

Creating a Listening Culture

At Suffolk Cricket, we believe cricket is more than just a game—it's a community. That's why we're committed to supporting clubs to create a listening culture where every voice matters, and everyone feels comfortable speaking up. Whether you're a player, coach, parent, volunteer, or supporter, your feedback is essential in helping clubs grow, improve, and make sure that cricket clubs are a positive place for all.

What Do We Mean by a 'Listening Culture'?

A listening culture is one where people feel safe, supported, and encouraged to share their ideas, concerns, and experiences. It's about creating an open environment where feedback isn't just welcomed—it's actively sought out and acted upon.

When clubs promote everyday conversations about how things are going—on and off the field—it becomes much easier for someone to raise a more serious concern if and when they need to. If people see that the club listens and responds, they're more likely to trust that their voice matters.

Why It Matters

- Improves the club experience for everyone – players, parents, coaches, and non-playing members alike
- Helps us spot and fix issues early, before they become bigger problems
- Encourages young people to feel more confident and heard, helping them grow on and off the pitch
- Builds trust and strengthens our community spirit

A listening culture doesn't happen overnight—and it's not just up to one person. It's something we all help build by:

- Being open to feedback
- Respecting different views
- Listening without judgement
- Speaking up when something doesn't feel right

How to create a Listening Culture

Here are some suggestions and practical steps you can put in place to make feedback a normal part of club life:

1. Make Feedback Easy & Normal

Reduce friction so speaking up feels routine, not awkward.

- Quick pulse surveys (only 2–3 questions monthly so its short and easy to complete).
- Anonymous suggestion box (physical or online form)
- Post-event “one thing better?” check-ins
- QR codes around the club linking to feedback forms
- Encourage verbal feedback casually (“Anything we could improve?”)

👉 Tip: Always show what changed because of feedback – it builds trust fast.

2. Ask About Food, Drinks & Social Spaces

Excellent entry point because it’s low-pressure.

- Vote on tuck shop or bar options each term
- Trial new items suggested by juniors (“Guest snack of the month”)
- Let juniors help design social menus or themed nights
- Feedback boards like: “*What should we stock next?*”
- Include dietary preference surveys so everyone feels included

These practical choices signal: *your voice shapes the club.*

3. Co-Design Social Events

Move from consultation → collaboration.

- Seasonal planning workshops (“What socials do YOU want?”)
- Junior event reps on social committees
- Crowdfund ideas before the calendar is finalised
- Let juniors lead one event per term
- Offer micro-budgets for youth-led activities

This builds ownership, not just participation.

4. Create Safe Spaces to Speak Up

Especially important if concerns or wellbeing issues arise.

- Regular informal “listening sessions” with approachable leaders
- Peer mentors or youth ambassadors
- Clear, visible reporting routes for issues
- Emphasise psychological safety (“No backlash for raising concerns”)
- Train senior members in listening skills

Consistency matters more than formality.

5. Give Juniors Real Representation

Inclusion in decision-making increases confidence.

- Junior advisory panel or council
- Rotating junior reps at committee meetings
- Voting rights on certain decisions
- Youth feedback summaries presented at AGMs
- Include juniors in strategic planning discussions

Avoid tokenism – act on what they say.

6. Make It Fun (Especially for Younger Members)

Feedback doesn't have to feel formal.

- Idea walls with sticky notes
- Emoji voting boards
- Interactive polls at socials
- Games or competitions for best new idea
- Feedback integrated into club apps or group chats

Engagement rises when it feels enjoyable.

7. Close the Feedback Loop

This is where many clubs fail.

- “You said – we did” updates on noticeboards/newsletters
- Thank individuals or groups publicly (where appropriate)
- Share progress transparently even if ideas can't be implemented
- Explain reasoning behind decisions

Feeling heard is as important as getting what you asked for.

Suffolk Cricket are proud to be working with clubs across the county so we move towards a culture where everyone feels part of something meaningful—and where every voice is heard.

If you would like any additional support for your club then please reach out to Lizzie, County Safeguarding Officer, using the contact details below:

Email: safeguarding@suffolkricket.org

Call: 07885 618 578