



Northop Cricket Club – ‘The future is in our hands’

Geographic Details.

County Cricket Board	Wales
Project Timescales	January – May 2010
Funding Stream(s)	EWCT Interest Free Loan Scheme Club Fundraising Commercial Sponsorship
Location (Inner-city/Urban/Rural)	Semi Rural
Applicant / Organisation Status	ECB Clubmark Accredited
Author and Title	Jan Blackwell, Club Secretary
Date	June 2010

Quantitative and Qualitative Detail.

Background.

Northop Cricket Club is a club with a long history and a bright future. It is believed the sound of leather on willow has echoed around the Flintshire village in North Wales from the Flint Road ground since the 1870s. And today that long history is continuing and thriving.

As well as the 1st XI and 2nd XI in the North Wales League, the club is only one of a handful to field a 3rd XI to bridge the gap between junior cricket at U15 level and senior cricket.

The club has made the development of junior cricket for youngsters from aged seven to 15 a top priority in the past decade with investment in training facilities and qualified coaches. This strategy has reaped its rewards, with Northop CC producing a string of Welsh internationals in a number of age groups and a crop of youngsters for North East Wales squads.

Northop CC is currently enjoying one of its most successful periods in its long history with a thriving playing and social membership.

The construction of a new pavilion and car park, courtesy of the former Delyn Borough Council, at the beginning of the 1990s put the club at the heart of the community and enabled the committee to utilise the facilities to generate income to plough back into improvements both on and off the field.

To cement the achievements and help to ensure the good work will continue, Northop was awarded ECB Clubmark Accreditation in September 2009.

The club currently has approximately 150 members.

Aims and Objectives.

Our aims and objectives began when the club achieved Clubmark accreditation status in September 2009. This had taken 18 months to complete and had involved many members of the management committee under the direction of the club development officer. Achieving Clubmark accreditation status meant that we were now to be recognised as a club with robust procedures and development plans for the future. It was agreed that the club had to look to the future to ensure it maintained its excellent reputation. The club also registered to take part in the 2010 NatWest CricketForce event and the management committee took this opportunity to understand how facilities could be improved.

We put together a 'wish list' ranging from sports equipment to new fencing. An action plan was drawn up that detailed the steps that would need to be taken to follow the plans through. The plan was regularly reviewed and updated in the weeks prior to the NatWest CricketForce weekend. The membership was asked for either their time/skills or donation of materials. We also contacted local businesses to request support.

The following list was compiled

- New mobile wicket covers
- Increase coach education to meet the demands of the junior section
- Purchase new quality training packs
- External painting of pavilion building
- Painting of fences and outbuildings
- New signage to entrance of club
- Internal painting of pavilion building, including ladies and gents toilets, bar area and changing rooms
- Over head shelving in the away changing rooms
- Picket fence to be power washed and then painted
- New picket fence – approx 60ft – to be constructed at the far end of the ground to prevent balls from rolling under hedge
- Kitchen facilities to be spring cleaned
- Pavilion curtains to be washed and upholstered seats cleaned
- Planters for summer bedding plants to be made and painted
- Benches, re varnished and repaired
- Patio tables and chairs power washed and repaired
- Hanging baskets to be arranged for summer months

Achievements to date.

Fundraising has been fantastic at the club with over £3000 being raised during the last 6 months. By registering for NatWest CricketForce in 2010 we were able to access a special discount on the purchase of mobile covers. To secure this we applied to the England and Wales Cricket Trust Interest Free Loan Scheme to provide a contribution towards the cost, coupled with sponsorship monies from a local firm. The club had been using heavy corrugated sheeting placed on a frame with wheels on it. The old covers were neither portable nor child friendly as they had to be towed by a tractor to put into place or the muscles of half a dozen adults were needed. The covers look fantastic and even have the club and sponsors name printed on them.

The NatWest CricketForce event was a tremendous success with over 75 volunteers involved both from within the club and the community and we estimated that approximately 400 hours of activity was undertaken.

It was a fantastic achievement to see so many people giving up their time to help at the club. They were kept going throughout the day with tea/coffee as well as BBQ food. On the Saturday, many worked on until early evening, finishing off with a curry delivered to the club! Back to it Sunday morning despite losing an hour's sleep through the clock change, the club was buzzing again by 10am. Club members and their children, senior players and junior players from all age groups, all made a contribution. It was a brilliant team effort, one that will be talked about for months to come. Everyone was proud to wear the NatWest CricketForce t-shirt, so much so that we will be doubling

our order for next year!

A mutually beneficial partnership for the future has now been developed with Deeside College who run courses for students from painting and minor building works to ground maintenance. As part of course work, students regularly require 'live' projects on which to practice their skills. As the college is located less than a mile from the cricket club, it is envisaged that we will be able to work together to achieve future projects.

We had lots of fun throughout the two days and had the local press covered the event which appeared in the local press. We also found a box hidden away in one of the kitchen cupboards containing various books relating to fixtures and minutes to meetings, dating back to 1903. Needless to say this has now been removed for safe keeping with the aim to choose key pieces and then display them in a glass frame within the club.

Northop Cricket Club has always been proud of its ground and pavilion building but in the past maybe half a dozen volunteers would have helped out to undertake a few key tasks. Without doubt, the above would not have been achieved if the club had not decided to embark on the NWCF event and we fully intend to build on what went well and consider what improvements we could make, to ensure 2011 is even more successful – if that could be possible!

Pictures.



Main partners involved.

Community

- Deeside College
- Youth Justice Service

Businesses

- Durant Cricket – Specialist Cricket Equipment
- MSH Decorators
- Jewsons in Buckley and Chester
- Roberts Estates
- Wynne Williams, local butcher.
- Rooms and Views
- Red Alligator designs and Fairway Design and Print Ltd
- Ball Packaging

ECB

- England and Wales Cricket Trust Interest Free Loan Scheme
- Cricket Board of Wales

Comments from the club.

Key factors for good practice.

- Communication. This is vital to ensure as many people as possible can become involved with the club. Promote the benefits of participation through posters, website updates and e mail communications.
- Team work. Without this key ingredient, things just won't happen. Make everyone feel involved and never say no to an offer of help.
- Organisation. Have a few key people to organise events both leading up to and on the actual weekend.
- Have fun! The pictures we have posted on our website (www.northopcricketclub.org.uk) speak louder than words!

What is still to be achieved?

All of our 'wish list' was achieved and we are just awaiting the erection of the new club sign and the filling of the planters/baskets. Education of future coaches will be addressed at the end of the 2010 season in readiness for winter nets and 2011 season.

We are already talking about what we want to achieve during 2011 and will no doubt be able to build on the success of 2010.

What mechanisms are in place to ensure sustainability?

In terms of playing, the development of the junior section will continue to be the clubs top priority. Coach education will be expanded to ensure sufficient numbers of coaches are available to provide coaching to all levels. Juniors above age 14 will be encouraged to attend Young Leaders courses to equip them with the skills to enable them to become involved in cricket coaching. Links have been forged with local schools to promote the game and to encourage children to come along to the club to join in.

In terms of the pavilion and grounds, the club will continue to maintain the facilities to a high standard but instead of relying on a few long standing volunteers, it will ensure the NatWest CricketForce event is repeated each year that will hopefully attract additional volunteers with each new year.

Both of the above will be linked into the clubs 5 year development plan which was created as part of the accreditation process.

A fundraising committee has been set up who are keen to ensure that events are run on a regular basis to ensure the club has a thriving fundraising account to pay for future improvements/enhancements.

Headline Figures and Statistics.

1	Over £5000 funding achieved
2	Over 65 new volunteers donating over 400 hours of time
3	Fundraising activities have achieved over £3000 in monies for the club