



BCB News

Latest information from the Bucks Cricket Board

Issue 1 - Sept 2012

Welcome to BCB News

80% of the responses to our recent online survey said that you would like to see regular PDF newsletters to keep you in touch with the latest developments in Bucks Cricket. As a result we've produced this first issue of BCB News.

Pages 3 and 4 of this issue are given over to a summary of the results of the online survey. Your opinions are important to us and I would like to thank the more than 250 of you who responded.

We also set out some of the changes we have already made and you will see that many of your comments and suggestions have already been addressed. We have also included lots of information we hope you will find useful, including contact

details for Board members and details of winter courses for officials and coaches.

We'd like as many people as possible in Bucks cricket to read BCB News. Please play your part by making sure that a printed or electronic copy is distributed to your committee and other members.

I hope you find this Newsletter interesting and informative. I would welcome suggestions for improvements and future content. You can contact me by email (see below).



Cliff Pocock

(Chairman)

email [click here](#)

A New Direction for Bucks Cricket



In 2011, we commenced a thorough review of BCB's role and activities, helped by Steve Silk, Gloucestershire Cricket Development Manager. It quickly became apparent that, although many of the things we were doing were right, we were concentrating much of our effort on our County and District player programmes.

We decided that we needed to shift our focus and concentrate more on working effectively with clubs and

other organisations in the County. The first step in this process was to conduct the online survey.

Let's be clear - in no way are we intending to reduce our Representative programme but there will be increased emphasis on providing effective support to clubs and other organisations in Bucks and thereby maximising the cricketing opportunities for players of all ages and abilities. It may be a long haul but we think this change of focus is important to the success and sustainability of Bucks Cricket.

Here are some of the new appointments we have already made.....

Clifton Simms - Cricket Development Officer (North)

email [click here](#)

Many of you will already have met Clifton, appointed in February with specific responsibilities for club development in North Bucks, based at his office at Woughton on the Green. To say that Clifton has hit the ground running is an understatement, as he has already established effective working relationships with quite a few clubs, MK Council, Bucks Sport, MKDCA and the eight School Games Organisers across the County.

During the 2012 season, Clifton organised and oversaw 13 Chance to Shine club-based projects to deliver cricket coaching in 50 primary schools as well as the ASDA Kwik cricket competition which attracted 101 teams from 74 schools. He's already planning the 2013 C2S programme now extended to include secondary schools. Invitations to submit Expressions of Interest should go out to clubs and schools during the October half term. Given this success, you will not be surprised to learn that in 2013, Clifton's responsibilities will be extended to include club development across the whole County.

Mark Fenton - Youth Cricket Director

email [click here](#)

Although we're very proud of our Representative programme we know we could do some things better. We are delighted that Mark has agreed to join the Board to assume responsibility for Youth Cricket and our Representative programme.



Mark will have responsibility for overall policy and strategy for boys' and girls' representative cricket. This includes overseeing all age group managers and coaches and ensuring that the Board provides the best possible development opportunities for promising young cricketers in Buckinghamshire.

Support Bucks Youth Cricket
Make a charitable donation or raise funds for Bucks Youth Cricket Trust - go to www.byct.org.uk or click on the VMG icon



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BCB News

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Page 1 of 4



BCB News

New Appointments (contd.)

Administration - Richard Burden email [click here](#)

Both of the above roles require substantial admin support and we are delighted that Richard, who has been our Webmaster for some years and also has two sons in the Representative programme, has agreed to assume that responsibility.

Richard is already very familiar with the challenges of running the programme and what coaches, managers, players and parents need. He has already been busy developing the online nomination system for the Representative squads and online registration for coach education courses.

Richard's appointment allows Stuart Beck (right), who has had a huge workload since Damien Dunlop's resignation last December, to relinquish his admin support role and focus on his responsibilities as Finance Director and the day to day management of the board's operational staff. The Board is very grateful for his commitment over this difficult period.



Facilities Advisory Group (FAG) - John Bushby email [click here](#)

Good facilities and funding are vital to the development of cricket in the County.

The FAG is being formed and led by John Bushby. This group's main role will be to work strategically with public bodies and other external partners to ensure that cricket is prioritised in their development planning and to work with our clubs and associations to improve playing and practice facilities.

The FAG will also be a resource for clubs seeking funding, and provide advice on submitting funding applications and many aspects of running your club.

Groundsmen's Association (GA) - Adrian Saunders email [click here](#)

A Groundsmen's Association has been formed under the chairmanship of Adrian Saunders. With admirable foresight, the GA hosted an excellent pre-season discussion on the drought orders which had been imposed by the Water Companies.

Several groundsmen also recently attended a demonstration of post-season work at Wormsley by Simon Tremlin. Adrian would welcome suggestions from fellow groundsmen for future activities.

It is hoped that, in the fullness of time, the GA will become a resource for technical support for club groundsmen in Bucks.

Coach Education Courses

BOOK NOW

UKCC Level 1 courses (3 sessions each) will be held at **Bletchley** (from 21 Oct), **Aylesbury** (12 Jan) and in **South Bucks** (6 Apr - venue to be arranged).

UKCC Level 2 courses (5 sessions each) will be held at **Bletchley** (from 24 Nov) & **Aylesbury** (9 Feb).

You must be logged in to the BCB website to book a course - full details at www.buckscb.org - click on *Coach Education* from the left-hand menu then select *Current Courses*

Got your quota of qualified umpires?

Bucks ACO is running ECBACO Level 1 umpires courses from January to March 2013 at **Great Brickhill CC** and **Penn & Tylers Green CC**.

These fun and enlightening courses will lead to better cricket for your club.

Full details from Alan English (tel 01494-443464) or via email - [click here](#)

Coaching Bursaries

Clifton Simms - BCB CDO - has details of schemes available to support coaches and volunteers which could help your club's development aspirations. He would be happy to act as a point of contact within BCB to support potential applications and enquiries: tel. 07791 197187 email clifton.simms@buckscb.org

1. Bucks Sport Coach Bursary

(www.buckssport.org/coachbursary) is open across Bucks and supports costs of level 1, 2 and 3 coaching qualifications up to £250. A club or delivery organisation (including BCB) has to make the application and in return, agree to deliver a 6-8 week block of activity to 14-25 year olds.

2. Sport Makers Fund (www.buckssport.org/sportmakersfund) is administered by Bucks Sport, and will fund up to £65 towards

the cost of a level 1 or 2 coaching course for applicants with specific plans to take their first steps onto the coaching ladder, or return to coaching after a period of time away.

3. AVSPAN Coach and Talented Athletes Bursary (www.buckssport.org/avbursaries), administered by Aylesbury Vale District Council and supported by Bucks Sport, is available to **any coach delivering in, or talented athlete living in Aylesbury Vale**. It will support the cost of level 1, 2 and 3 coaching qualifications and funds up to £500 (etc). (NB application forms must be sent directly to the addresses at the bottom of the application forms)

There may be other grants etc available from other local councils (e.g. Wycombe District).

We will look into this shortly and hope to add the information to our website - though keeping such things up to date isn't easy! If you know of any please let Clifton know.

RSS Feeds - Get regular updates about BCB's activities.

- Go to the Board's website www.buckscb.org
- In the menu on the left hand side, click on RSS Feeds and follow the clear instructions.
- You will then receive email copies of all news items when they are posted.

Your Ad Here?

To advertise in this Newsletter and/or on the Board's website, please contact Cliff Pocock on **07770-401652** or by email - [click here](#)



BCB News

Survey Results

We were delighted to receive over 250 thoughtful responses to this initial survey. The majority came from club members although there were significant numbers from coaches and umpires as well as those with connections to county cricket at senior and junior level. Current players, club officials, coaches, parents and umpires all featured well.

A full report of your opinions and comments would run to many pages. The following report is a summary of your views.

**Easy Cricket Kit Winners: Derek Cameron Beaconsfield CC
and Mark Greaves Drayton Parslow CC**

Clubs

Your Top Priorities:

- Focussing on preserving, maintaining, developing and improving facilities of smaller and village clubs
- Establishing district development groups etc to improve BCB's relationship with member clubs.
- Focussing on income generation through commercial sponsorship, public grant aid and fund raising

Items You Thought Less Important:

- Charging clubs which use BCB resources, skills and advice
- Charging higher affiliation fees to put resources and skills in place to advise on and help club development
- Supporting the development of high performing cricket clubs

It was no surprise that charging clubs more wasn't a popular choice; the view that top clubs were well able to look after themselves was very clear as was concern about survival of small village clubs

People

Your Priorities (in Order):

- Focussing on the recruitment, retention and development of a team of high quality coaches
- Recruiting a core team of professional staff with the necessary skills to deliver key objectives
- Providing training and a recognition programme for coaching etc
- Focussing on the recruitment, retention and development of a team of high quality volunteers
- Focussing on the recruitment, retention and development of a team of high quality officials (i.e. umpires, scorers etc)

Apart from coaching and, at the other end, match officials, all these options were fairly closely grouped together.

Playing

Your Top Priorities:

- Increasing participation at all ages and abilities
- Establishing clear and transparent player pathways to enable all players to achieve their potential
- Establishing partnerships with schools, to ensure that every child has a quality introduction to cricket

Items You Thought Less Important:

- Focussing on improving the quality of the best young cricketers through the representative cricket programme
- Increasing participation by women & girls
- Developing cricketing opportunities for people with disabilities
- Increasing participation by ethnic minorities, particularly in administration as well as playing roles

There was a clear division here with the top 3 choices well ahead of the others.

People showed a marked lack of enthusiasm for special treatment for ethnic minorities and the disabled, but several respondents commented that making cricket available to all would cover the minority groups.

The representative cricket programme came somewhere in between the two.

Places, Facilities etc

Your Top Priorities:

- Concentrating on improving BCB's relationships with our member clubs and other organisations delivering cricket in Bucks
- Working with Clubs to improve their facilities
- Development of shared, accessible and high quality practice and match play facilities
- Providing inter club competitive cricket for all age groups

Items You Thought Less Important:

- Helping Clubs improve their adult playing strength
- Supporting Club administration
- Working with adult Leagues on playing formats & player discipline issues

Club relationships and their facilities were clear 'winners' here. Working with leagues came a long way behind everything else and helping with club admin was also much less popular than the other choices.



BCB News

Our Survey: Your Comments

All told there were around 400 comments on various matters, with those about communications and relating to clubs the most numerous. There were also plenty of comments relating to junior cricket and coaching.

In a summary like this it's only possible to give a flavour of the comments but please be assured that everything that's been said will be considered.

The North/South Divide

The 'North/South divide' was a frequent matter raised by some of the respondents from the north of the county with comments such as "*nothing at all seen north of Aylesbury*" and "*there is a general feeling that youth cricket e.g. Bucks teams has a south Bucks bias - not sure if this is true but it is the perception.*"

It's true that South Bucks has a much stronger representation among those who assist with the running of BCB but, much as we'd like to redress this, there is a dearth of volunteers from the north of the county - and only about a quarter of club Chairmen and Secretaries who completed the survey came from Aylesbury and points north. And responses from club members in the south easily outnumbered those from the north.

We know that we need more participation from clubs and their members in Milton Keynes and other northern locations - so **do** contact us with offers of assistance if there's any way you think you can help.

There's always going to be a bit of a problem in a county which measures some 70 miles from North to South and as little as 15 miles East-West in places.

Our Performance

Our Better Areas

- Providing inter club competitive cricket for all age groups
- Improving the quality of the best young cricketers
- Increasing participation by women & girls
- Providing training and a recognition programme for coaching etc

Areas we particularly need to address

We didn't perform well at:

- Assisting smaller village clubs
- Working with Clubs to improve their facilities
- Concentrating on improving BCB's relationships with member clubs
- Increasing participation at all ages and abilities
- Opportunities for people with disabilities
- Helping Clubs improve their adult playing strength

A Cautionary Note

We should not be complacent - even the best item scored less than 30% 'Very Well' answers.

There was a total of 78% who answered 'Poorly' or 'Not too well' to the question about adult playing strength and the responses to the other 'club' questions were not much better.

Communication

BCB took a hammering here - probably justifiably! With over 80% of replies saying that they would like to see regular PDF newsletters and supporting short surveys to keep in touch with opinion, these are two of the (many) things we intend to bring in with as little delay as possible.

This newsletter is a 'special' - as well as being the first - and we hope it will be well received. We plan to send out something more or less every other month. Details haven't been finalised yet but we thought it better to contact you with some response to the questionnaire and while it's still reasonably fresh in our minds. On the other hand some decried the use of PDF and wanted emails as a primary source of information. It's clear that we will need to try a mixture of methods. One other drawback is that information sent to clubs often just stays with the person to whom it's addressed rather than being circulated to others.

The website was seen as being a bit cluttered and often out of date. Before the survey went out plans were already in motion to improve it and refresh the layout.

There were several comments that nobody from BCB was ever seen or in contact with clubs, particularly in North Bucks. We clearly need to do something to mend fences, but exactly how this will pan out is still up in the air - with over 100 clubs and very few people available it's a practical problem given the geography of the county.

Another theme was along the lines of "*Bucks CB should provide an umbrella of general advice enabling clubs to pool knowledge, negotiate bulk discounts on equipment etc. - appreciate this is not easy*" and "*would like to see meetings arranged with groups of Clubs to encourage closer working together*".

This has been recognised but - as another respondent said "*there is a massive amount to achieve*".

There was also a general lack of knowledge about who does what and how to get in touch; other respondents cited failure to reply to emails.