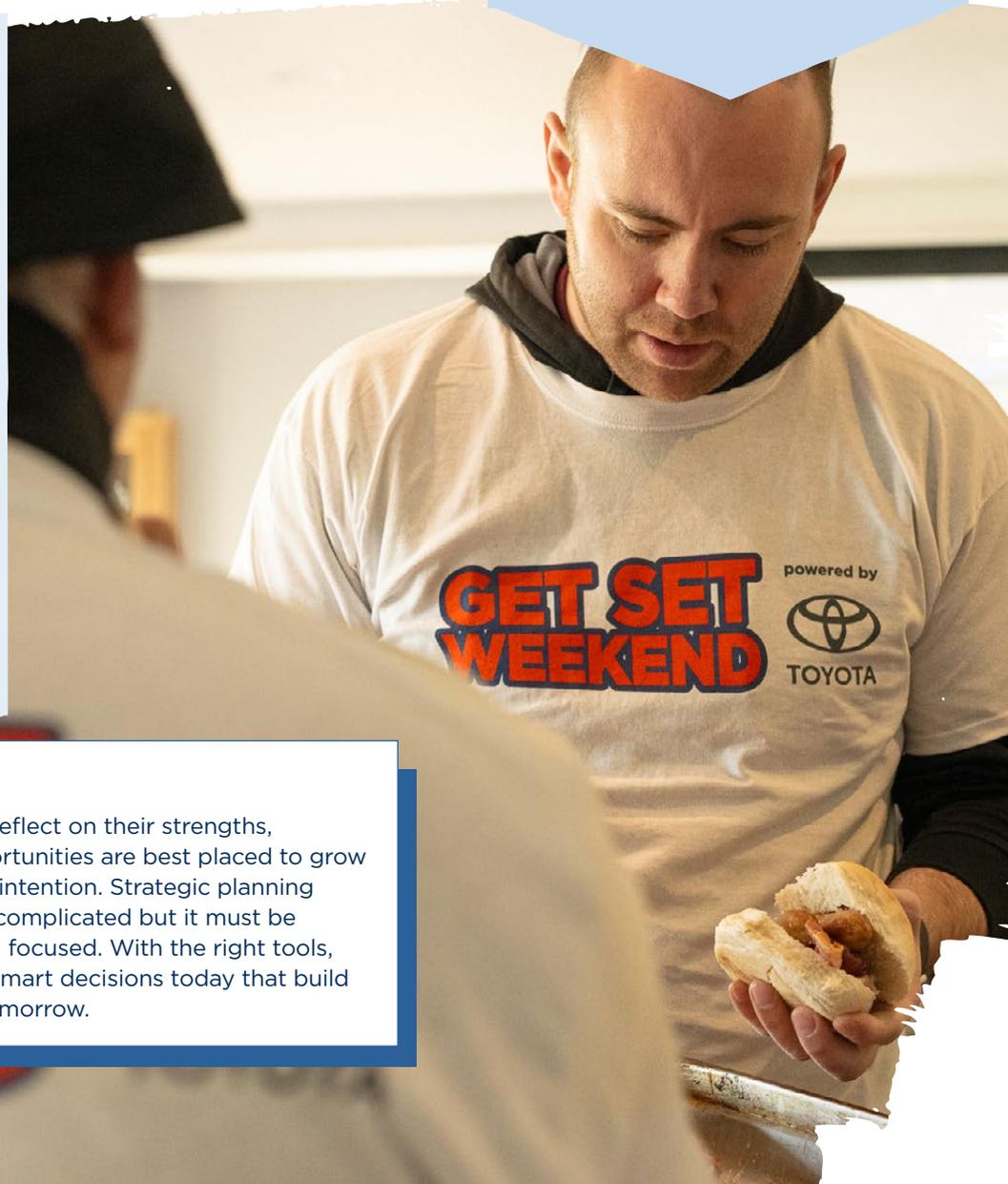
- Clear objectives and steps
- Who is responsible for delivery
- Timelines and review points
- Budget or resource needs
- Success indicators

Tool: Use a simple action plan template or project tracker to bring structure to your plan.

Discussion Prompt: Are our current goals based on real insight (data, consultation, evidence) - or assumptions?

SUMMARY

Clubs that regularly reflect on their strengths, challenges, and opportunities are best placed to grow with confidence and intention. Strategic planning does not have to be complicated but it must be honest, inclusive, and focused. With the right tools, your club can make smart decisions today that build long-term success tomorrow.



Section 4

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Building Connection from Within

A thriving club starts with a connected membership. When people feel heard, valued, and involved, they are more likely to stay, contribute, and bring others along. Engaging your membership goes beyond just communication – it is about creating a culture of belonging, trust, and shared purpose.

This section provides practical ways to build stronger relationships with players, parents, social members, and volunteers, turning membership into meaningful connection.



WHY MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT MATTERS

Membership is more than names on a list. When people feel like part of something bigger, they stick around, bring others in, and help the club grow:

Retention & Belonging: People stay where they feel seen, heard, and appreciated.

Stronger Culture: Engagement builds a sense of ownership and shared responsibility.

Increased Contribution: Involved members are more likely to volunteer or support the club.

Better Decision-Making: Listening to members helps the club respond to real needs.

Sustainable Growth: Engaged members become advocates, helping attract new faces.

Discussion Prompt: Who feels most connected to the club right now and who might feel left out?

UNDERSTANDING YOUR MEMBERS

Good engagement starts with understanding your current membership. Think about who is part of your club and how they experience it.

Ask yourself:

- Who are our current members (players, families, volunteers, social members)?
- Why did they join, and why do they stay?
- What do they enjoy – and what might they find frustrating?
- Are there voices we don't hear from enough?

Task: Run a quick Pulse Survey - ask 3-4 short questions via paper, WhatsApp, email or in-person:

1. What do you enjoy most about the club?
2. Do you feel involved and included?
3. What would improve your experience?

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR CLUBS

1. Create Feedback Loops

- Run short surveys, suggestion boxes, or informal feedback chats
- Hold “club forums” or open committee meetings a few times a year
- Use matchdays or socials to talk with different groups (e.g. parents, new members)

2. Involve Members in Decisions

- Invite member input on key issues (e.g. kit choices, events, priorities)
- Set up short-term working groups with players, parents, or volunteers
- Share updates on decisions - even when ideas are not taken forward

3. Celebrate Contributions

- Acknowledge players, volunteers, and helpers regularly - in person, newsletters, or online
- Share stories that highlight the people behind the scenes
- Use simple thank-you cards, shout-outs at events, or volunteer-of-the-month ideas

4. Make It Easy to Get Involved

- Break tasks into small, flexible roles with clear time expectations
- Offer one-off volunteering opportunities (e.g. BBQ shift, scoreboard, fundraising)
- Match tasks to people’s interests or skills - ask what they enjoy

5. Build Social Connections

- Host informal social events for different groups (e.g. juniors, families, adults)
- Create a buddy system for new members or parents
- Encourage social spaces at the club - coffee mornings, quiz nights, or post-match hangouts

Discussion Prompt: What is one thing we could do to make members feel more involved this season?

Task: Map Your Membership - create a simple list or chart of your members by role or group:

- Players (seniors, juniors, women & girls)
- Parents
- Coaches & volunteers
- Social members
- Committee members

Ask: Who do we regularly see at the club? Who do we hear from in meetings or online? Who stays and socialises? Who seems on the edges or leaves quickly? Are some groups less visible?

MEASURING SUCCESS WITH CLUBS

To understand whether your efforts are making a difference, it is important to track progress in simple, consistent ways. The table below outlines key areas to monitor, what to look for, and practical methods to capture that information.

Area	What to track	How to track
Retention	Returning players, volunteers, and families	Compare membership year-on-year; track drop-offs and returners
Engagement	Survey responses, social media interaction	Run simple polls, feedback forms, or comment boxes
Participation	Involvement in events, socials, or volunteering	Keep attendance lists or use sign-up sheets to monitor involvement
Satisfaction	Informal comments, testimonials, member feedback	Ask for regular feedback - short chats or post-event surveys
Culture	Evidence of inclusion, openness, collaboration	Observe member interactions, meeting participation, shared tasks

COMMON CHALLENGES & HOW TO ADDRESS THEM

Clubs can face common internal challenges that affect how members feel and engage. Understanding the root causes and applying practical, people-focused solutions can help create a more inclusive, positive, and sustainable club environment.

Challenge	Potential Causes	Practical Solutions
Low engagement	Lack of communication, unclear roles, time pressures	Offer simple, flexible roles; communicate clearly via channels members use
Negative atmosphere	Poor behaviour, lack of inclusion, cliques	Set behavioural expectations, encourage open forums, highlight positive contributions
Unheard voices	Same people always involved, no space for new ideas	Rotating committees, or informal feedback groups
Volunteer burnout	Too much falling on too few people	Share the load - ask, rotate tasks, and celebrate contributions
Lack of feedback	No systems in place to listen or respond	Create simple mechanisms - post-match chats, digital forms, or suggestion boxes

Practical Task: Create a Club Involvement Map

1. Set up a whiteboard, flipchart, or wall space with three columns:
Who's involved? | What do they do? | What's missing?
2. Use sticky notes (different colours for players, volunteers, coaches, etc.) to list all current roles and contributors under "Who's involved?"
3. Add how they contribute under "What do they do?"
4. Then, as a group, identify gaps, overload, or underrepresented groups and add them under "What's missing?"
5. Use markers or coloured stickers to highlight risks or key opportunities.

MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT HEALTH CHECK

Use this quick list to reflect on your progress:

- Do you regularly seek input from your members?
- Are roles and opportunities clearly communicated?
- Do members feel listened to, included, and valued?
- Are you celebrating contributions in visible ways?
- Is it easy for new members or parents to get involved?



CASE STUDY

BACKWORTH CC (NORTHUMBERLAND)

"Our approach to membership engagement is built on offering a wide range of playing formats and inclusive initiatives, which has significantly increased participation and strengthened community ties. By creating opportunities for all ages, abilities, and backgrounds—including juniors, women, and LGBTQ+ players—we've broadened our appeal and built a more welcoming, vibrant club environment. These efforts have not only attracted new members but also helped retain existing ones by keeping them actively involved, whether through playing, volunteering, or simply staying connected. It's this inclusive, flexible approach that continues to shape our growth and identity as a community-focused club."

SUMMARY

Start with listening:

Ask, observe, and invite feedback regularly.

Involve, do not inform:

Make engagement two-way, not top-down.

Keep it simple:

Small actions - like a thank-you - go a long way.

Celebrate together:

Shared success builds stronger community.

Make it a habit:

Do not wait for problems - keep engaging all year round.

Section 5

DEVELOPING YOUR PLAYING OFFER

More than matches: creating cricket that works for everyone

A strong playing offer sits at the heart of every successful club. But it is not just about running teams – it is about offering the right cricket experiences for the players you have now and the ones you want to welcome in the future. A thoughtful playing offer supports retention, inclusion, development, and progression.

This section will guide you through how to assess and evolve your playing offer to meet the needs of your members, attract new players, increase club revenue, and build stronger community ties.

WHY YOUR PLAYING OFFER MATTERS

A relevant and inclusive playing offer helps your club:

- Attract and retain players of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds
- Grow participation across juniors, adults, women, and girls
- Provide opportunities for social, competitive, and performance cricket
- Support coach development and talent progression
- Create volunteering and leadership pathways
- Generate increased revenue through memberships, events, and sponsorships
- Strengthen your club's reputation and community reach



Clubs that diversify their offer create more entry points to the game and more reasons for people to stay with the club.



THE IMPACT OF EXPANDING YOUR PLAYING OFFER

If you only offer one opportunity to play (e.g. a Saturday men's league team), you will only attract the kind of player who fits that exact mould. But cricket is not one-size-fits-all. By increasing your playing offer, you unlock a range of benefits:

1. Increased Membership

- Different formats and schedules (e.g. evening softball, walking cricket, midweek T20s) suit different lifestyles and commitments
- Broader appeal draws in juniors, women, girls, beginners, returners, and casual players

2. More Volunteers

- Parents of juniors, social players, and new members often bring fresh energy and skills
- More teams mean more opportunities for involvement - as captains, scorers, coaches, organisers, or event helpers

3. Greater Community Engagement

- Offering inclusive, family-friendly, or culturally relevant formats can connect you with new parts of your community
- Local schools, councils, and community groups are more likely to partner with a club that visibly supports diverse participation

4. Additional Revenue Streams

- More players means more memberships, bar takings, kit sales, and potential match-day income
- A broader offer opens up access to grants, sponsors, and funding targeted at inclusion or growth (e.g. women & girls, disability sport, youth engagement)



REVIEW YOUR EXISTING OFFER

Start by understanding what you currently provide and how well it's serving your community.

Key Questions to Ask:

- What age groups, genders, and formats do we currently cater for?
- Is there a balance between recreational and competitive options?
- Which teams are growing, and which struggle to attract players?
- What do players and potential players say they want?
- Are there barriers (time, cost, culture, transport) stopping people from joining?

Task: Use a simple "Team & Participation Audit" to map out your offer and identify gaps.

Format	Age group/type	Open/Women's/Boys/Girls/Mixed	Number of teams	Gaps/notes

COMMON CONCERNS: SCALING UP WITH CARE

It is natural, and valid, for clubs to feel hesitant about growing too quickly, especially if they currently run only one or two teams. Common concerns include:

Volunteer capacity: "We do not have enough people to run more teams."

Facilities pressure: "We do not have the space or pitch time."

Financial risk: "What if we invest and it does not work?"

Player spread: "Will new teams dilute existing squads?"

These are genuine challenges, but they are also solvable with planning and the right support.

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT GROWTH

Here is how to manage the transition and grow your offer sustainably:

Start Small & Scale

- Pilot one new format (e.g. a summer social 6-a-side or women's softball evening).
- Offer 4-6 sessions to test demand without long-term commitment.

Engage Your Members

- Involve current players in co-creating the offer.
- Ask for help - people are more likely to volunteer when they feel ownership.

Link Growth to Purpose

- Frame expansion around values: inclusion, community, development.
- Share stories of impact (e.g. "We started this women's team and now 10 new families are involved in the club.")

Access External Support

- Use ECB resources or Recreational Cricket Board staff for guidance.
- Apply for targeted funding (e.g. through [ECB's County Grants Fund](#)).

Partner Where Possible

- Share facilities, coaching, or teams with nearby clubs or schools.
- Collaborate rather than compete to widen access.

WOMEN'S & GIRLS' CRICKET

Offering cricket for women and girls is essential for inclusion, growth, and alignment with national priorities.

Ideas to Expand or Start:

- Run Girls' only Dynamos
- Appoint a W&G cricket lead on your committee
- Launch softball festivals or social sessions
- Join a local W&G league
- Partner with schools or other clubs to share resources

Tip: Even if you are starting small, consistency and visibility are key to building interest.

JUNIOR CRICKET

A strong junior section builds the future of your club. It is also a great way to engage families and the wider community.

Focus Areas for Development:

- Offer cricket across age groups (including All Stars and Dynamos)
- Involve parents as helpers, coaches, team managers, or scorers
- Create clear pathways from junior to adult teams
- Celebrate junior achievements publicly

Task: Visualise and plan a new or restarted junior cricket programme:

Steps:

1. Discuss what a thriving junior section could look like in 6 months.
2. Map age groups, activities, volunteers, and community partners on a chart.
3. Identify one small, achievable action to start within the next month and assign a lead.
4. Capture the plan and schedule a follow-up to review progress.



COACH DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT

Behind every great playing offer is a team of skilled, confident coaches. Supporting your coaches means better experiences for players.

Things to Consider:

- How many active coaches do we have, and at what level?
- Are we supporting coach progression (e.g. Support » Foundation » Core)?
- Do our coaches reflect the diversity of our players?
- Are we offering CPD, mentoring, or peer support?

Tip: Build a coaching community - regular check-ins, sharing ideas, and recognising success goes a long way. You can also signpost your current and potential coaches to ECB Coach Education [courses](#) and [resources](#).

TALENT IDENTIFICATION & PROGRESSION

Some players want more than just club cricket - and that is a good thing. Your club can play a key role in helping talented players access the next level.

How to Support Progression:

- Know your local talent pathway and how to nominate players
- Build relationships with county age group and performance leads
- Encourage dual-pathway players (club + county)
- Celebrate player achievements to inspire others

Discussion Prompt: Are we actively supporting players who show potential to develop further?

SUMMARY

A great playing offer is player-led, inclusive, and adaptable. It reflects your community, meets a range of interests and ambitions, and supports everyone - from the casual player to the county prospect. By reviewing your offer and planning intentionally, your club can grow stronger, more welcoming, and better connected to the wider game.



CASE STUDY

MILLHOUSES WORKS CC (YORKSHIRE)

“Women and girls deserved more chances to play, lead, and thrive, so we made it a priority and embedded it into everything we do. By hosting festivals, summer camps, and community events, we’ve created fun, welcoming opportunities that give girls hands-on experience and encourage families and schools to get involved. We’ve used social media and club events to celebrate achievements and grow awareness through local networks and word of mouth. This isn’t a side project - it’s part of who we are and central to building a club where everyone belongs.”



Section 6

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CONNECTING BEYOND THE BOUNDARY

A thriving cricket club is more than just a place to play, it is a hub of community life. Engaging meaningfully with your local community helps your club become inclusive, visible, and valued. Strong community connections build trust, attract members, open doors to partnerships and funding, and support long-term sustainability.

This guide provides practical approaches to map, plan, and deepen community connections, offering tools and prompts to support confident conversations between clubs, volunteers, and support officers.



WHY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MATTERS

Engagement is about building relationships, not just hosting events. Clubs that connect with their communities benefit in multiple ways:

- **Increase Membership & Retention:** Attract and retain more players and families.
- **Enhanced Reputation:** Become a visible, trusted local asset.
- **Access to Funding & Partnerships:** Strong community roots attract funders, sponsors, and collaborators.
- **Volunteer Growth:** Engaged communities are more likely to contribute time and skills.
- **Inclusive Culture:** Reflecting the community ensures the club is welcoming and resilient.

Discussion Prompt: How well does your club reflect the community around it? Who might be missing from the conversation?

KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY

Start by understanding the people and groups around your club. Use local data, observation, and conversations to explore:

- Demographics: age, ethnicity, income, and household makeup
- Schools, youth groups, and community centres
- Local businesses and employers
- Faith groups, charities, and cultural organisations
- Existing sports and social clubs

Tool: The Office for National Statistics (ONS) [Custom Area Profile Tool](#) can help build detailed profiles for areas in England and Wales.

Tip: Capture what you already know about potential partners and community members before planning new initiatives.

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR CLUBS

1. Community Mapping

- Identify schools, youth groups, cultural organisations, local businesses, faith groups, and service providers.
- Map out who shares your club's values or goals and who you could engage with.

2. Develop a Community Engagement Plan

- Set achievable goals: e.g., recruit 10 new junior members, host an open day.
- Identify target audiences and the methods to reach them.
- Start small: one well-run event or partnership can spark long-term engagement.

3. Run Inclusive Events

- Host free taster sessions, open days, or family-friendly activities.
- Ensure accessibility (physical access, language, transport) and celebrate diversity (food, festivals, themed match days).
- Co-host with local groups to share resources and expand reach.

4. Build Strategic Partnerships

- Partner with schools for coaching or PE enrichment.
- Collaborate with health organisations to promote wellbeing.
- Engage local businesses for sponsorship or facility support.

5. Use Digital Tools Effectively

- Share stories, photos, and member highlights via social media.
- Use newsletters or WhatsApp groups to communicate with members.
- Encourage clubs to appoint a "Digital Champion" to manage online engagement.

Discussion Prompt: What is one step we could take this season to strengthen our community connections?

Task: Select 1-2 key partners and plan one simple next step to begin collaborating.

MEASURING SUCCESS WITH CLUBS

Tracking activity and offering support helps transform everyday efforts into visible, meaningful progress:

Area	What to track	How to track
Participation	Number of new members, event attendance, returning players	Record targets for new members and event attendance, and track progress through regular check-ins
Diversity	Representation across age, gender, and background	Identify any underrepresented groups in your club, document outreach activities, and track changes in participant diversity.
Engagement	Social media reach, member feedback, informal conversations	Use polls, suggestion boxes, or post-match chats to collect responses and monitor trends over time
Partnerships	Number and quality of local collaborations	Keep a log of schools, businesses, or community groups contacted and track joint activities or events held
Impact	Testimonials, positive stories, community recognition	Collect testimonials, photos, or community recognition and maintain a record to highlight club achievements.



Being able to demonstrate both individual and community impact allows a recreational cricket club to show the real difference it makes. This can help:

- Attract new members and families
- Build trust and reputation in the local area
- Support funding and sponsorship opportunities
- Motivate volunteers and staff
- Guide smarter decisions
- Allow clubs to celebrate celebrating success that strengthens club culture and engagement

COMMON CHALLENGES & HOW TO ADDRESS THEM

Clubs often face common challenges that can limit the impact of community engagement activity; understanding the potential causes and applying practical solutions can help clubs toward greater success.

Challenge	Potential Causes	Practical Solutions
Low turnout at events	Poor timing, limited promotion, events not aligned with local families' interests	Adjust event timing, improve promotion through social media, newsletters, or local networks; co-host events with schools, businesses, or community groups to broaden reach
Limited resources	Budget constraints, lack of volunteers, underutilised facilities	Focus on low-cost, high-impact initiatives (e.g., open days, mini-tournaments); creatively use existing facilities and equipment; explore partnerships or shared resources with local organisations
Resistance to change	Fear of the unknown, comfort with current routines, lack of evidence that new approaches work	Pilot new ideas on a small scale; share case studies or success stories from other clubs; celebrate early wins to demonstrate benefits and build confidence
Lack of confidence	Inexperience with engagement strategies, uncertainty about what works, fear of failure	Take small, achievable steps to engage families; provide hands-on guidance, mentoring, or buddy systems; document and share positive outcomes to build confidence and motivation

Practical Task: Create a Club Involvement Map

Put yourself in the shoes of a family visiting the club for the first time. Map out their full experience—from arrival to leaving—considering everything they see, hear, and feel. Identify what currently makes them feel welcome, and highlight areas where the experience could be improved to encourage them to return and get more involved.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT HEALTH CHECK

Use this checklist to help track progress and adapt your approach:

- Have you identified key community groups and partners?
- Do you have a clear engagement goal?
- Are your events inclusive and welcoming?
- Are you communicating regularly with your community?
- Are you measuring and celebrating your impact?



SUMMARY

- **Share stories:** Inspire with examples of other successful clubs.
- **Reflect regularly:** Review what is working and what could improve.
- **Celebrate wins:** Highlight achievements to build confidence and morale.
- **Stay curious:** Adapt approaches to fit your unique community.
- **Keep reflecting:** how is your club experienced by those new to it



CASE STUDY

LUTONIAN CC (BEDFORDSHIRE)

“Our community engagement has had a positive and lasting impact, strengthening membership growth, volunteer involvement, and a sense of purpose and belonging within the club, while creating opportunities for young talent, promoting healthier lifestyles, and providing a safe, supportive space for local people. Building meaningful engagement requires listening to local needs, being inclusive, maintaining consistent communication, involving people at all levels, and responding to feedback to sustain trust and long-term relationships.”



Section 7

FACILITIES & PLACES

MAXIMISING THE IMPACT OF YOUR CLUB'S SPACE

Cricket facilities are more than pitches and club houses - they are community assets. Whether your club owns, leases, or hires a venue week-to-week, your space can play a powerful role in supporting cricket, strengthening membership, generating income, and connecting with the wider community.

This section provides practical guidance for clubs and support officers to assess, plan, and improve how facilities are used, maintained, and promoted - making the most of what you have, no matter the setup.

WHY FACILITIES MATTER

Great facilities support great experiences - for players, volunteers, and visitors alike. Clubs that think creatively and strategically about their space often benefit from:

Improved Player & Volunteer Experience:

Clean, welcoming, and functional spaces build pride and belonging.

Increased Usage:

Making facilities accessible for training, socials, or wider community use drives footfall and awareness.

Sustainable Income:

Hiring out space or hosting non-cricket activities can provide vital additional funds.

Stronger Partnerships:

Schools, groups, and businesses are more likely to engage with clubs that offer usable, welcoming venues.

Long-term Resilience: Well-managed facilities support growth, safety, and future funding applications.



Discussion Prompt: How well does your current facility support your cricket, community, and financial goals? Consider:

What?	Who?
Cricket: Does it meet the needs of all players and teams?	Owners can look at upgrades or new user groups.
Community: Is it welcoming, accessible, and used beyond matchdays?	Tenants might co-host events or develop shared use.
Finance: Are there opportunities to increase use or bring in income?	Renters could explore better access, relationships, or alternative spaces

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR FACILITY SITUATION

Every club has a unique setup. Understanding your starting point helps guide realistic and effective improvements.

Club type	Common challenges	Potential steps & solutions
Facility-owning	High maintenance costs, underused space, lack of specialist expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a long-term facility development plan - Explore hire opportunities (e.g. for local groups or events) - Apply for capital funding or grants - Partner with experts (e.g. architects, grounds consultants) - Set up a facilities sub-group or volunteer rota
Long-term lease/tenure	Limited ability to change facilities, unclear lease terms, shared access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarify rights and responsibilities in the lease - Build strong relationships with the landlord/owner - Invest in portable or adaptable improvements - Focus on building regular community use to strengthen your case for improvements
Weekly/seasonal hire	Limited access, dependency on external providers, lack of visibility in local area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen relationships with facility providers - Request consistent access or long-term bookings - Use digital tools to communicate matchday experience - Look for pop-up or shared spaces for training, socials, or community events

Tip:

Start by auditing your current space what is working, what is underused, and what feedback do you receive from members or visitors?



PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR CLUBS

1. Make Spaces Work for Everyone

- Regularly review layout, cleanliness, and signage to ensure spaces are welcoming.
- Involve players, parents, and volunteers in identifying small upgrades that would improve usability.
- Use temporary signage, seating, or gazebos to enhance spaces even if you do not own them.

2. Maximise Usage Year-Round

- Explore off-season use: indoor training, film nights, youth socials, or community hire.
- Consider simple additions like outdoor lighting or indoor storage to extend seasonal use.
- For hired facilities, work with the provider to explore flexible booking options or shared access plans.

3. Generate Income Through Hire or Shared Use

- Offer your space to local groups for meetings, fitness classes, or children's activities.
- Promote availability on local community boards, social media, and online booking platforms.
- Consider discounted hire for partners or in exchange for in-kind support (e.g. maintenance or promotion).

4. Strengthen Safety, Maintenance & Accessibility

- Carry out regular checks (and document them) - including toilets, changing rooms, nets, and access routes.
- Ensure your facilities are accessible to all (ramps, lighting, signage, and gender-inclusive spaces).
- Encourage reporting of issues and create a simple checklist for routine maintenance tasks.

5. Use Your Facility to Tell Your Story

- Display club history, achievements, and positive messages around the space.
- Use noticeboards, TV screens, or banners to promote membership, events, and local partners.
- Invite visitors (e.g. councillors, funders, school leaders) to see the facility in action.

Discussion Prompt: What is one small, affordable change we could make to improve our members' experience of the club this month?



MEASURING SUCCESS WITH CLUBS

Tracking facility use and improvement helps clubs prioritise investment, plan ahead, and demonstrate impact to members, partners, and funders.

Area	What to track	How to track
Usage	Cricket and non-cricket activities hosted	Keep a simple calendar or log of all sessions, events, or bookings
Satisfaction	Feedback from members, visitors, and partners	Use short surveys or informal chats after matches or events
Condition	Cleanliness, safety, and wear and tear	Use checklists for regular inspection and create a visual maintenance log
Access	Availability for different groups and needs	Map out when, how, and by whom your space is used; identify gaps
Income	Earnings from hire or events	Keep records of bookings and income to help with budgeting and future planning

COMMON CHALLENGES & PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS

Clubs face practical challenges in getting the most value from their facilities whether owned, leased, or hired, but understanding the causes and taking targeted actions can lead to big improvements.

Challenge	Potential causes	Practical solutions
Limited usage outside matchdays	Lack of promotion or awareness	Advertise on community platforms, share availability on social media, invite local groups to visit
Poor member experience	Facilities feel outdated, unclean, or unwelcoming	Focus on low-cost improvements (e.g. signage, decoration, clean toilets); involve members in upkeep
Lack of access to funding	Difficulty showing need or impact	Collect testimonials, track usage data, and take photos to support funding applications
Volunteer fatigue with maintenance	Too few people doing too much	Rotate responsibilities, create a simple task rota, or invite a community 'clean-up day'
Restrictions from landlords	Rented spaces with limited control	Build strong relationships with providers, share positive stories, and explore joint improvement plans

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Cricket relies on the natural environment. Simple actions can reduce costs, improve reputation, and protect the game for the future.

Practical Steps for Clubs include:

- Install water butts and explore drought-tolerant pitch care.
- Use LED lighting, smart controls, and motion sensors.
- Reduce single-use plastics and increase recycling options.
- Add bug hotels, native plants, or bird boxes to green spaces.
- Partner with local eco-groups or run community green projects.

Task: What is one sustainable change we could make this season that benefits the club and the environment? Choose one achievable idea, assign a lead, set a deadline, and share the result to inspire your next step.

FACILITIES HEALTH CHECK

Use this checklist to reflect on your current approach and identify opportunities:

- Do members feel comfortable, safe, and welcome in all areas of the facility?
- Is the space being used to its full potential – during and outside the cricket season?
- Are we tracking facility use and feedback to inform decisions and funding?
- Have we identified small improvements we could make this year?
- Are we using the facility to promote the club and attract new members or partners?

SUMMARY

Be strategic: Whether you own or hire your space, think creatively about how it can support your club's goals.

Focus on experience: The small details - clean spaces, clear signage, welcoming layout - really matter.

Share responsibility: Involve volunteers, members, and partners in maintaining and improving facilities.

Track and tell your story: Use evidence to unlock funding, demonstrate value, and celebrate progress.



CASE STUDY
THORNTON-LE-MOOR CC (YORKSHIRE)

“We knew our facility was holding us back from growing the club. With aspirations to offer junior cricket to enable the club to grow, we took on a full clubhouse refurbishment, funded through multiple sources and powered by our incredible volunteers. This year, we’ve launched Dynamos Cricket and entered junior competitions for U9 and 11s, with exciting plans for further growth ahead.”

Section 8

APPLYING THE PRINCIPLE OF THIS GUIDE

STARTING A JUNIOR CRICKET OFFER: STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR CLUBS

This guide outlines the practical steps a recreational cricket club might take to introduce a junior playing offer, while considering its wider impact across People, Places, and Practices. Each step includes key decisions, actions, outcomes, and potential barriers to help clubs plan effectively.

STEP 1

Key Question:

What do you want to achieve by offering junior cricket?

WHY THIS STEP MATTERS:

Setting a clear and shared vision at the outset is vital. It ensures everyone in the club understands why you're introducing junior cricket, what success looks like, and how it connects to the club's broader goals. Without this, it's easy for initiatives to lose momentum, face resistance, or fail to deliver impact.

KEY DECISIONS TO MAKE:

1. Which age groups and formats will you offer?

- Consider ECB programmes like All Stars (5-8) and Dynamos (8-11)
- Decide whether you will offer softball, hardball, or both
- Match formats to your club's facilities, volunteer capacity, and community demand

2. What are the club's specific goals for this offer?

Examples:

- Growing the overall junior membership
- Increasing family involvement in the club
- Providing an inclusive environment that attracts more girls or underserved groups
- Building a future pipeline for senior cricket (men's and women's teams)
- Strengthening links with schools or local communities



ACTIONS TO TAKE:

1. Start with a club committee discussion:

- Add it as a standing agenda item for the next committee meeting
- Present the rationale, benefits, and any initial ideas or local data (e.g. school demographics, lack of nearby junior cricket, etc.)
- Use stories or examples from other clubs to make it real and relatable
- Aim to get broad support in principle to explore the offer further
- Ask a Club Support Officer to help facilitate the first committee discussion

2. Engage with clubs who've already introduced junior cricket:

- Ask your Recreational Cricket Board Club Support Officer for introductions.
- Set up short phone calls or site visits to learn:
 - i. What worked well?
 - ii. What challenges did they face?
 - iii. What would they do differently?
- Consider inviting a guest speaker (Junior Coordinator, Coach, Safeguarding Officer from another club) to your club meeting to share their experiences.

3. Draft a short vision statement:

- Summarise the “why” of your junior offer in one or two sentences.

For example:

“We aim to launch a junior programme in 2026 to provide a fun, inclusive environment for local children aged 5-11, support our long-term sustainability, and increase family involvement in club life.”

- Use this to guide decision-making and communication going forward.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

1. A shared understanding of purpose:

All committee members, volunteers, and key stakeholders know why the club is making this move, and what it's trying to achieve.

2. Club-wide buy-in:

Early agreement creates a foundation of support — so when challenges arise (e.g. scheduling, resources, or resistance), you've already aligned on the bigger picture.

3. Clearer communication with parents and members:

When you promote the offer, you can explain not just what you're offering, but why — which helps with trust and take-up.

STEP 2

Key Question:

How does this new junior offer fit within your club's existing cricket activity?

WHY THIS STEP MATTERS:

Before adding a new junior session, it's essential to understand what's already happening at your club and when. This avoids scheduling clashes, overloading volunteers, or using up limited pitch space. By mapping your current offer, you can identify available windows, conflicts to avoid, and opportunities to align with other activity (e.g. encouraging families to stay and watch open-age games, or open-age players to support junior cricket).

KEY DECISIONS TO MAKE:

1. What days and times are currently available at your club?

- Look at your calendar of matches, training, and other events
- Consider light, space, volunteer capacity, and social opportunities
- Think about peak times for family availability (e.g. Friday evenings, Sunday mornings)

2. How might the new offer impact senior or existing junior cricket?

- Will you need to share a pitch with seniors?
- Does the new offer compete with existing sessions for volunteers or space?
- Can it complement other activity - like starting junior sessions before a senior match?



Aligning different sessions in this way could really help integrate the various aspects of club activity, creating a vibrant atmosphere with more people around and a genuine buzz of activity. It would also offer a great opportunity to engage and recruit volunteer parents, strengthen connections between teams, and generate additional income through food, refreshments, or other match-day initiatives.

ACTIONS TO TAKE:

1. Use a simple playing offer audit:

- Create a table or spreadsheet that captures your current formats, age groups, number of teams, and when/where they play/train:

Example Audit Table:

Format	Age group /type	Open/Women's/Boys /Girls/Mixed	Number of teams	Conflicts / Opportunities
Hardball	U15	Boys	1	Trains Wed evenings - clashes with senior nets
Softball	U11	Mixed	0	Sunday mornings free - potential new session slot
League	Senior 1st XI	Open	1	Matches Saturdays - avoid junior matches then
Training	Women's	Women's	1	Trains Fridays - opportunity for junior warm-ups

2. Identify scheduling conflicts and opportunities:

- Highlight areas where activity might clash (e.g. pitch use, car park access, limited volunteers)
- Look for quieter periods where junior sessions could be added with minimal disruption
- Consider if sessions can run back-to-back or share facilities efficiently

3. Consult with relevant stakeholders:

- Grounds team - to confirm pitch availability
- Captains/coaches - to check for any training impacts
- Key volunteers - to assess availability for new sessions

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

1. A clear view of how the new junior offer fits within the club schedule:

For example:

“We can run U11 mixed softball sessions on Sunday mornings, which doesn't clash with senior cricket and brings more families to the club early in the day.”

2. Disruption to existing activity is minimised:

For example:

“We moved junior training to Friday evenings instead of Saturdays so it doesn't clash with the 1st XI match, and we asked one more parent to help with coaching support.”



STEP 3

Key Question:

Do you have the right people in place to successfully deliver this junior offer?

WHY THIS STEP MATTERS:

The success of any junior programme depends on having the right people in the right roles - not just qualified coaches, but also team managers, first aiders, and enthusiastic helpers. Without good people supporting, even the best-planned junior offer will struggle to get off the ground or be sustained long-term. Investing early in people planning will help you avoid burnout, build a positive experience for players and parents, and make the offer more sustainable.

1. Key Decisions to Make:

- Who will lead and support the junior section?
- Will this be an existing committee member, or a new junior lead?
- Do you have a junior coordinator, coaching lead, or parent rep?
- Who is responsible for admin tasks (e.g. registrations, comms, safeguarding)?

2. Do you have enough coaches, managers, or helpers to run sessions safely and confidently?

- Are your coaches qualified and up to date with DBS and safeguarding?
- Do you need more helpers for setup, admin, refreshments, or first aid?
- Can you create small, shared roles so no one person is overloaded?

ACTIONS TO TAKE:

1. Ask parents and members to get involved early:

- Use sign-up sheets at events or add a question to your registration form: "Would you be willing to help in any way?"
- Reach out to parents with specific, manageable asks (e.g. "Could you help set up cones on Friday nights?")
- Do not wait until the programme starts - recruit during planning

2. Offer clear, realistic volunteer roles:

- Avoid vague appeals like "We need help" - instead, define small, time-bound roles:
 - > Session helper (30 mins setup)
 - > First aider (on-site during sessions)
 - > Team manager (WhatsApp & fixtures)
- Use role descriptions to show how people can help even if they are not cricket experts

3. Arrange training and support for new volunteers:

- Contact your Recreational County Board (RCB) to arrange or signpost:
 - > ECB Foundation Coach courses
 - > Safeguarding training
 - > DBS checks
- Consider hosting a "Welcome to Junior Cricket" evening for new volunteers, run by an experienced coach or Club Support Officer

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

1. A confident and capable team in place before the programme starts:

You know who's doing what - from coaching to admin - and you have backups where needed.

2. Volunteers feel supported and valued:

Clear roles, appropriate training, and regular check-ins help volunteers enjoy their experience and stay engaged.



STEP 4

Key Question:

Can your current facilities support a safe, welcoming and sustainable junior offer?

WHY THIS STEP MATTERS:

Junior cricket often requires different facility considerations than senior cricket - softer balls, smaller boundaries, accessible toilets, and a safe environment for young players and parents. Clubs also vary widely in how much control they have over their space. Understanding your facility status (owner, leaseholder, renter) will shape what is possible now and what might need longer-term planning or negotiation.

START BY IDENTIFYING YOUR CLUB'S FACILITY STATUS:

A. Asset-Owning Club (you own your ground and buildings outright)

Review your space:

- Can you run safe junior sessions?
- Do you have a flat, visible area for softball play?
- Enough room for two age groups to train at once?
- Shelter, toilets, and safe drop-off/pick-up areas?

Consider low-cost upgrades that can have a big impact:

- Mobile boundary rope or cones to create junior-sized areas.
- Gazebos or benches for parents and players.
- Additional kit (junior-sized bats, soft balls, stumps).

Cost of upgrades or upkeep:

- Even minor facility enhancements cost money. Explore funding options via the ECB, your RCB, Sport England, or local council grants.

Managing multiple users:

- If the same space is used for seniors, women's teams, or community bookings, coordinate to avoid overloading peak times.

B. Long-Term Leaseholder (you have a formal lease or agreement, often with a local authority, school, or landowner)

Check lease terms:

- Confirm whether junior activity is permitted under your lease.
- Are there any restrictions on additional structures (e.g. mobile nets), days or times of use?

Engage with the landlord early:

- If changes are needed (e.g. new signage, net installation, equipment storage), start discussions well in advance. Permissions can take weeks or months.

Restrictions on modifications:

- For example, you may want to install a mobile net or temporary toilet, but need landlord approval that could delay delivery.

Shared use with other sports:

- E.g. Football bookings may limit your ability to use the pitch on Friday evenings. Try to secure slots early and build good relationships with other users.

C. Weekly or Seasonal Renter (you rent a pitch or facility week-to-week or just for the summer)

Speak to your provider about regular access:

- Aim to secure a fixed weekly slot for your junior offer to build consistency for families and volunteers.

Explore shared or portable solutions:

- Can you store soft balls and stumps on site?
- Could you share kit with another club or school?
- Consider portable kit bags that volunteers can take home.

Inconsistent facility access:

- A week-to-week booking system makes it hard to run a reliable programme for juniors. Confirm availability well in advance.

Limited flexibility on bookings:

- You may need to adapt start times or session formats to fit availability — e.g. running 45-minute sessions instead of 60.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

1. You understand what your current facility status enables or restricts:

Whether you own, lease, or rent, you have a realistic picture of what's possible right now — and what may need work.

2. You've identified any potential obstacles early:

You can now plan ahead to solve access issues, apply for grants, or negotiate with partners without delaying the launch.

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STEP 5

Key Question:

Are your club's policies, procedures, and governance ready to safely and confidently support junior cricket?

WHY THIS STEP MATTERS:

Bringing juniors into your club is not just about coaching and equipment, it also means meeting your legal and duty-of-care responsibilities. Getting your safeguarding, data handling, and governance practices right ensures the club offers a safe, inclusive, and welcoming experience for every young player and their family. It also protects the club, its volunteers, and its reputation by meeting ECB requirements.

KEY DECISIONS & ACTIONS TO TAKE:

1. Appoint a Club Safeguarding Officer (CSO)

This is a mandatory ECB requirement for clubs offering junior cricket.

The CSO should:

- Be DBS-checked and have completed Safe Hands training
- Be visible to parents and volunteers (e.g. named on noticeboards and welcome emails)
- Act as a point of contact for any welfare or safeguarding concerns

Tip: If your CSO is new, your RCB can help with onboarding and training.

2. Ensure All Volunteers have valid DBS checks

Any volunteer working with juniors in a regulated role must have:

- A valid ECB DBS check (renewed every 3 years)
- Completed safeguarding training if in a regulated role
- Use the Safe Hands Management System (SHMS) to track who is up to date

Tip: Do not leave this until the last minute - some DBS checks can take time to process.

3. Adopt or Review Club Policies and Codes

Ensure your club has adopted the relevant regulations and has the following policies in place. These should be regularly reviewed, up to date, and clearly visible to members and parents:

- Safeguarding Policy (use ECB's Safe Hands model)
- Anti-discrimination Regulations
- Code of Conduct for:
 - > Players
 - > Parents and carers
 - > Coaches and volunteers
- Publish these policies on your club website or noticeboard
- Share them with parents at registration
- Include key points in your pre-season volunteer briefing

4. Register on the ECB Safe Hands Management System (SHMS)

- This is the ECB's central system for monitoring safeguarding compliance
- Every club with junior players must be registered and actively maintained

Your CSO or main club contact should ensure:

- Club contacts are correct
- All required volunteers are listed with valid checks
- Safeguarding declarations are submitted annually

Tip: You can find more information about SHMS [here](#)

5. Use Play-Cricket to Manage Your Junior Teams

Play-Cricket helps ensure:

- Fixtures are visible and trackable
- Team admin is centralised and secure
- Player data is managed in line with GDPR
- Set up teams early and assign managers who can update scores, player lists, and communications

Tip: You can find more information about Play-Cricket [here](#)



SUMMARY

Starting a junior mixed cricket offer is one of the most rewarding ways to grow your club, engage new families, and secure your long-term future. It takes planning and people – but it is worth it. Use this guide to spark conversation, delegate actions, and build momentum.

Pillar	Key Considerations
Playing Offer	Format, scheduling, fit with current activity
People	Volunteer capacity, recruitment, training
Places	Access to safe, suitable facilities (owned or hired)
Practices	Governance, safeguarding, ECB compliance

POTENTIAL BARRIERS AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Pillar	Potential Barrier	Possible Solution
Playing Offer	Perceived lack of demand or interest	Survey 30+ local families/schools to assess interest in a mixed junior offer and publish results at the next committee meeting.
Playing Offer	Fear of impacting existing adult or junior activity	Run an All Stars/Dynamos programme test feasibility without disrupting core sessions
Playing Offer	Concerns about competitive pathway	Liaise with local junior league organiser to explore inclusion of mixed teams or festivals suited to new players.
People	Lack of coaching capacity	Run a volunteer recruitment campaign to register new helpers and fund at least 2 places on ECB Foundation Coach course
People	Volunteer burnout / overcommitment	Restructure volunteer roles, break down coaching into manageable 1-hour sessions and rotate weekly across at least 3 people
People	Limited confidence in running mixed sessions	Deliver an informal CPD evening for all junior volunteers, focused on inclusive delivery and managing different needs
Places	No safe or appropriate space for juniors	Conduct a pitch/space audit, identify one safe area for soft ball play, liaise with local schools/clubs who may have suitable space
Places	Restrictions on modifications (e.g. landlord permission)	Request written permission from landlord/council for temporary facilities (e.g. pop-up nets)
Places	Shared use with other sports	Negotiate a fixed junior slot in booking schedule with other users before season starts (e.g. Fridays 5:30–7:00 PM).
Practices	Club unsure of safeguarding responsibilities	Book a 1:1 support session with County Safeguarding Officer to review current compliance and update procedures
Practices	No junior-friendly policies in place	Adopt ECB’s model policies for junior cricket at next committee meeting and share summary with members
Practices	Inconsistent communication with parents	Set up a dedicated WhatsApp group and email list for junior parents before the programme starts, managed by a nominated club contact.

STARTING A MIXED JUNIOR CRICKET OFFER STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR CLUBS

Purpose: Practical guidance to introduce a junior cricket offer, considering Playing Offer, People, and Practices. Each step includes key questions, decisions, actions, and outcomes.

Step 1: Define the Vision & Purpose

What do you want to achieve by offering mixed junior cricket?

Decisions:

- Age groups and formats (hard/softball)
- All Stars and Dynamos Cricket
- Clubs goals (participation, family engagement, inclusive environment, future talent)

Actions:

1. Discuss with committee and wider club
2. Learn from other clubs
3. Write a 1-2 sentence vision for what you want to achieve

Achieve club-wide buy-in through shared understanding and clear communication with parents and members.

Step 2: Map your current playing offer

How does this new junior offer fit within your club's existing cricket activity?

Decisions:

- Available time slots
- Potential impact on existing activity
- space, volunteer, and family-time constraints

Actions:

1. Audit current playing schedule
2. Identify scheduling clashes and opportunities
3. Consult key stakeholders from across the club

An inclusive offer that fits the club schedule, avoids clashes, and makes the best use of time, space, and people.

Step 3: Plan for the People

Do you have the right people in place to successfully deliver this junior offer?

Decisions:

- Clear, manageable roles which need to be filled
- Parents/volunteers that could assist
- Training & development needs: ECB Foundation Coach, Safeguarding, DBS checks

Actions:

1. Audit current playing schedule
2. Identify scheduling clashes and opportunities
3. Consult key stakeholders from across the club

Get the right people, roles, and support in place to deliver the junior offer, with responsibilities, volunteers, and training needs clearly identified.

Step 4: Get your Practices in place

Are your club's policies, procedures, and governance ready to safely and confidently support junior cricket?

Decisions:

- Appoint a suitable Club Safeguarding Officer
- Agree which safeguarding and inclusion policies need reviewing or updating
- Assign responsibility for managing compliance platforms

Actions:

1. Register and update records on SHMS
2. Ensure all relevant individuals have up-to-date DBS checks and safeguarding training
3. Manage junior teams/fixtures via Play-Cricket

A safe, inclusive, and well-governed junior environment that meets ECB safeguarding and compliance standards.

Tip: Planning, consultation, and early action are key. Delegating tasks, engaging volunteers, and communicating clearly will help you launch a sustainable mixed junior cricket programme.