Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Report

Gloucestershire County Cricket Club

Reporting Period: 01/04/2024 - 31/03/2025

This report outlines the progress and achievements of Gloucestershire County Cricket Club in advancing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) over the past twelve months (01/04/2024 - 31/03/2025). Gloucestershire Cricket is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment for all staff, players, members, supporters, and the wider community. This report highlights the work undertaken across six key focus areas, demonstrating the Club's dedication to embedding EDI principles throughout the organisation and its activities. Key achievements include the establishment of robust governance structures, proactive training and development initiatives, celebrating diverse communities, increasing visibility of EDI efforts, and actively engaging with various stakeholders to inspire change.

**Section 1: Good Governance**

Good governance is fundamental to embedding EDI within Gloucestershire Cricket. Strong leadership commitment, clear policy frameworks, and accountability measures ensure that EDI principles are integrated into the core of the organisation's strategy and operations.

1.1 Practices met as standard

* The Club has an EDI sub-committee responsible for ensuring all aspects of EDI are considered across the organisation constantly and consistently. This sub-committee includes staff, playing staff and board members, enabling regular communication
* The Executive Board currently has EDI as a standing item on its meeting agendas
* The Club has engaged staff as EDI champions across the organisation to provide support and facilitate discussions as well as lead to co-ordinate activity

1.2 Examples of engaging others into the work

* The EDI sub-committee includes representatives from various parts of the organisation, ensuring diverse perspectives are involved in decision-making
* The Club has been actively developing its work with Hartpury College and University to enable students from all socio-economic backgrounds to gain work experience opportunities within professional sport
* Cricket in Gloucestershire has an EDI working group which encompasses representatives from the Club, the Gloucestershire Cricket Foundation, local cricket leagues and umpire organisations. The group, which was born out of CoRE (The Bristol Mayoral Commission on Race Equality) which had a focus on cricket in the region around 2021, meets twice a year to ensure collaboration and feedback

1.3 Examples of influencing others through work

* Gloucestershire Cricket is supporting a project with SARI (Stand Against Racism & Inequality) and Wesport (West of England Sports Trust) on an embryonic Hate Crime Project, aiming to develop better processes around Hate Crime within Sport across the country. The Club will be involved in Bristol-based pilots of this project
* The Club shares its facility for dry hire events, ensuring people from all backgrounds feel welcomed regardless of catering requirements i.e. Jamaican events with a very unique menu expectation
* By working with the Hartpury Sports Business Hub on digital experience and income generation projects, the Club provides opportunities for a diverse intake of learners to experience roles within professional sports
* Taunton and Somerset College have just appointed the Club an apprentice for the upcoming season doing their NVQ level 2 in Turf Management. These partnerships are supporting young people from all backgrounds to engage in roles they wouldn’t otherwise get the opportunity to

1.4 Work that sets us apart

* The Gloucestershire Cricket EDI working group that includes representatives from various cricket bodies is believed to be the only one of its kind in the country
* Gloucestershire Cricket has commissioned the design of an online app aiming to support the selection process of cricketers into pathway systems and ensure transparency, considered the first of its kind. This app aims to mitigate conscious or unconscious bias

**Section 2: Data and Insights**

Data collection and analysis are crucial for understanding the current landscape of EDI within Gloucestershire Cricket and for driving evidence-based decision-making. From a staffing perspective, the annual EDI census can highlight areas of focus as well as recognise successes as a year-on-year tool. Progressing insights into stakeholders can enable decision-making and track growth.

2.1 Practices met as standard

* The Staff EDI census, centralised and anonymised by the ECB, has seen an increase in the percentage of people completing it in 2024 up 6% from 2023
* The census has shown increasing trust in senior leadership (up 21%) and decreasing stress levels from the previous year

2.2 Examples of engaging others into the work

* The Club gathers feedback through various interactions and uses it to inform decisions, such as diversifying food offerings at the ground
* Feedback from the Schools Takeover Day indicated its success, with 400 students in attendance, and up to 70% of those having never visited the ground before

2.3 Examples of influencing others through work

* The insights gained from the Staff EDI census allow the Club a greater understanding of where focus, support and attention could be best used across the organisation as well as a comparison to ‘game wide’ data
* The development of an online app for selection processes is likely to influence other sports organisations to adopt more transparent and data-driven approaches

2.4 Work that sets us apart

* The development of the online app for pathway selection represents an innovative approach to data-driven insights in talent identification, with the potential for predictive analytics related to the game. It is entering a pilot phase in early 2025

**Section 3: Training and Development**

Training and development initiatives are essential for fostering an inclusive culture, raising awareness, and equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills to champion EDI within Gloucestershire Cricket.

3.1 Practices met as standard

* Club executive and non-executive representatives have taken part in racial literacy training provided by the ECB
* The PCA (Professional Cricketers' Association) leads regular player and team culture and awareness sessions around the subject of EDI within the game. The LBW (Learn Before Wicket) programme covers topics including inclusive language, unconscious bias, disability, LGBTQ+ inclusion, and allyship
* Gloucestershire Cricket actively trains mental health first aiders through staff to ensure peer support is available. Support through pensions policies including healthcare have been clearly communicated with staff, and the team psychologist is also available across the organisation

3.2 Examples of engaging others into the work

* EDI champions across the organisation can discuss challenges and ideas with a range of people
* The PCA's EDI sessions actively involve players in discussions and awareness-building

3.3 Examples of influencing others through work

* By training mental health first aiders, Gloucestershire Cricket is promoting a culture of wellbeing and support that other organisations may consider adopting
* The Club's participation in the LBW programme alongside the PCA contributes to a broader awareness and understanding of EDI issues within cricket nationally

3.4 Work that sets us apart

* The development of curriculum delivery at the venue for ESL (English Second Language) students from the local City of Bristol College to improve their learning opportunities is a unique initiative which has led to improved college attendance. This helps the students with integration into education as well as meeting the long term objective of Gloucestershire Cricket which is to create pathways into employment for more young people living in the county

**Section 4: Celebration**

Recognising and celebrating diversity within cricket as well as through non-cricketing contact points is an essential part of growth towards a more inclusive and welcoming sport. An extensive network of relationships built over years foster a sense of belonging at the venue, and enable regular communication opportunities to continue enhancing offers to people from all backgrounds. Whilst often challenging to measure the success of such relationships, events and interactions, continued and steady progress will tend to follow commitment towards these partnerships.

4.1 Practices met as standard

* Across the year, the Club celebrates religious and other events from all backgrounds, and aims to understand how to support groups further
* For the fourth year running, an Eid celebration was held at the ground, bringing together Muslims from various mosques in Bristol. This will be a staple part of the calendar going forward
* The successful implementation of low and no alcohol stands on matchdays recognises and caters to people's diverse preferences
* The multi-faith room and adult changing facilities are integrated into work being done with local faith groups, organisations and charities as we continue to support our community through our facilities

4.2 Examples of engaging others into the work

* The annual Eid celebration actively engages the Muslim community in Bristol and beyond
* Our targeted complimentary ticketing policy ensures people's socio-economic background doesn't prevent them from watching live cricket
* The Club’s annual fireworks display in partnership with the local school offers discounted tickets to those accessing free school meals, ensuring broader access to community events

4.3 Examples of influencing others through work

* The Club’s commitment to hosting events like the Eid celebration can encourage use of the facility, for cricket or otherwise, when considering future events or visits
* The complimentary ticketing policy enables live cricket to be more accessible to individuals from diverse socio-economic backgrounds

4.4 Work that sets us apart

* The inclusion of a 'Player in the Community' award at the End of Season awards ceremony, supported by a commercial partner, highlights the importance of social impact achievements for both the Club and its partners

**Section 5: Visibility**

Ensuring diverse representation and talking about EDI successes are crucial for demonstrating commitment and fostering an inclusive image of Gloucestershire Cricket.

5.1 Practices met as standard

* Consistent crowd behaviour policies are in place for matchdays
* A zero-tolerance policy towards discrimination on matchdays that has resulted in a lifetime ban for one individual. Social media is also monitored aiming to disarm those who actively discriminate in Gloucestershire Cricket circles
* Major matchday programmes, particularly T20 home fixtures, are used to highlight inclusive work, such as an ACE Programme Takeover Day, a Her Game Too dedicated fixture and a Pride match

5.2 Examples of engaging others into the work

* The use of social media takeovers and videos featuring professional playing staff helps to connect with the supporter base and promote various important causes including social wellbeing
* Post-match signing sessions for our men’s and women’s teams aim to create special opportunities for young people to meet their role models, inspiring closer affiliations to cricket

5.3 Examples of influencing others through work

* The Club's zero-tolerance policy on discrimination sets a clear standard for expected behaviour at sporting events
* Highlighting the ACE Programme and other charitable work during high-profile matches raises awareness and can inspire young people to get involved in cricket who may not feel it is a game for them

5.4 Work that sets us apart

* Gloucestershire Cricket is working with Access Able on a project which will enable the Club website to sit within an accessible framework, making it more user-friendly for more people
* The Club has welcomed and formed partnerships with organisations requiring or benefiting from the presence (or lack of) facilities like a prayer room and adult changing facility, addressing a significant need in the densely populated local area

**Section 6: Engage and Inspire**

Actively engaging with diverse communities and inspiring action both within and beyond the organisation is vital for driving meaningful cultural improvements. The Club converses with representatives from all backgrounds to understand and (where possible) negate barriers to accessing cricket – both playing and watching.

6.1 Practices met as standard

* The Club has been developing its work with Hartpury College and University to support students from all socio-economic backgrounds. By partnering with educational organisations, the Club is enabling more young people to find pathways working in professional sport

6.2 Examples of engaging others into the work

* The Club supports the ACE Programme to increase participation in cricket from African and Caribbean backgrounds. This includes programme delivery, role model support, major matchday engagement and regular comms support
* Monthly coffee mornings are hosted for the CfD (Centre for Deaf and Hard of Hearing) at the café, fostering social interaction and leading to the groups (30+) participation in other Club events
* The Kit Drop and Swap initiative enables used kit and unwanted Club items to be re-homed, and allowing a more cost-efficient way to play the game for many
* The Club hosts regular and impactful interactions through Community Programmes, supporting charities that benefit around 350 people a week across various aspects of wellbeing

6.3 Examples of influencing others through work

* Gloucestershire Cricket's collaboration with SARI and Wesport on the Hate Crime project aims to develop better working practices across sport to tackle hate crime
* The professional cricketers have actively engaged in community work, learning about different sectors of society and understanding their role model potential

6.4 Work that sets us apart

* The Walkers and Talkers charity led by former Gloucestershire player Andy Brassington use the venue each week bringing around 200 people together through this social wellbeing initiative, highlighting the Club's role as a community hub beyond cricket
* The professional cricketers have continued to take it upon themselves to be stretched in their community work, developing relationships with groups of people they wouldn’t otherwise interact with creating growth within the playing staff skillset

Over the past twelve months, Gloucestershire Cricket has made significant strides in embedding EDI across the organisation. Establishing good, robust governance structures and advancing leadership knowledge aligning with current ECB focus areas gives the foundations to implement positive steps throughout the Club. Training undertaken in many key areas over an extended period of time recognises the importance of inclusion, and partnership work with a constantly expanding network of stakeholders, charities and communities demonstrates a strong commitment to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment. Standout achievements include refugee cricket and education programmes, ongoing involvement in an EDI working group spanning the professional and recreational game in the county, and the development of an app to aid transparency in pathway selection processes. 2025 will see a new EDI strategy sitting at the heart of a new Club strategy aiming to build upon the successes of 2024 using established partnerships and practices forged in recent years. The addition of Gloucestershire Women and girls pathway into the Club allows the opportunity to drive inclusion equally, starting at the highest level of the game and positively impacting people from all walks of life to see Gloucestershire as the team for them and cricket as the most inclusive team sport in the country.