



## Grounds and Facilities

### A Joint Venture

#### Introduction

The Greater Manchester Cricket League is recognised as a League that is constantly striving to improve playing conditions which in turn improves the standard of cricket played.

The GMCL recognise that this cannot be achieved without the total commitment of the clubs competing in the league and as a result the GMCL have introduced minimum standards for Grounds and Facilities.

These standards are monitored and reported on throughout the season with the support of willing volunteers, the Umpires Association and the Web Admin Team.

These standards provide all clubs with a rating of either Gold, Silver or Bronze and dependant upon the tier in which the club is playing, clubs must achieve the minimum standard for that tier.

The Leagues Accreditation document is available using the following link:

To add link

#### Limitations of the GMCL Grounds Accreditation Scheme

The current scheme provides clubs and the league with information on the current state of a clubs facilities which includes covers and sightscreens for example, these are matters of fact, a club either has them or doesn't.

But in terms of the condition of the playing surface, the wicket and outfield we rely on weekly reports from our Umpires which although very useful can be subjective and open to interpretation.

The information the Umpires submit especially on the playing surface after each game provides the league with a score, which is averaged over the season.

The scoring matrix is shown at Appendix 1

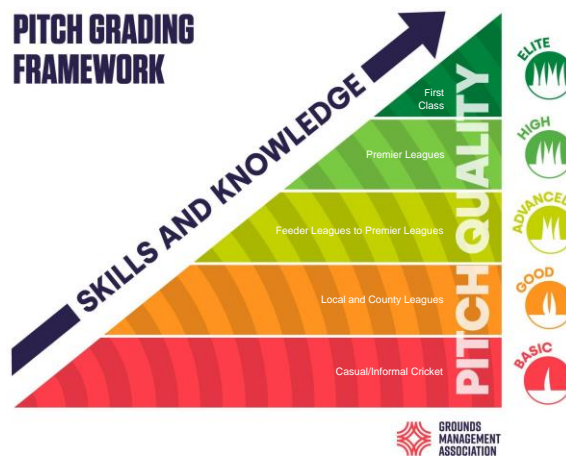
#### Joint Venture Opportunity

This paper is seeking the support of the Board for initial funding to undertake ground assessments of the GMCL top 36 clubs to ascertain the condition of the playing surface (the square) and the condition of the outfield at these clubs

This follows meetings and discussions with Andy Welsby from the Grounds Management Association (GMA) and Ian Shaw the Cricket Development Manager at the Lancashire Cricket Foundation (LCF) who is working closely with Andy on the development plan for grounds across the County. The GMCL have been given the opportunity to work closely with both the LCF and the GMA to understand more fully the condition of our cricket wickets and be involved at the outset.

## Performance Quality Standards

The Quality Standards for both the square and the outfield have been developed in conjunction with the ECB, the FA and the GMA and these are linked to pitch grading framework.



Shown at Appendix 2 are the Performance Quality Standards for Cricket.

## Proposal

The GMA and the ECB have been working closely on the development of a tool called 'PitchPower' specifically for cricket. PitchPower is used extensively by the Football Association to help clubs improve their playing surface and ultimately to determine grant funding opportunities.

In essence the LCF will provide Regional Pitch Assessors to visit each of the 36 clubs and carry out a detailed analyses of the cricket square and outfield. Following the visit a bespoke assessment report with expert grass pitch maintenance advice and recommendations will be provided to each club and the League, which will identify the condition of the square and outfield, recommendations to improve the playing surface along with an indication of the equipment at each club and any additional equipment requirements.

The report will help clubs to improve their surfaces, which in turn improves the game.

## Costs

The budget estimates to support this piece of work are £200 per inspection and test although its very likely this will reduce to more like £150.

The funding for this initiative if we use £200 as the cost would be made up of:

GMCL £75 per club therefore £2,700

LCF £75 per club therefore £2,700

and £50 from each club inspected.

If costs reduce the above would reduce proportionately.

### **Recommendation**

The Board to agree to provide funds to commence this programme of work in May 2024 and to inform GMCL clubs of the Boards intentions.

## Appendix 1 Standards for Pitches

GMCL – Umpires Pitch Marking								
Pitch/Grading Criteria	Variable or Unevenness of Bounce	Mark	Carry & Bounce	Mark	Seam Movement	Mark	Turn/Spin	Mark
<b>Very Good</b>	Consistently Good Bounce on all lengths	5	Consistently Good Carry & Good Bounce on all lengths	5	None or very little movement and very occasionally	5	None or very little spin, very few balls turning	5
<b>Good</b>	Occasional Varied Bounce	4	Occasional balls lacking carry or good bounce	4	Little and occasional movement for seam bowlers	4	Little, occasional spin	4
<b>Improvement Needed</b>	Variable Bounce throughout innings	2	More than a few balls lacking carry or good bounce	2	Regular limited movement	2	Regular Spin, frequently during innings	2
<b>Poor</b>	Excessive and frequent variety of bounce	1	Too many balls lacking carry or good bounce	1	Excessive movement throughout innings for seam bowlers	1	Excessive Spin throughout	1
<b>Unfit</b>	A pitch is only rated unfit if it is <u>dangerous</u>							0
Umpires must make allowance for the abilities of the bowlers and wear and tear of the pitch during the afternoon								

## Appendix 2 Performance Quality Standards

To be inserted