

Sussex Cricket Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Forward

Chair of SCL and SCF

Who we are

Sussex Cricket is the oldest professional sports club in the world and one of the eighteen first-class county clubs within the domestic cricket structure of England and Wales.

Sussex Cricket Limited is responsible for the governance and development of the whole game in the county, from recreational to professional level.

Our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Ambition

In 2020, Coronavirus changed the way we live and impacted everyone's home and work life. We saw increases in hate crimes in particular, the impassioned responses to the deaths of George Floyd, Sarah Everard, and Sabina Nessa. In addition, socio-economic shifts around class and social mobility made the impacts of inequality clearer.

In 2023 the ICEC published a report on equity in cricket. Their findings point to the fact that deeply rooted and widespread forms of structural and institutional racism, sexism and class-based discrimination continue to exist across the game. Together with legislation, this drives our focus on eradicating inequality and increasing the equality, diversity and inclusion within our organisation, and the communities we serve.

A plan to achieve this forms the basis of our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy. It represents our passion for people and will address the need to drive improvements across all protected characteristics through a targeted response based on evidence.

In 2020 we established our EDI committee. We published our first EDI action plan in March 2022 responding to the ECB recommendations.

We recognise the importance of diversity in making better decisions. To this extent our Board of Directors and Foundation Trustees now better reflect the diversity of our communities. We've invested in our diverse communities to increase access to facilities and better understand the barriers we need to remove. We've increased the opportunities for women and girls to play cricket in Sussex and our disability cricket provision is sector leading.

There is still a lot we need to do. We need to take stronger action, recognising that everyone is different. We need to provide targeted support to effectively remove barriers and level the playing field. We need to go beyond equality to ensure there is equity. We need to foster an inclusive culture for all, which cultivates belonging and ensure our organisation is antiracist, antisexist, anticlassist, and does not discriminate.

Our responsibility and commitment to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

We are committed to inspiring a passion for cricket across all our communities, creating inclusive and welcoming environments for people from all walks of life, regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, physical or neural ability.

Everyone who is involved in cricket has a shared responsibility to support this by committing to be anti racist, anti sexist and anti classist. We are signed up to the ECB Anti Discrimination code of conduct and are committed to delivering the ECB EDI Standards as set out in the ECB's County Partnership Agreement with Sussex Cricket.

We recognise our collective and individual responsibilities and accountabilities. We commit to:

- Providing equality of opportunity, fairness and respect for all
- Creating safe, enjoyable and inclusive cricket settings
- Having a clear, simple process in place for reporting concerns
- Genuinely listening and responding to what we hear
- Developing and implementing an equality, diversity and inclusion strategy and action plan
- Regularly reporting on our progress

Our strategic objectives

Our Sussex Cricket 2021-2024 County-Wide Plan sets out our priorities for the organisation and includes our focus on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. Our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy aligns with the County Plan and sets targeted focus based on evidence.

We have 3 strategic objectives:

Developing an inclusive culture

- Clear, visible leadership, governance and accountability in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Communicate (to include reporting) and engage effectively
- Use robust data and evidence to target action and measure progress
- Ensure all our people are equipped to be inclusive and enable conversations that mean we are sensitive and understanding of our people as individuals
- Being clear on our values and the behaviour we expect. Ensuring everyone feels supported to challenge poor behaviour respectfully

Providing equality of opportunity, fairness and respect for all

- Ensure our approach to people is truly inclusive and maximises opportunities to increase the diversity of our workforce to represent the communities we serve, including attraction, recruitment, on-boarding, learning and development, strategic workforce planning, reward, talent management and retention
- Better understand our equal pay gap and set the foundations to achieve equity
- Support the professionalisation of the women's game that achieves long term sustainability
- Developing a clear, simple process for reporting concerns so that people feel safe speaking up
- Better understanding the barriers for those who feel excluded and developing an approach to remove those barriers

Creating safe, enjoyable and inclusive cricket settings

- Gathering evidence, including listening to our communities about their experiences
- Investing in new facilities and maintaining existing ones

- Providing access to learning and development opportunities for anyone who wants to work or volunteer in cricket

Our priorities

In addition to pursuing equality, diversity and inclusion for all, evidence tells us that we need to prioritise:

- Increasing opportunities for women and girls to be involved in cricket
- Improving access to the talent pathway with a focus on race and socio economic background
- Further developing our inclusive culture

We will drive actions across all protected characteristics by building on wider benefits across multiple groups. We recognise that we are all connected with multiple differences and although we need targeted actions, we will need to continue to work together to ensure equity for all.

Our Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan

Our action plan sets out the detail of how we will achieve our ambition and measure our success. This was first published in March 2020. Building on what we've learnt delivering our action plan we published an update in March 2024.

What Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion means to us

Equality

Equality is about **access to opportunity**. We need to ensure that people are not treated less favourably because of their protected characteristics. This is cemented through the Equality Act 2010, which is a law protecting you from discrimination or unfair treatment based on certain personal characteristics. These are age, race, sex, gender reassignment, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

Equity

Equity is the **result or outcomes we achieve** by applying equality. We promote impartiality and fairness in all our approaches to people, especially in our processes and procedures and in opportunities and access for all. We do this by understanding that people are different. We recognise that varied levels of resources or support are needed to remove barriers and allow people to succeed, engage and thrive. We understand the root cause of outcome disparity and provide a voice in decisions to those that have been historically disadvantaged.

Diversity

We **value and recognise difference** both in our employees and the wider communities we serve. We recognise that difference enriches our decisions and therefore our outcomes. We are all diverse. We have a legal responsibility to ensure equality of the nine protected characteristics, but diversity is wider and some examples of difference include racial origin, nationality, geographical location, cultural exposure, neurodiversity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, religion, belief, values, disability, socio-economic background, life experiences, mental health, accent, political belief, parental status, caring responsibilities, body size, shape, marriage or civil partnership, and personality, to name a few. We are all made up of different things. These differences overlap and is what we call intersectionality.

Inclusion

Inclusion is closely tied to a sense of belonging. We have a **culture that is welcoming to everyone in every space**, interactions and at all levels regardless of age, sex, gender, religion, race, gender identity, abilities. We value difference and try to understand other perspectives even when we disagree. We use language that acknowledges diversity, is sensitive to difference and respects everyone. We ensure transparency in our decision making and approaches to people. We are self-aware and are mindful of our privilege, or lack of, in all our interactions. We make space for all voices to be heard or for people to otherwise input in order that we truly value and reap the benefits of difference.