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CASE STUDY

# The MCC Foundation

How a Fundraising Strategy Review  
can transform your organisation

Exceptional fundraising partnerships

Our work with the MCC Foundation (MCCF) began in 2016. Established as the charitable arm of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), the Foundation had three principal objectives; to encourage the playing of cricket both nationally and internationally, to inspire sporting excellence and to develop young people's self-esteem and resilience. It was clear, though, that a number of factors were limiting the Foundation's success. As a former professional cricketer, our Director in the South, Chris Goldie, was keen to examine the challenges facing the Foundation and offer a package of strategic fundraising advice, capable of transforming the future of the organisation.

## The key issues

Back in 2011, the Foundation launched its Cricket Hub initiative, a core programme aimed at supporting talented athletes from state secondary schools. In the space of five years, MCCF had launched 41 regional centres, alongside building new partnerships with charities in places like Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Rwanda. But managing this growth was a challenge. Whilst the popularity of the initiative highlighted a genuine need for investment in youth cricket, without a clear fundraising strategy it was becoming difficult to identify where this injection of funds would come from.

Rather than being responsive to need and targeting Hubs in geographical regions where facilities were in short supply, the Foundation's activity was often restricted by the specific conditions attached to a major gift or grant. Inevitably, this triggered a reactive pattern of development, leading to additional problems down the track. For example, even when a Hub was ear-marked for a designated area of deprivation, the next challenge would be how to fund it from the MCCF's dwindling unrestricted income.

## Time to take stock and turn things around

To help the Foundation fulfil its undoubted potential, primarily as a fundraising organisation, MCC commissioned Gifted to conduct a full review of the Charity's activities. Chris Goldie and fellow Director, Andrew Day conducted over 45 personal interviews with key stakeholders and, through an online survey, evaluated the views of more than 300 members. Their aim was to undertake a forensic examination of the Foundation's strengths and the opportunities that existed for making the organisation more sustainable. The findings that came out of this comprehensive Review formed the basis of a five-year fundraising strategy, which mapped out how the Foundation could deliver the philanthropic income required to fund its ground-breaking initiatives.

The Review also marked a really important moment for the organisation as a whole, providing MCC and the MCCF with an opportunity to take stock before making critical decisions about the next big steps. In essence, it revealed the value of stepping back and asking the right kind of questions, with an experienced and independent partner at your side.

## A scoreboard that speaks for itself

The final report addressed the overwhelming need to significantly raise the Foundation's unrestricted income. This also introduced two further priorities around boosting the engagement of MCC members and investing serious effort into finding new benefactors. Trustees wholeheartedly embraced these ambitions and committed to a fundraising plan which clarified the role of key staff and included bespoke fundraising training.

Five years later, the Foundation's scoreboard spoke for itself. Unrestricted income had risen from £33,000 in 2015, to an incredible £821,000 in 2021. And, with continued efforts to make sure that MCC members saw the Foundation as part of its DNA, these figures remain on an upward trend. Today, the MCCF has a clear identity, benefits from widespread support and has a charitable income of more than £1.17m, compared to £226,831 in 2016.

More importantly, the impact of the Foundation's activities is undeniable. With around 60 sustainably funded Hubs, the organisation is inspiring more than 2,300 young players to discover the joy of cricket and improve their physical and mental well-being.

"Our work with MCC and the MCCF shows exactly why investing in a strategic review can be an incredible catalyst for change," says Chris Goldie. "As consultants, we were able to help them achieve their potential and establish a confident presence in the sports sector. It's wonderful to visit the Club and see givers recognised on a donors' board, close to a fundraising office with 6 or 7 dedicated staff. Personally, it's also hugely gratifying to see a sport that's especially close to my heart make such a difference to young people whether they live in a suburb of Luton or a refugee camp in Lebanon."

Gifted Philanthropy would be delighted to have a no-obligation conversation with you about conducting a feasibility study and how we might help you to achieve your fundraising goals. Either get in touch with one of our directors or contact us via our website.

Amy Stevens - 0113 350 1337

<https://www.giftedphilanthropy.com/amy-stevens>

Chris Goldie - 020 3627 3437

<https://www.giftedphilanthropy.com/chris-goldie>

Andrew Day - 01926 674137

<https://www.giftedphilanthropy.com/andrew-day>