



Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (E D I) - A Game for Everyone – 2026

Herefordshire Cricket Limited want cricket to be a game for everyone. We want to be a truly inclusive and diverse sport where everyone feels welcome and there is opportunity for all. We know there is still much work to do before all communities and individuals think 'cricket is a game for me'.

Every organisation within the cricket network and every individual involved in the game has a role to play in supporting real change on and off the pitch so that our game reflects the populations of England and Wales. We are committed to constantly listening, learning and acting to ensure cricket really is a game for everyone.

Our County :

Herefordshire is a rural County in the West Midlands on the Welsh Borders, with 2 First Class counties Worcestershire (East) and Gloucestershire (South) and National Counties Shropshire (North) the bordering counties.

The County covers 2,180km² or 840 sq miles, with an overall population of 192,000, the 4th smallest with a population density of 88 / km² or 220 / sq mile. The 95% of the county's land is classified as rural according to Defra's 2011 rural/urban definition obviously why we are well known for Hereford Beef cattle and cider from our apple orchards.

The City of Hereford (population 62,000- 32%) is centrally based around the River Wye , bringing all the rainfall from Wales ,a bit like Worcester and the Severn, suffering from the Floods, the City is the centre for most activities Football, Market, Shopping , Business

The other principle locations are the market towns of Leominster, Ross On Wye, Ledbury Bromyard and Kington have 81,000 (42%) while 21,000 (11%) live in Rural villages.

We are governed by one Local Authority, Herefordshire Council and therefore an ease of communication for Education, Leisure, Planning,

Herefordshire (98.8%) over indexes on white ethnicity against the National Average (82%)

	Males	Females	Total	Nationally
Males Over 45	48,000		25%	
Females over 45		52,000	27%	
Males 16 - 45	31,000		16.1%	
Females 16 - 45		30,000	15.6%	19.1%
Boys Under 15	16,000		8.4%	16.7%
Girls Under 15		15,000	7.9%	
	95,000	97,000	192,000	
	49.5%	50.5%		

Our Approach to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Herefordshire Cricket believes that cricket should be a game for everyone. We are committed to creating welcoming, inclusive and accessible opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to participate in, enjoy and benefit from cricket.

As a rural county, we recognise that barriers to participation are often linked to geography, transport, financial hardship, disability, health inequalities, social isolation and a lack of local opportunities. We also recognise our responsibility to ensure that cricket is welcoming to women and girls, ethnically diverse communities, disabled people, LGBTQ+ individuals, people from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those who have traditionally been under-represented within the game.

Our approach is based on five key principles:

Access

We will reduce barriers to participation and create opportunities for people to engage with cricket regardless of their circumstances, location, ability or background.

Inclusion

We will create environments where everyone feels welcome, respected, safe and valued.

Representation

We will work to improve diversity within our workforce, leadership, coaching, officiating and volunteer networks.

Opportunity

We will provide clear and accessible pathways for participation, development and performance, ensuring that talent can emerge from all communities.

Accountability

We will measure our progress, listen to feedback and continually review our policies, programmes and practices to ensure meaningful and sustainable change.

Key Areas of Work in 2026

Governance and Leadership in 2026

We will continue to embed EDI throughout our governance structures, policies and decision-making processes. Board members and staff will receive appropriate training and development to ensure EDI remains central to the organisation's work.

We will seek to broaden representation within leadership and governance roles and ensure recruitment and appointment processes remain fair, transparent and inclusive.

Women and Girls in 2026

Women and girls represent the greatest opportunity for cricket growth within Herefordshire.

Building on the momentum generated by the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup and the continued growth of the recreational and performance game, we will create opportunities for women and girls at every stage of their cricket journey.

This includes supporting softball and hardball participation, delivering female-only opportunities where appropriate, increasing the number of female coaches and volunteers through programmes such as Metro Bank Girls in Cricket and Ignite, and supporting clubs to create welcoming environments for women and girls.

Disability and Inclusive Cricket in 2026

We are committed to ensuring cricket is accessible to everyone.

Our Limitless programme provides inclusive cricket opportunities for people with disabilities, supporting physical activity, confidence, wellbeing and social connection. We will continue to develop opportunities across schools, clubs and community settings while supporting coaches and volunteers through disability awareness and inclusion training.

Communities and Social Impact in 2026

Cricket has an important role to play in improving lives and strengthening communities.

Programmes such as Changing the Game, Walking Cricket, Boundless Boundaries, the Looked After Children programme and Extra Cover demonstrate how cricket can support wellbeing, confidence, resilience and community connection.

We will continue to prioritise areas experiencing higher levels of deprivation and work alongside community organisations, schools, local authorities and health partners to increase participation and reduce inequalities.

Talent Development in 2026

In partnership with the ECB and Worcestershire County Cricket Club, Herefordshire Cricket is committed to creating a talent pathway that is accessible, inclusive and player-centred.

Through the principles of the ECB Emerging Player Programme we will:

- Increase engagement with state schools.
- Ensure nominations and selection processes are open and accessible.
- Take a longer-term and more patient approach to talent development.
- Broaden talent identification through multiple formats, including softball cricket.
- Reduce financial barriers through the ECB Financial Barriers Common Approach.
- Regularly review our Financial Assistance Policy.

Workforce, Volunteers and Clubs in 2026

Our staff, coaches, volunteers and clubs are critical to delivering an inclusive game.

We will continue to invest in workforce development through EDI training, Mental Health First Aid, neurodiversity awareness and inclusive coaching education.

We will support clubs to align with ECB EDI standards, adopt anti-discrimination policies and progress through ECB Club Accreditation, helping to ensure that cricket environments across the county are safe, welcoming and inclusive for all participants.

Measuring Success: EDI Objectives 2026–2029 – see County Partnership Agreement (Portal)

To ensure accountability, Herefordshire Cricket will monitor and report annually against the following objectives:

- **Increase participation among women and girls – see Womens and Girls Operations Plan**
- **Increase participation within disability cricket programmes. – see Disability Operattions Plan**
- **Increase engagement in communities experiencing higher levels of deprivation. - See HCL Strategy and Operations Plan**
- **Increase the number of female coaches, volunteers and leaders.- See HCL Strategy and Operations Plan**
- **Improve access to cricket for state school pupils.- See HCL Strategy and Operations Plan**
- **Reduce financial barriers through assistance schemes, equipment support and targeted funding.- See HCL Strategy and Operations Plan**
- **Ensure all staff and core workforce members complete appropriate EDI, safeguarding and wellbeing training.- See HCL Strategy and Operations Plan**
- **Increase the number of clubs achieving ECB Club Accreditation and implementing ECB EDI standards.- See HCL Strategy and Operations Plan**
- **Maintain annual review and reporting of EDI progress through Board governance processes.- See HCL Strategy and Operations Plan**

Through these commitments, Herefordshire Cricket aims to ensure that everyone, regardless of age, ability, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background or personal circumstances, has the opportunity to access, enjoy and succeed within cricket.



Supporting Notes to the Policy – WHO WHAT WHERE WHEN WHY HOW?

The second largest ethnic grouping is 'other White' (4%) which are predominantly Eastern European. The ethnically diverse community is only 1.4% compared to 17.5% nationally. However Herefordshire has its own battles with LSEG (Lower Socio Economic Groups)

In addition to this it should be noted that the Health Statistics for the County create a deprivation trend in terms of goods and more importantly services and can be seen here - [Microsoft Power BI](#) – please ensure you select the correct drop down boxes from UA and District to see the Herefordshire stats.

Economically we have significant areas of deprivation in Hereford city and Leominster. In particular it is important to draw attention to the paragraph stating - **The wards with the highest proportions of people living in income deprived households were Hinton & Hunderton (21.10%), Newton Farm (21.08%) and Leominster South (17.89%). The highest numbers of income deprived households were in Newton Farm, Red Hill and Leominster East.**

Board and Staff:

The HCL workforce under indexes compared to the population of England and Wales for people from ethnically diverse communities, particularly in Executive roles. However, with 6 FT and PT salaried staff – there is a 50/50 split of male/female employees. Staff all white, 1 male over 60, 1 male over 50, 1 male over 40, 1 female over 50, 1 female over 40 and 1 female over 20. We have a 5.2 FTE workforce.

The Board and Staff represent Herefordshire in line with the population which is mainly white over 41. Of the 9 Board members there is one from an ethnically diverse background the remainder white, 5 male and 4 females. F

Clubs, Leagues and Facilities:

26 clubs all play on either private or leased facilities. Herefordshire Council do not maintain any cricket facility.

79 Primary schools – 15 Secondary , 3 Special Schools

Previously we were only able to visit 40% of Primary Schools in Herefordshire and only 4 Secondary Schools therefore very little cricket was played in Schools. Funding and resource are the main constraints but thanks to a significant external funding programme in partnership with Herefordshire Council we have established various Schools Coaching programmes in tandem with our Chance to Shine programme to increase this to even more Primary Schools in the county– in addition to this we have taken the opportunity to make contacts within the Integrated care system to identify health inequalities and where HCL could engage with interventions - i.e. childhood obesity is a major issue in Herefordshire and areas of deprivation. We have commenced work on this with this bid to Talk Community for funding and are in discussions about continuing the programme further.

MAIN AREAS OF WORK

Governance:

HCL have considered other networks and people of expertise and completely embedded all equity plans into the Operational Plan. Three new Directors Kate Dawe (Schs), Tom Hall (Partnerships) and Graham Andrews (EDI) joined the Board in late 2024 to immensely augment our Board skills.

National Counties :

The link with Worcestershire County Cricket Club, the ECB Birmingham and District Premier League and the Worcestershire County League has proved very beneficial from a standard/quality of player selected into the 1st XI. This has also given us an increased inclusivity and ethnic representation. In addition to this in 2024 the Board appointed a Board Director (Performance) who is also a FT Staff member of WCCC to strengthen the ties between the two counties.

Talent Pathway :

In partnership with the ECB and Worcestershire County Cricket Club , HCL are working to provide a talent pathway for aspiring cricketers from all walks of life, to achieve their potential in the game, of which the new EEP has seen a real growth in recruited numbers.

Women's & Girls' Cricket

Our Women's and Girls' Action Plan aims to make cricket a gender-balanced sport



Some of the areas of our work are: -

- Plans are in place to improve the softball and hardball network of clubs to make this more social and interactive experience.
- Work with other sports (Netball, Hockey) to increase participation through the School Games programme offered by Stride Active.
- We are now averaging nearly 30% Girls' participation in All Stars & Dynamos participants
- A mixture of girls' softball festivals & hub & development projects including a new leagues.
- Girls' Dynamo's Cricket festivals planned and executed.
- A new full-time Women's & Girls' Development Officer will strive to embed and grow offers for female participants across the County
- Recruit more women volunteers within clubs

Disability Cricket:

A newly devised Disability plan will steer our work involving a range of development hubs in schools and communities and higher-level talent sessions. A close working relationship with Worcestershire Cricket Board came to an end in 2023 whereby we now have sole control over the programme at the National Blind College as well as our Wednesday evening Summer sessions held at Pentland Gardens the home of Herefordshire Cricket Ltd.

We also have a Disability Hub based at Burghill Tillington & Weobley CC which sees sessions across the Summer as part of a pan-disability programme. Our partnerships with Lords Taverners cater for coaches and managers to attend upwards of two training and refresher sessions per annum in order to ensure we are delivering the latest up to date thinking in this arena. Our EDI bid to ECB in 2026 aims to recruit a further employee to grow this and other non-traditional forms of cricket.

Strategy for growing cricket in all Communities

As a result of our office staff re-structuring in 2025, we have been able to create a new post of Cricket Development Officer for Communities and Partnerships.

The Community development programmes promote and encourage the playing of cricket, whether that be Street cricket, women's softball cricket, Walking cricket or other formats amongst people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, providing opportunities for them to develop their playing abilities and to progress in the suitable pathways.

**COMING
SOON**

HEREFORDSHIRE CRICKET

**COMING
SOON**

WALKING CRICKET

S P R I N G & S U M M E R 2 0 2 5



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WALKING CRICKET IS CRICKET AS WE KNOW IT, BUT NO RUNNING IS ALLOWED - YOU HAVE TO WALK TO SCORE YOUR RUNS.

**THEPOINT4,
THE ROYAL NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR THE BLIND,
VENNS LANE, HEREFORD, HR1 1DT**

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@herefordshirecricket

**MEN
ONLY**

HEREFORDSHIRE CRICKET

**COMING
SOON**

INDOOR SOFTBALL CRICKET

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in parterhip with



ARE YOU READY FOR THE BATTLEFIELD OF HEREFORDSHIRE LEGENDS? COME JOIN US FOR CRICKET WITH NO FUSS FOR THOSE THAT ARE FRANKLY PAST IT BUT STILL THINK THEY'VE 'GOT IT'.

**THEPOINT4,
THE ROYAL NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR THE BLIND,
VENNS LANE, HEREFORD, HR1 1DT**



Easy to access cricket

The coaches will be local and know the communities they work in. The young volunteers who co-run the clubs gain new skills and qualifications and grow as they learn to lead. Maximise opportunities for all young people in schools and communities to enhance their first experiences of cricket and ensure the growth in participation.

Making cricket a gender-balanced game

Creating a supply of activity for female only, safe and confident sessions. There are considerable opportunities in the existing cricket club network to grow participation for women and girls. The launch of All Stars Cricket and Dynamos Cricket and women's soft ball festivals has introduced new female players into the game and they now need an effective club offer to enable them to play regularly.

The HCL are committed to driving cricket's progress to become a gender-balanced sport, acknowledging that the area of women and girls is the biggest opportunity for growth in cricket. To achieve this the HCL intends to invest in the development of every level of the game from the grassroots to the elite, as well as supporting female coaches, officials and administrators. HCL are committed to facilitating the implementation of this vision.

Club Development and Support

Our clubs have been undergoing development plans with HCL . It identifies a club's vision for the future, its aims and the ways in which the club hopes to achieve them. It is a short, working document that is easy to read and therefore kept clear and simple that can be re-viewed, update and amended by Club Committees. HCL promotes the ECB Club Accreditation Scheme and Safe Hands to ensure the environments where cricketers and members will train, compete and socialise are safe, sustainable and inclusive.

Coaches, Volunteers and Officials

Engage, value and support respected, expert and player centred volunteers to create an inclusive positive player experience.

Where Do We Want to Be?

Our Cricket programme is continually striving to maintain and improve the cricket offer to anyone interested in cricket, especially those from urban areas and under-represented groups in our game, while always looking to meet their needs and aspirations. We are also looking to build closer links with communities through use of our networking and community engagement. Everyone should have the right to benefit from cricket regardless of age, gender, background or ability.

HCL 's equity duties must include

- Raise EDI knowledge with clubs, coaches, volunteers – training workshops etc Regional Meetings in 2025 using ECB Training Programmes We will interpret data and comments from our players/users to identify areas of training required or asked for
- Monitor and review the Action Plan – through our bi-monthly Compliance Operations Group
- To obtain more in depth data from surveys – via ECB Systems
- To raise awareness of diversity and build a more inclusive and diverse cricket community via our website rebrand and social media outlets.
- To achieve a better gender balance in the game by raising the profile of Women's and Girls Cricket at Clubs using 1-1 Club Development Visits and writing action plans for each club to deliver.
- To encourage greater allyship with LGBTQI+ community – by having a greater presence around participation in LGBT+ history month. An example of this would be to work with ECB programmes on transgender awareness training for our staff and coaches to ensure that they understand the importance of inclusivity. (this is particularly important for the youth coming through)
- To publish our equality objectives regularly on the rebranded website.
- Ensure HCL commitment and measure progress towards greater diversity. Re staffing this will be as and when a recruitment opportunity arises.



- HCL take responsibility for their commitments and share progress transparently by reporting back to ECB Network Partner on a monthly basis.
- Work towards eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation by providing education and training for Cricket Networks across the County using ECB Templates and training programmes.
- Ensure EDI education and training is openly available by offering the opportunity through regular events and newsletter
- Ensure a fully inclusive recruitment and induction process for all coaches and administrators across the HCL Programmes
- Deliver diverse coaching programmes across the 10 pillars of the HCL CPA Plan via monitoring of staff, coaches, attendees through registers and data collection.
- ENDS MARCH 2026 – RMC