

Community cricket programme to empower young people

A free community cricket programme is giving young people from disadvantaged communities in Edinburgh a safe space to play the bat-and-ball game while learning life skills.

The Wicketz programme was established to help break down barriers faced by 8 -19-year-olds living in areas with high levels of deprivation, through cricket.

Founded by the Lord's Taverners charity, which exists to empower young people facing the challenges of inequality, Wicketz also aims to develop vital life skills by delivering workshops focusing on social issues most relevant to the areas each project is delivered in.

Fettes College provided its sports hall on October 16 and 23 so participants could take part in their first hard ball cricket sessions. Over the two days 33 young people took part in the training.

The sessions, which are delivered by Cricket Scotland, allow young people of any gender to learn the key skills of cricket and give the game a go. The sessions combine cricket coaching and competition with workshops that are specially designed to improve the participants' well-being, life skills and social integration.

Mohammad Afzal, Edinburgh Wicketz Development Officer,

said: “We are so grateful to Fettes College for loaning us its fantastic sports hall for the Edinburgh sessions. It was amazing to be able to give the participants the opportunity to use the sports facilities Fettes has and to encourage more people to get involved in the sport.

“Cricket can serve as a valuable tool for educating young people on physical fitness, team-work and communications skills, as well as improving character development and allowing for personal growth, helping young people build life skills that will serve them well in various aspects of their lives. The impact of Wicketz has been immense in Edinburgh.”

Mark Appleson, Director of Sport at Fettes College, added: “What the programme does for underprivileged children across the UK is incredible and provides an outlet to learn new skills, make friends and improve well-being.”

Colin Crichton, Chair of the Lord’s Taverners in Scotland, said:

“This has been a wonderful opportunity for Edinburgh’s Wicketz participants to play the game in an environment they would not normally be able to access.”

Wicketz sessions take place weekly in Edinburgh, with the third hub launching in early 2024. To find out how to get involved,

visit www.lordstaverners.org/programme-information/edinburgh-wicketz/.











