

Making a difference at the heart of the community

As cricket's official recreational charity, The Lord's Taverners has been at the heart of the sport since 1950 offering support for projects and initiatives throughout the country which provide disadvantaged children with access to cricket.



WHAT IS CITICRICKET?

CitiCricket was initially set up by Channel 4 in 2000 under the name of Street Cricket with the objective of giving children in deprived city areas the opportunity to experience the benefits of playing cricket.

The Lord's Taverners began their support of the project in 2002 and the following year took over the funding of the programme. In the summer of 2008 the project was re-launched under the name of CitiCricket to reflect the initiatives' core objectives. The Lord's Taverners has invested over £250,000 since becoming involved with the scheme, which has seen over 10,000 boys and girls benefit from being introduced to cricket. Many of these youngsters have gone on to play with local clubs, which have been formed as a result of CitiCricket.

Such is the popularity of the scheme, it is now present in eight counties including Berkshire, Gloucestershire, Nottinghamshire, Warwickshire, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Leicestershire & Rutland and Oxfordshire.

HAVING A MAJOR IMPACT

Andrew Watson, Club Development Manager for Yorkshire:

"CitiCricket was developed to bring the sport to deprived areas where there was a gap in the provision of cricket for youngsters. Working

with The Lord's Taverners we identified projects within the county where cricket could really make a difference. Five different regions were selected. These areas were Rotherham, Huddersfield, Scarborough, Leeds and Hull.

"The funding that we have received from The Lord's Taverners has had a major impact and has been used to great effect in many different areas. CitiCricket has enabled the opening of cricket development centres; created links between the clubs and the schools; facilitated the training of new coaches and allowed us to be able to visit the schools to inform the pupils about the CitiCricket project.

"The development centres have opened a link between the CitiCricket clubs and district and county cricket clubs, which in turn has opened up a route to cricket excellence. The benefits that these projects have reaped are huge. There are better links between the clubs and schools which increased participation and increased volunteer work forces, including parents and coaching. The great thing is these benefits are found in all projects. The introduction of every CitiCricket project has created a significant improvement to its local community.

"Before CitiCricket was introduced to these regions, the kids never had the chance to play sport on this level, as the funding simply wasn't there. The funding that we

Leading edge

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receive from The Lord's Taverners makes such a difference. It means that we are able to keep the projects running and provide the best equipment and train up further coaches so that the kids can play cricket to the best of their ability. I am truly thankful to The Lord's Taverners for funding the CitiCricket projects, not just in Yorkshire, but in all 8 counties. Without this funding the CitiCricket projects probably wouldn't have been started and definitely wouldn't have been sustained.”

BENEFITTING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Keith Blagg, Head Coach at Hull CitiCricket Club:

“We were first offered funding by The Lord's Taverners to start a CitiCricket project on the fringe of the Bransholme housing estate in Sutton village on the outskirts of Hull in 2000.

“The Bransholme estate is notorious in the area; it is a very rough estate with an extremely high depravity level. There was always a high and continuous level of vandalism and criminal damage around the area and a great amount of truancy from the schools.

“The cricket club in the area was struggling to gain new recruits as the young people simply didn't know about cricket. It took a while for us to get the project off the ground as none of the kids had played cricket at school.

“We spent a lot of time visiting the schools letting them know that the CitiCricket project was up and running and invited them to get involved. We did a few taster sessions at the schools so that the children could see what cricket had to offer and get them enthused by the thought of playing the game.

“Once the idea of playing cricket took off amongst the kids, there was a snowball effect. From struggling to put together one team, we've now got nine teams ranging from under-9s to

under-17s, with 200 kids involved in the club. About half of the kids involved are from the Bransholme estate and the effect on the estate since CitiCricket has taken off has been tremendous.

“There is now a real sense of community spirit as the parents and families have all got involved too. The parents will volunteer their time to help out with odd jobs or make the teas at break of play. The criminal damage and vandalism has all but stopped since the CitiCricket started. In fact in 2000 there were 30 instances of criminal damage to the cricket grounds and in 2007 there was only one! Truancy from school has also reduced significantly.

“The teams play in age-group leagues which means the kids get to travel to different areas of the county to play against other teams and take part in competitions. We've also taken them to watch a Test Match at Headingley which they all absolutely adored. Because the children can play

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The Hull CitiCricket project

cricket from the ages of 7 to 17, they get to develop their skills to such an extent that they really excel in the sport.

“If it weren’t for CitiCricket the kids would either be out on the streets without a structured way for them to spend their time, or they’d be sitting at home playing computer games complaining to their parents that they’ve got nothing to do. Cricket gives them structure,

exercise and ultimately, fun! We are extremely proud that one of our organisers won an Outstanding Services to Cricket Award (OSCA) for “behind the scenes” work. This was a huge moment for us and since then we have been given the honour of becoming the Yorkshire Region’s Focus Club. We are truly privileged and extremely thankful that this has all been made possible by The Lords Taverners.”

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CHILD'S PLAY

Xavier Van Waarde,
11 year old player from Hull CitiCricket Club:

“Cricket is my favourite sport. I started playing in Keith’s team when I was 7 and I didn’t really know what cricket was before then. I don’t get to play any other sports at school so playing cricket at the weekends

is ace. I also get to travel to other areas of the county to play cricket. My favourite place was probably Cottingham because we won by loads when we played there.

“It’s great playing in the team because it means I get to see my mates from school at the weekends and also I’ve made friends with people from others schools too”.



The Hull CitiCricket project

The Lord’s Taverners is one of the UK’s leading youth sports and disability charities and cricket’s official recreational charity.

The Lord’s Taverners believes that sport and recreation are essential for children and young people to help them build their self-esteem, health, well-being and future social, personal and educational potential.

Our mission is to give a ‘sporting chance’ to young people in need; those who through physical, mental, social, environmental or economic disadvantage, not of their own making, would otherwise miss out.

We achieve this by encouraging participation in youth cricket, particularly in disadvantaged areas – providing grants towards non-turf pitches, funding for youth cricket competitions and donating hundreds of cricket bags to clubs and school teams across the UK.

Also, supporting recreational and sporting activities for youngsters with special needs – donating specially adapted minibuses and sports wheelchairs giving young people vital transportation and access to sport, and providing grants for play and sports equipment.

This year The Lord’s Taverners will help tens of thousands of young people of all abilities and backgrounds participate in cricket and other sporting and recreational activities.

Our strongest sporting relationships are with the cricketing family, but we also work with other sports including tennis, basketball and rugby.

The Lord’s Taverners benefits hugely from the support of The Lady Taverners, Young Lord’s Taverners, our regions and 5,000 members, many of them drawn from the world of sport and entertainment.

For more information
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