



Circular Cricket Project Repair and Refurbishment Workshop

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Background

As part of Circular Cricket project led by The Centre for Sustainable Design[®] (CfSD) and funded by UKRI AHRC through its Design Accelerator programme (DA)¹, a repair and refurbishment workshop was delivered on 14th May 2024. The overall project aims to integrate circular design principles into UK cricket gear manufacture and develop a new production model for circular cricket gear through working prototype development. The project also aims to collaborate with and/or set up a social enterprise to develop a new, UK-based production model which reduces environmental impact while contributing to reducing social inequalities.

The workshop was held in-person at East St Arts in Leeds and led by Dr Lilian Sanchez Moreno and Professor Martin Charter from The Centre for Sustainable Design[®] University for the Creative Arts (UCA). It was attended by Malcolm Barraclough from All Rounder Solutions Ltd, Harriet Wadsworth and Noah Clarke from Leeds Beckett University, Sohail Raz and Mohammad Hazifa from Yorkshire Cricket Club (YCC) and 8 Afghan refugees, residents at Mecure Leeds Parkway Hotel, Bramhope Leeds.

The workshop focused on engaging with participants from disadvantaged groups to train them in repair and refurbishment related to cricket batting pads and batting gloves. Anticipated benefits for participants included but were not limited to, upskilling in repair and refurbishment techniques for the sector as a pathway towards employment and to provide social benefits through community engagement and integration activities.

The practical training session included an introduction to the overall project to contextualise the R&R activities, a step-by-step guidance for repairing and refurbishing cricket batting pads and gloves and opportunities to socialise. A series of prompts/cards related to the repair process were developed for the workshop. The training day concluded with participant feedback which was translated by Mohammad Hazifa from YCC to identify challenges, potential barriers, and solutions for upscaling R&R services. However, due to language barriers, feedback during the repair and refurbishment session was limited and therefore, this report is primarily on observations made by the workshop facilitators. Nonetheless, a short follow-up survey was circulated by YCC after the workshop to obtain further insight into participants background and overall experience of the workshop. The findings from this follow up survey have been summarised in the conclusion section of this report.

Reception of project overview and level of sewing skills

Within the group of 8 Afghan refugees, 2 participants spoke English. This was helpful to translate the presentation related to the overall project aims and objectives and to assess levels of interest in both the project and cricket, both of which, were significantly high. 7 of the 8 participants indicated that they had zero to basic levels of sewing skills, while 1 participant was highly skilled and indicated having previous experience working within a textile manufacturing industry in Turkey. Nonetheless, participants appeared to identify how to proceed with repairing the batting pads and gloves solely with the repair images presented at the start of the workshop. In turn, this suggests that repairing cricket gear is relatively

¹ DA is part of Future Observatory, the Design Museum's national research programme for the green transition.

straightforward and can be completed as a service and/or by teaching self-repair techniques to cricket players.

Repair and Refurbishments Process Cards

As mentioned above, a series of cards related to the repair and refurbishment process were developed to prompt participants to discuss and identify the repairs required, reflect on the material properties of the product to be repaired and identify the skills and techniques required to complete the repair. The aim was for participants to use the cards during the practical activities to reflect on the repair process. However, these were initially not used due to a lack of clarity over their function. The use of the repair cards could potentially be explored in more depth during a consecutive workshop with the aim to develop a repair toolkit within consecutive projects.



Image 1: Repair process cards

Training Session

The practical training session focused on the repair and refurbishment of cricket batting pads and gloves. The focus areas for repair and refurbishment were the following:

- Repairing any deterioration of the polyurethane (PU) leather on the batting pad casing and upper gloves.
- Repairing internal padding exposure (bottom section for pads, and fingertip area for gloves).
- Replacement of leather palms (gloves) and:
- Replacement of external/additional padding in pads.

Participants completed the repairs in less time than what was previously anticipated. The repair of slightly damaged pads was completed in approximately 30 to 60 minutes, while repairing batting gloves took approximately 30 to 60 minutes. Overall, it was identified that basic sewing skills were required to complete the activities as these were minor and mainly cosmetic. The images below show some of the repairs conducted during the workshop as well

as the different level of repair skills. The repair technique used was primarily patchwork repair to mend areas where the fabric had disintegrated due to use. Image 2 shows the repair conducted by the experienced participant compared to image 3 which shows a slightly more visible repair. Nonetheless, the workshop also provided the opportunity for participants to learn from others whilst socialising with each other in a relaxed setting. This represents an opportunity for consecutive workshops in which previous participants can assist in training new repairers.



Image 2: Repair of slight tear to batting pad completed by experienced participant.



Image 3: Repair of tear to batting pad



Image 4: Repair of tear to batting gloves

Once the repairs were completed, participants tested the cricket gear and responded positively to their functional properties. Feedback related to the workshop also appeared to be positive and most participants indicated high levels of interest in being trained in cricket gear repair, despite language barriers. Lastly, cricket gear was donated to the group of Afghan refugees both by All Rounder Solutions Ltd and the Yorkshire Cricket Club. The donation included batting pads, batting gloves, bats, and cricket balls.

Social Impact of the Workshop

Lastly, the follow up survey that was circulated by YCC on 27th June, indicate that the workshop has provided the following social benefits: improved mental health; enable participants to socialise and engage with the local community, confidence building through upskilling, and combat boredom at the refugee hotel. Below, a few quotes from participants have been included to highlight the social benefits of the repair and refurbishment workshop:

[The Workshop] build up my confidence to try new things and learn extra skills.

Group activities like the workshop help us destress and puts us in a positive environment.



Image 5: Follow up survey at YCC

Conclusions

The following section aims to highlight the key learnings from the repair and refurbishment workshop:

- Zero to basic sewing skills were sufficient to complete the repairs.
- Assisted by images of repair, participants appeared to find the repair requirements and how to repair, straightforward. In turn, this suggests that training would require minimal time and financial resources to set up cricket gear repair as a business model.
- Hygiene factors did not appear to be an issue for the repairers. E.g., negative attitudes towards sweat stains or odour were not expressed by repairers.
- The workshop enabled participants to actively socialise whilst completing the repair activities.

- Participants responded positively to using the repaired cricket gear, despite the visible repairs.
- The workshop revealed that thimbles and leather sewing needles are required for repairing the PU leather.
- The workshop provided participants with series of social benefits, including improved mental well-being, confidence building and upskilling.
- A group setting also enabled skill sharing. This has the potential to develop a knowledge exchange model for future workshops where participants from previous workshops train new participants.