



INSPIRING GENERATIONS

CRICKET'S GAME-WIDE STRATEGY
FOR 2025-28

October 2024





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CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

When I joined the ECB in September 2022, I set the entire game a goal: to become the nation's most inclusive team sport. This is our north star – to be the sport of choice when it comes to feeling included, welcomed, and free from any form of discrimination.

The game has been growing in every tangible sense. More young people are playing the sport at the grassroots level – cricket is just one of three team sports to see under 16 participation trending upwards. The 2023 Men's Ashes saw viewing figures grow by 44% compared to 2019; the Women's Ashes saw attendances increase by 288%. The Hundred was launched during this term, which has led to more women and families attend cricket than ever before. All this while successfully navigating the global pandemic and cost of living crisis.

With all this in mind, this document is designed to capture the positive work taking place across the game. It aims to take the best of the previous strategy, and turbocharge areas where necessary. This includes creating a pillar for driving forward a sustainable, thriving professional game – something that will be key in the years ahead.

The next four years are a unique opportunity for generational change in cricket. At an international level, each year is a blockbuster, with the India tour in 2025, the ICC Women's T20 World Cup being hosted in England and Wales in 2026, and the Ashes returning to home soil in 2027 followed by cricket's return to the Olympics in 2028. This is our chance to inspire the next generation, and leave our sport in better health than we found it.

At the professional level we are looking to generate investment into The Hundred. The competition is now well established, but needs investment to become the biggest and best franchise league after the IPL. We will continue to showcase the best County cricket has to offer, as it continues to be the deepest, most established domestic cricket system in the world by some margin. We will continue to grow audiences at The Vitality Blast, and produce the next generation of Test cricketers through the County Championship. We are building a women's domestic pyramid for the first time, including the launch of the ECB Women's County Cup – cricket's answer to the FA Cup.

At grassroots level, we have the chance to give every young person the opportunity to pick up a bat and ball. We are working in partnership with the Government to maximise the legacy of the 2026 Women's T20 World Cup, building transformative cricket domes across the country and delivering state school programmes for more young people than ever. Alongside All Stars and Dynamos, and through increased investment in our County Boards, we will make cricket the go to sport for young people, regardless of background.

The plan is there to achieve all of this, but it will require working in partnership. This strategy is formed from extensive engagement with the cricket network. To now achieve our aspirations will require all of our brilliant Counties to drive the game forward in their local areas. It requires the game's outstanding charities – the ACE Programme, Chance to Shine, the MCC Foundation, the Lord's Taverners and SACA – to continue to reach communities that cricket has traditionally failed. And it needs the power of individuals – volunteers, coaches, fans and players – to continue to pour their hearts into the game we love.

Cricket is a unique game that can reach communities no other sports can. It can inspire the nation and bring people together from all walks of life.

We have a once in a generation opportunity to inspire the next generation. This is cricket's time.

I look forward to working with you all, to see what we can achieve.



Richard Thompson, ECB Chair

INTRODUCTION TO INSPIRING GENERATIONS

Cricket in England and Wales has seen transformative growth since the publication of Inspiring Generations, the game-wide strategy which covered the period 2020-2024.

As the game enters a new strategic cycle from 2025-2028, our new strategy represents an evolution, not a revolution, of our plans. Many of the themes of Inspiring Generations remain just as relevant today, and will be familiar to those working in cricket.

Alongside this document we will also be publishing a series of Action Plans, which provide greater details about our efforts to deliver specific elements of our strategy, such as State Schools and Volunteering. Reference to each of these is provided throughout, and these documents can be found on <https://www.ecb.co.uk/about/publications>.

At the heart of Inspiring Generations is a single, unifying purpose:

Inspire a generation to say "CRICKET IS A GAME FOR ME"

We want everyone to feel that cricket is for them. A sport they can enjoy, feel part of and build connection and community through. To deliver our purpose, we have identified three pillars to our vision that we want to achieve by 2028.

Our 2028 Vision:

1 To become the most inclusive team sport

A safer and more equitable sport, that proactively addresses all forms of discrimination and inequalities.

2 To grow and unite the game

We will continue to grow the number of people engaging with cricket by empowering and supporting cricket's delivery network like never before.

3 Lead the game through global transformation

As the global game evolves faster than ever before, we will lead and support the game to both capitalise on and protect against this change.



The strategy consists of six key objectives:



MAKE CRICKET DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE

Measurably improve cricket's diversity, inclusion, equity and fair access.



TRANSFORM WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' CRICKET

Cricket to be seen just as much as a sport for girls as for boys.



CONNECT COMMUNITIES THROUGH PLAY

Support a network of diversified delivery partners to get more people playing than ever before.



INSPIRE THROUGH WINNING ENGLAND TEAMS

Win the big series and events, playing entertaining cricket.



SUPPORT A THRIVING AND SUSTAINABLE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL GAME

Ensure the long-term health of the professional game by developing players for club and country, and inspiring and engaging fans.



WIN THE BATTLE FOR ATTENTION

Get more people attending, watching and following cricket, more often.

Underpinning these six ambitions are a series of enablers that cut-across multiple areas of the game, alongside Cricket's Core Values which define how we will do what we do.

OUR STRATEGY

OUR PURPOSE:

Inspire a generation to say **“CRICKET IS A GAME FOR ME”**

OUR 2028 VISION

- 1** To become the most inclusive team sport
- 2** To grow and unite the game
- 3** Lead the game through global transformation

OUR SIX OBJECTIVES

 MAKE CRICKET DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE	 TRANSFORM WOMEN'S & GIRLS' CRICKET	 CONNECT COMMUNITIES THROUGH PLAY
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OUR 2028 TARGET

EDI DASHBOARD GRADE D+ > B*	INCREASE PERCEPTION OF CRICKET AS GENDER EQUAL TO 65%	600K U16s PLAYING EACH WEEK
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OUR AREAS OF FOCUS

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure cricket's culture is welcoming to all • Strive for diverse representation in every part of the game • Remove barriers for aspiring cricketers of all backgrounds • Tackle discrimination and inequalities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow the visibility of women's professional cricket • Grow the appeal of women's professional cricket • Progress towards a commercially viable women's game • Grow the number of clubs with a girls' section | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a participant centred club & league network • Provide access to young people who are missing out • Engage and support ethnically diverse communities • Leverage the impact of cricket through Trusts and Foundations and charity partners |
|---|---|--|

CRICKET'S CORE VALUES

RUN ON RESPECT	EMBRACE ENJOYMENT	BUILD BELONGING	PROGRESS WITH PURPOSE
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ENABLERS

FACILITIES	ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	VOLUNTEERS	SAFEGUARDING	THE CRICKET REGULATOR
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 INSPIRE THROUGH WINNING ENGLAND TEAMS	 THRIVING AND SUSTAINABLE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL GAME	 WIN THE BATTLE FOR ATTENTION
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ENGLAND MEN AND WOMEN EACH WIN AT LEAST ONE ASHES SERIES AND ONE WORLD CUP	18 HIGH-PERFORMING, INCLUSIVE AND FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE PROFESSIONAL COUNTIES BY 2028	14M PEOPLE ENGAGING WITH CRICKET
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- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entertain fans through a positive brand of England cricket • Win the big series and events • Support talent pathways to produce future England stars | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make The Hundred the #1 challenger to the IPL • Grow audiences through high quality domestic competitions • Foster effective player pathways in all formats • Support high performing & financially sustainable clubs • Deliver the domestic & international season | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to deliver the "Road to 4m" attendees • Get more people watching cricket more often on TV • Grow the marketable UK digital audience to 2m |
|--|---|--|

HEALTH OF CRICKET

MAKE CRICKET THE MOST INCLUSIVE TEAM SPORT



Tripled
the number of female and
quadrupled
the number of ethnically diverse
Non-Executive Directors across
the game since 2020.



83% of players
agreed that playing cricket means
they appreciate people from
different backgrounds.

TRANSFORM WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' CRICKET

124,000 tickets
sold for England Women in 2023,
288% increase on 2019.

Over 20,000
women's and girls'
grassroots fixtures in 2023.

CONNECT COMMUNITIES THROUGH PLAY

Over 2.5 million
players
at the grassroots
level each year.

One of three
team sports
trending upwards for
under 16 participation.



17,900 junior teams,
up from 13,200 in 2021.

92% of players
agreed playing makes them
feel part of the community.



79% of volunteers
believe their volunteering has had a
positive impact on their community.



INSPIRE THROUGH WINNING ENGLAND TEAMS

Twice as many people
see England Men as 'entertaining'
compared to 2022.



Men's Ashes TV viewing
up 44% in 2023.

SUSTAINABLE AND THRIVING PROFESSIONAL GAME

Over 120,000
County members,
the bedrock of our game.

Over 100
women's
professional players.



26% of participants
in boy's County age groups from ethnically diverse backgrounds.

Over 3 million
tickets sold
across the game in 2023.



Over 10 million
viewers
watching on TV each year.





MAKE CRICKET DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE & ACCESSIBLE

We will build on cricket’s progress in recent years, to deliver our plan for making cricket more diverse, inclusive and accessible. A safer and more equitable sport, that proactively addresses all forms of discrimination and inequalities, is a better sport for everyone.

WHAT WILL WE ACHIEVE BY 2028?	Measurably improve cricket’s diversity, inclusion, equity and fair access.
HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL?	Increase Cricket’s EDI Dashboard grade from D+ to B. To objectively monitor our progress, we have developed an internal dashboard that rates cricket’s inclusion, diversity, fair access and equity using a standardised grading system of A to F for each metric. Through our insights work, including the game-wide census we also capture qualitative feedback from people’s experiences.

Diversity is cricket’s superpower, bringing together people from all walks of life to bond over a shared love of the sport. Cultivating this superpower has sat at the heart of Inspiring Generations. During this period, we broadened access to cricket for those from underrepresented groups, through our Transforming Women’s & Girls’ Cricket Action Plan, the South Asian Action Plan, introduction of the Disability Premier League and more. However, we also heard from many witnesses and the Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket about the extent of the pain and damage that racism and discrimination has caused within our sport. Our focus over the next four years will be to tackle these structural and systemic issues that the game faces.

There is more information in the ECB’s EDI Action Plan, which can be found on <https://www.ecb.co.uk/about/publications>.

AREAS OF FOCUS	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2020-2024
Ensure cricket’s culture is welcoming to all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced EDI standards across the game, with every county now having its own EDI Action Plan. Delivered Inclusive Leadership programme to over 330 leaders across the game.
Strive for diverse representation in every part of the game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trebled female, and quadrupled ethnically diverse, County Board members. Established game-wide employee networks - focused on gender, race, class, disability, and LGBTQ+ inclusion.
Remove barriers for aspiring cricketers of all backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased ethnic diversity to 26% of participants in boys county age groups and 16% in girls. Partnered with the MCC Foundation, providing free-to-access training and match play to 4,500 more young people.
Tackle discrimination and inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced the Anti-Discrimination Code across the game. Set up the Anti-Discrimination Unit, now part of the Cricket Regulator.



WHAT WE WILL DO IN 2025-2028
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver tailored EDI training to the game’s workforce, including its most senior leaders. Embed Cricket’s Core Values (see page 34) to foster an inclusive culture. Invest in creating accessible and inclusive spaces across the professional and recreational game.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Counties to reach new, more ambitious Board diversity targets for gender and ethnicity. Deliver targeted programmes to address underrepresentation in key roles across the game. Establish development programmes for future leaders (including CEO and Chair roles).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver our new Cricket Cities programme to engage more ethnically diverse communities. Boost access to cricket for state school students through our State School Action Plan. Support talented young people to fulfil their potential through widening access to talent pathway programmes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed and enforce the Anti-Discrimination Code throughout the game. Raise governance and EDI standards across the game, through the County Partnership Agreement. Tackle inequalities with an evidence-led approach, including clear plans to address gender pay gaps.

CASE STUDY

ESSEX CRICKET IN THE COMMUNITY & AZTECS CRICKET CLUB



I've loved creating growth opportunities for girls and encouraging everyone to get involved. Team sports especially teach leadership and other essential workplace skills, setting them up for accelerated careers.

Harvinder Channa, Non-Executive Director at Essex Cricket in the Community and Head of Girls' Cricket at Aztecs Cricket Club

A passionate advocate for making cricket a more inclusive sport, Harvinder is using her skills and expertise as an EDI professional to drive change at all levels of cricket through her voluntary roles. As the Board EDI Lead, she has helped to oversee and develop Essex Cricket's EDI Action Plan. She also established, and leads, the girls' section at her local cricket club in Dagenham.



TRANSFORM WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' CRICKET

The next period is arguably the most exciting ever for women's and girls' cricket in England and Wales. With a home ICC Women's T20 World Cup and the game thriving at all levels, this is the period to once and for all make cricket a gender balanced sport.

WHAT WILL WE ACHIEVE BY 2028?

Cricket to be seen as just as much a sport for girls as it is for boys.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL?

Increase perception of cricket as gender equal to 65%.

We aim to reach 65%, up from 59% today. This metric has been historically hard to shift, but this boost would be in line with the increase that football saw following the UEFA Women's Euros on home soil in 2022 and the Lionesses run to the final of the FIFA Women's World Cup in 2023.

Since publishing the Transforming Women's and Girls' Cricket Action Plan in 2019 the women's and girls' game has gone from strength to strength, with progress across all five areas: participation, pathway, performance, profile and people. This coincided with the global development of women's sport, with Deloitte now estimating the sector will generate over \$1bn of revenue in 2024. From a gender equity perspective, cricket needs to deliver for women and girls who have historically not been given the opportunity to experience the joys and opportunities that cricket has provided men and boys. From an audience perspective The Hundred and the Ashes in 2023 has shown the opportunity to showcase men's and women's cricket side-by-side. With plans to grow the grassroots, alongside the evolution of the women's professional game structure and a fantastic schedule of England Women's internationals – including hosting the flagship ICC Women's T20 World Cup in 2026 – the next four years will be key for accelerating that growth, so that everyone, no matter their gender, can say that cricket is a game for me.

AREAS OF FOCUS	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2020-2024
Grow the visibility of professional women's cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 1 million fans have attended women's matches in The Hundred since 2021. 8 of the top 10 most watched women's domestic sports broadcasts on pay TV in 2023 were cricket. Execution of a game changing, industry award winning, men's and women's Ashes 2023 marketing campaign "Ashes, Two Ashes".
Grow the appeal (quality) of professional women's cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched the first iteration of the women's professional game structure, growing from zero to over 100 professional domestic contracts for women's players across four years. Equalised match fees, prize money, and employment conditions for England Women.
Progress towards a commercially viable women's game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 124,000 tickets sold for England Women in 2023, a 288% increase on 2019. Partnered with Metro Bank to be our first ever "Champion of Women's and Girls' Cricket".
Grow the number of clubs with a girls' sections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 20,000 women's and girls' fixtures in 2023, a growth of over 20% year on year. Invested £12.7m in women's and girls' facilities across 833 organisations. Established a network of County Women's and Girls' Cricket Development Officers (CDOs). 80,000 unique girls have attended an All Stars or Dynamos course since 2021, with 35% of Dynamos players being girls. Established a partnership to invest in coaches of girls' teams through the Metro Bank Girls in Cricket Fund. Chance to Shine delivered cricket to more than 600,000 young people in the 2022/23 academic year, with a 50/50 gender split. This is reaching more girls in schools than ever before.



WHAT WE WILL DO IN 2025-2028

- Deliver the biggest women's cricket event in history when we host the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in 2026.
- Host the first ever women's Test match at Lord's against India in 2026.
- Optimise and grow England Women's home international schedule.
- Align all men's and women's professional white ball domestic competitions to maximise profile, visibility, and scale: The Hundred, Vitality Blast, and Metro Bank One Day Cup.
- Launch a standalone ECB Women's T20 County Cup.
- Increase the depth of the women's professional game by launching an accessible and connected three-tiered domestic pyramid.
- Embed the evolved women's professional Tier 1 and Tier 2 teams within First Class County (FCC) structures.
- Increase the number of women's professional domestic cricketers to over 180.
- Enhance Women's County Talent Pathways across Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 Counties.
- Support Tier 1 and Tier 2 Counties with commercial strategies.
- Implement a five year broadcast and streaming plan for women's professional domestic competitions.
- Implement a holistic audience and ticketing strategy with optimised pricing across all women's cricket products.
- Use the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in 2026 to instigate a step-change in future profitability for international women's cricket.
- Transition more girls from schools and junior club programmes to create more, sustainable girls' sections at clubs.
- Invest in the people, including coaches, that enable women's and girls' recreational cricket to happen.
- Improve County-wide recreational playing offers, including growing league structures, for women and girls to play.

CASE STUDY

LITTLE STOKE CRICKET CLUB



I think cricket has given the girls confidence to show that they can play sport just as boys do. They have found that they can achieve success when they won the trophy. The girls have developed friendships, and all the issues of school can be forgotten because you are out there playing with your friends. Playing cricket has just given them confidence.

Volunteer at Little Stoke Cricket Club



Little Stoke identified that they had a group of girls interested in cricket through their family ties and a pool of volunteers willing to make it happen. They also felt that the girls who were playing with the boys were not getting the same opportunities and so wanted to give them the chance to play in a girls-only setting. In 2021, the club hosted an event to showcase what cricket could offer to women and girls. Over the next few years they continued to evolve – providing separate facilities, adopting a coloured kit, changing the signage to include women and girls and so on. In 2023 the club was recognised as Staffordshire Cricket's Women's and Girls' Club of the Year.





CONNECT COMMUNITIES THROUGH PLAY

Recreational cricket is the lifeblood of the game and has the power to improve lives and connect communities. We will build on our strong foundations to increase the reach, relevance and fundraising ability of the recreational game.

WHAT WILL WE ACHIEVE BY 2028?

To increase the reach, relevance and revenue of the recreational game.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL?

600,000 kids to be playing in an average week.

The grassroots game has exceptionally strong foundations. We currently have around 2.5m active cricketers, with 1.4m under 16s, of whom 550,000 are playing in the average week. This is underpinned by 5,650 active clubs, 2,600 junior teams and 120 disability champion clubs. By turbocharging this and finding innovative ways to create new partnerships, access new funding and reach new audiences, we can create an even larger network of communities saying cricket is a game for me.

AREAS OF FOCUS	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2020-2024
Develop a participant centred club & league network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced Dynamos Cricket, reaching 300,000 children alongside All Stars Cricket – including 35,000 free places. Increased the number of junior fixtures by 40%. Over 120 Disability Champions Clubs formed since the programme launched in 2021. 6,638 recreational game grants, with the value of £32.2m, to support around 900,000 participants, including 3,500 with disabilities.
Provide access to young people who are missing out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through Chance to Shine deliver cricket to over 150,000 pupils over two years in the schools with the highest proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Doubled the number of girls team and sections in clubs. Developed playing opportunities in 300 urban spaces. Expanded our partnership with the Lord's Taverners to deliver cricket into 600 schools, reaching 7,000 students. Underpinned by a Super 1's Development Officer in each County.
Engage and support ethnically diverse communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivered our Core Cities programme, focused on South Asian communities. Launched a partnership with ACE, working with Black communities in key cities. In partnership with KP Snacks, installed over 100 non-turf match pitches in public parks.
Leverage the impact of cricket through Trusts and Foundations and charity partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched or recommitted to long term partnerships with Chance to Shine, Lord's Taverners, ACE, SACA and the MCC Foundation. Supported one third of CCBs transfer to charitable status since 2020.



WHAT WE WILL DO IN 2025-2028

- Simplify and streamline the digital experience of participating in the game for players and volunteers.
- Strengthen affiliation and support for clubs and leagues.
- Improve the experience and diversity of volunteers through the [Volunteer Action Plan](#).
- Bolster cricket delivery into state schools through the [State School Action Plan](#).
- In partnership with Government and Sport England, deliver cricket to 850,000 young people and build cricket hubs in schools and urban areas, including flagship Cricket Domes.
- Use All Stars and Dynamos to drive transition into continued play in schools and clubs.
- Deliver our new [Ethnically Diverse Communities Action Plan](#).
- Continue our partnership with the ACE programme, engaging 7,000 young people from Black communities across seven cities.
- Work with counties to further integrate the talent identified by the ACE Programme, SACA and the MCC Foundation.
- Improve our ability to evidence the impact of cricket to attract funding to grow the game.
- Invest in transformative projects through the Game Changer Fund.
- Diversify revenue into the recreational game by supporting network of Trusts and Foundations and national partners.

CASE STUDY

RAVENSCAR CRICKET CLUB & WYKEHAM CRICKET CLUB



“

When the Afghan refugees came to Scarborough, my wife and I asked how we could help.

John Morrison, Chair at Ravenscar

”

In 2023 Ravenscar Cricket Club worked with North Yorkshire Council to help Afghan refugees integrate to life in the UK, through cricket. Several men joined Ravenscar, but with there being no women's team at the club at the time, Ravenscar volunteers helped, by taking them to training every Thursday night at another local club, Wykeham.

John and Ravenscar want to make their club as inclusive as possible, and have since raised money to build an extension to their changing room space, to create a women's only changing room, and help make the club as welcoming as possible. This is one of the steps taken as a result of their work with the Afghan women.

The Afghan refugees who arrived in Scarborough have now been relocated to different parts of the country, but John has remained in touch, and helped introduce them to new clubs.





INSPIRE THROUGH WINNING ENGLAND TEAMS

Through our England teams we will create inspiring moments and celebrate heroes of the game.

WHAT WILL WE ACHIEVE BY 2028?

Win the big series and events, playing entertaining cricket.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL?

Win both the Men's and Women's Ashes, and a Men's and Women's World Cup, at least once over the time period.

The next four years contain many landmark moments for England Cricket. Hosting the 2026 ICC Women's T20 World Cup in England and Wales is an opportunity to capture the hearts and minds of the nation. With both Men's and Women's Ashes down under before a home Ashes in 2027, we have the chance to assert our dominance in cricket's oldest rivalry. We will seek to return to the top step of major international competitions, including the ICC World Test Championship, the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka in 2026 and the ICC Men's ODI World Cup in Africa in 2027. And for the first time since 1900, under the auspices of Team GB we will seek to qualify and win medals at the Olympic Games in Los Angeles in 2028. All of this presents an opportunity for the game to bring in new audiences, create new superstars and produce enthralling cricketing moments for the next generation.

AREAS OF FOCUS	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2020-2024
Entertain fans through a positive brand of cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transformed our brand of Test cricket, with twice as many people seeing England Men as 'entertaining' compared to 2022. Drew both series in the historical double Ashes in 2023, with TV viewing shattering the numbers seen in 2019, and the biggest crowds at women's cricket this country has ever seen.
Win the big series and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Won the T20 Men's World Cup in 2022 in Australia. Won the Deaf Ashes for the first time ever in Australia in 2022.
Support our talent pathways to produce future England stars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saw eight England players reach #1 in the ICC player rankings. Partnered with the South Asian Cricket Academy (SACA), with graduates Jafar Chohan and Zum Ahkter being selected in England and England Lions squads respectively.



WHAT WE WILL DO IN 2025-2028

- Play cricket with positive intent whilst challenging for series wins in all formats.
- Grow engagement with England Cricket on owned and operated platforms and social channels.
- Continue to foster a positive and inspiring culture which allows players to perform at their best.
- Deliver world-class science and medicine support and initiatives, preparing players and teams for international series and tournaments.
- Optimise our use of data and analytics.
- Maximise England Lions, Young Lions and Women's A Teams to support the transition into the international game.
- Support the County Talent Pathways through County Partnership Agreement (CPA) Standards and a new Coach Development strategy.

CASE STUDY

SHOAIB BASHIR'S COACHING CHAIN

SAJ MOHAMMED SHOAIB'S UNCLE

My Uncle Saj was more than family; he was our gateway to cricket. He guided us to coaching sessions, the local nets, and every game, nurturing our growth with unwavering support. His mantra was, "stars are made behind closed doors." Every achievement I've made, and will make, is a testament to his influence.



IBBY AFZAL COLTS COACH, GUILDFORD CITY CRICKET CLUB

I met Ibbby at age 8 when he became my coach at Guildford City CC. His mantra was simple: hit the ball hard. That advice turned batting into pure fun and still guides my approach today. He made cricket simple, enjoyable, and unforgettable.

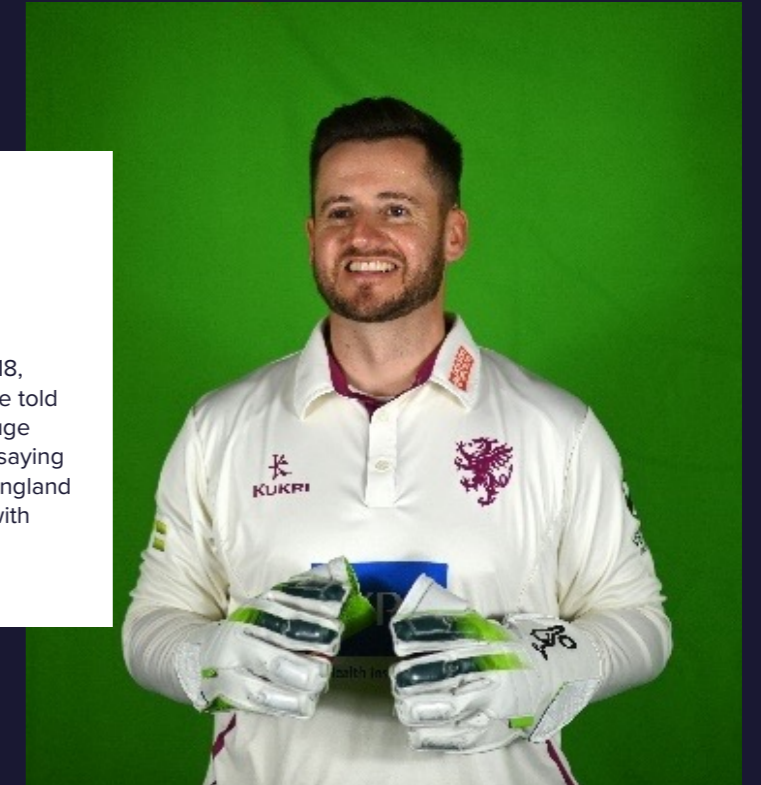


ERANGA MENDIS SPIN BOWLING COACH, SPIN BOWLING CLINIC

Eranga was my first bowling coach, and I started working with him aged 12. Under his guidance, I became a more skillful bowler with a broader perspective on the game. Eranga's coaching was crucial in developing my mental toughness and resilience, equipping me to navigate challenges both on and off the field.

STEVE DAVIES TEAMMATE AND MENTOR, SOMERSET CCC

I first met Steve at a Somerset 2nd XI game aged 18, where he was wicketkeeping and saw me bowl. He told me I reminded him of Ravi Ashwin, which was a huge compliment. Steve believed in my potential, even saying that with hard work, he could see me playing for England one day. That lit a fire in me to pursue my dream with passion.



JEETAN PATEL ASSISTANT COACH, ENGLAND MEN'S TEST TEAM

I first met Jeets in Abu Dhabi while with the England Lions. Working with him transformed my approach to bowling. He instilled in me the importance of a strong mindset, teaching me to always aim for wickets, regardless of the risks. This shift allowed me to bowl with an open mind, unafraid of being hit for boundaries.



THRIVING AND SUSTAINABLE MEN'S AND WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL GAME

By 2028 we will strive to have a professional game that is financially secure, structured around a coherent schedule and compelling competitions that inspire and engage fans. Alongside our long-standing domestic competitions, we will grow The Hundred, to make it the number one challenger league to the IPL in the men's game and the best women's domestic competition in the world.

WHAT WILL WE ACHIEVE BY 2028?

Ensure the health of the men's and women's professional game by developing players, and inspiring and engaging fans.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL?

18 high-performing, inclusive and financially sustainable professional counties by 2028.

Professional cricket is changing globally like never before. Over the last decade we have seen the number of men's franchise leagues rise from five to 17, with demands on players greater than ever. During this time, we've also seen the women's professional game accelerate at pace, producing an enormous new growth opportunity for the sport. Alongside wider societal trends, this set of conditions is intensifying the need to produce compelling and accessible competitions for all cricket fans. With so many moving parts we need a clear and united focus over the next four years and beyond, to ensure that we continue to produce world-class players for club and country and inspire future generations into lifelong fandom.

Cricket is the nation's summer sport with the potential to create powerful narratives. Over this period we want full stadiums of diverse fans and broadcast visibility, generating revenue to invest in the wider game. We want the game's competitions to be relevant at all levels – local, national and global – with a coherent calendar that respects the values and significance of all formats and balances the needs of both players and fans.

We want to uphold the traditions of the game alongside embracing new opportunities. The Vitality County Championship remains the premier men's red ball domestic competition in the world. We want to work together to make it even stronger. In the white ball arena we will optimise our three domestic competitions – Vitality Blast, Metro Bank One Day Cup and The Hundred – through further aligning men's and women's competitions. By creating a diverse portfolio of domestic competitions it allows cricketers at all levels to thrive – a prime example being the young talent at Glamorgan and Leicestershire taking their Counties to One Day Cup glory over the last three years.

AREAS OF FOCUS	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2020-2024
Make The Hundred the #1 challenger to the IPL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched The Hundred, with more than two million tickets sold across the first four seasons.
Grow audiences through high quality domestic competitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced county streaming on YouTube for domestic fixtures, alongside digital coverage on ecb.co.uk and social channels. Coordinated marketing and ticket sale campaigns, including Vitality Blast Off!
Effective player pathway for players in all formats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our pathways produce more overseas franchise players than any other nation – 74 men's players and 20 women's players in 2023. Launched the Disability Premier League in 2022, the first disability cricket to feature on Sky Sports. This has provided extensive development opportunities for our top disability cricketers.
Support high-performing and financially sustainable professional clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced the first County Partnership Agreement (CPA) and implemented associated standards across the critical areas for the professional game. 130 professional game facility grants, with the value of £22.8m.
Deliver the domestic & international season and brilliant major events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saw cricket to return to international events through the Commonwealth Games in 2022 and IBSA World Blind Games in 2023. Confirmed the major match day allocations for each venue through to 2031.



WHAT WE WILL DO IN 2025-2028

- Deliver private investment into The Hundred and launch a new operating model for the competition.
- Launch an aligned Vitality Blast women's competition alongside the existing men's competition and optimise the structure and schedule from a player and fan perspective
- Reform men's performance related fee payments to financially incentivise developing England players.
- Pioneer the growth of the global disability game, with an increase in the volume of pan-disability international cricket.
- Further embed minimum standards through the CPA in areas of critical importance to the game, in particular governance and finance.
- Embed Tier 1 and Tier 2 women's teams into County structures.
- Support County plans through investment into key strategic areas.
- Make the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in 2026 the biggest women's cricket event ever.
- Work with Cricket Scotland to build towards the Olympic Games in 2028.

CASE STUDY

COUNTY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (CPA)

Since its inception in February 2020, the CPA has seen significant progress made in areas of critical importance to the game. Overall compliance with the CPA standards across the 18 professional counties has risen from 78% in 2021 to 94% in 2024.

Individual counties have used the CPA to supplement the day-to-day running of their business. Sussex have had buy-in at all levels, with high staff engagement and regular reporting to Board level. Compliance with the standards has increased as a consequence, and risk levels minimised across the business.

Glamorgan have also used the CPA to their advantage, approaching the standards with a willingness to improve. Their relationship with Cricket Wales, responsible for recreational cricket in Wales, has been critical to their success. A joint strategy and vision for growing the game and collaborative working on the CPA has led to great progress within the country.



The CPA has been excellent. It gives clear direction to Glamorgan and has allowed us to embed the standards into our strategic thinking and planning.

We use the various guidance, frameworks and snapshots to provide updated information to our board and we are able to reference it regularly at our senior management meetings, which then allows for improved day-to-day business operations.

Dan Cherry, CEO at Glamorgan CCC





WIN THE BATTLE FOR ATTENTION

In an increasingly competitive sport and leisure market, we must grab the attention of new and existing fans.

WHAT WILL WE ACHIEVE BY 2028?

Broader and deeper engagement across attending, watching and following cricket.

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL?

14m people engaging with cricket in 2028.

This is engagement with cricket including watching on TV, following online, attending in stadium, playing or volunteering. The game exceeded 14m in 2023, but the aspiration is to hit this regularly by 2028, including in non-Ashes years.

Cricket is in its best ever commercial health, with record viewing figures, record attendances and a more diverse audience. But we can't afford to rest on our laurels, and working with world-class broadcast partners in Sky Sports we must continue to serve existing and new fans. We must provide a varied portfolio of cricket competitions and participation programmes, so that we provide the right product, at the right time place, at the right price point and supported with seamless customer journeys.

AREAS OF FOCUS	KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING 2020-2024
Continue on the road to 4 million ticket sales, reaching 3.5m attendees by 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced a new audience to cricket via The Hundred, with 31% female buyers, 23% junior tickets and 41% family buyers. Grew attendances at women's cricket by 150%, including a record Ashes year in 2023. Delivered a 44% increase in the number of ticket buyers. Hit our target of 3m attendances (outside of a global events year) in 2023, a year ahead of the target.
Get more people watching cricket more often on TV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reached record levels of viewing on Sky in 2023, including the game's overall share of Sky Sports viewership.
Grow the ECB's marketable UK digital audience from 0.8m to 2m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grew the ECB first party database from 1.4m records at the start of 2020 to over 3.11m in 2024. Social media following across England Cricket channels grew from 16.1m at the end of 2019 to 26.5m at the end of 2023.



WHAT WE WILL DO IN 2025-2028

- Leverage high profile events, including the Ashes and ICC Women's T20 World Cup, to win the battle for attention and grow our audience.
- Grow County membership and bundled products to increase frequency of attendance.
- Continue to broaden the audience for cricket through the growth of The Hundred.
- Improve customer journeys with the introduction of an aggregated ticketing platform for the whole game.
- Work with Sky and the BBC to deliver world-class coverage of every ball.
- Boost viewership on Sky Sports, in turn increasing cricket's share of viewing hours across the Sky Sports portfolio.
- Increase the amount of cricket on free to air television to more than at any time since 2005.
- Create shared digital and data services that are enablers for the whole game.
- Continue to develop and evolve the ECB digital ecosystem of apps, websites and social platforms to provide frictionless customer journeys and drive fan engagement.
- Drive retention of fans through targeted and personalised communication on the right channels at the right time.

CASE STUDY

IMOGEN PARKES AND ALICE CAPSEY

Imogen's family weren't cricket fans or players. In 2021 they saw The Hundred advertised, took advantage of the accessible pricing for families and went to one of the matches at the Kia Oval.

This is where Imogen, now 13, started to fall in love with cricket, particularly inspired by Oval Invincibles' Alice Capsey, who chatted to Imogen after the match and took a photo with her.

Cricket has been transformative for Imogen. She lives with Asperger Syndrome and ADHD, and she had to stop attending school due to bullying (mental, physical and cyber) she was experiencing, which contributed to her mental health reaching an all-time low. Around a year after her first experience of cricket at The Hundred, Imogen decided she wanted to play the sport as well as watch it. Mum Steph saw a flyer for the Lord's Taverners' programme Super 1s, designed to provide regular, competitive cricket for young people with a disability. Since the first session, where Steph noted that she was quickly at ease, she has gone from strength to strength as a cricketer. She has played various Super 1s tournaments and has even tried hard ball cricket.

As well as her love of playing, her love of watching has extended into other formats of cricket, and she has already attended a men's Test match and Vitality's Blast men's match, as well as continuing to go to women's regional games and The Hundred.

Playing cricket has massively developed Imogen's confidence; she has made new friends through the sport, where she struggled to maintain relationships before, and is now considering a return to a suitable school.

Things came full circle for Imogen this summer when Alice Capsey surprised Imogen at a training session and had a net with her. "To know that cricket is a place that she feels safe and confident is amazing," said Alice as part of a BBC interview.



Thanks to The Hundred and cricket, she's now a better person.

Steph, Imogen's Mum

When I started cricket, it just made me so much happier.

Imogen Parkes

CRICKET'S CORE VALUES

PURPOSE

Inspire a generation to say that
"CRICKET IS A GAME FOR ME"

VISION

We want cricket to be the most
inclusive team sport in England
and Wales

**RUN ON
RESPECT**

WE ENSURE OUR GAME IS BASED ON
FAIRNESS, RESPECT AND DECENCY.

**EMBRACE
ENJOYMENT**

WE MAKE SURE EVERYONE FINDS
FUN IN THE GAME.

**BUILD
BELONGING**

WE ACTIVELY INCLUDE SO
EVERYONE CAN FIND A PLACE IN
THE GAME.

**PROGRESS
WITH PURPOSE**

WE STAY OPEN TO CHANGE TO KEEP
THE GAME MOVING FORWARD.

**BEHAVIOURS
AND ACTIONS**

ENABLER

WORLD-LEADING FACILITIES CREATING GREAT PLAYING CONDITIONS FOR ALL

Cricketers of all kind deserve outstanding facilities that meet their needs. Whether you are the England captain or picking up a bat or ball for the first time, we want to make sure you have the space to thrive.

The cricket-playing environment matters – it needs to be welcoming and inclusive for all. Working with partners such as Sport England, and turbocharged with Government investment, we are seeking to create world-leading, inclusive facilities at all levels of the game.

WHERE WILL WE SUPPORT	WHAT WE WILL DO BETWEEN 2025-2028
Create welcoming and accessible recreational clubs and professional venues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and invest in 400 projects to support recreational clubs be more welcoming. Work with professional venues to boost accessible seating spaces and increase compliance with venue standards.
Increase access to cricket in cities and schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver 250 successful Grass Pitch Improvement projects through Sport England funding. Invest in 200 new places to play in urban areas, including “cricket domes”. Invest in schools through the State School Action Plan.
Invest in women’s and girls’ facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in high-performance facilities to support new women’s domestic structure. Invest in 400+ women’s and girls’ projects at recreational clubs. Train the women’s and girls’ recreational workforce.
Use facilities investment to improve the financial sustainability of the professional game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in facilities to improve physical and digital customer experience in venues. Support revenue diversification projects through the Infrastructure Investment Fund.

CASE STUDY

BRADFORD PARK AVENUE



The dome has given cricket in Bradford a massive lift to deliver all forms of cricket, from tape ball to County first team to County Age Group. The facility has also given women’s and girls’ cricket a huge boost, providing a venue for quality practice and game play. The dome is a facility the whole community can use and be proud of.

Nasa Hussain, Head Groundsman/Facilities Manager at Bradford Park Avenue



- The world’s first cricket dome was built at Bradford Park Avenue in 2023, opening in October.
- The state-of-the-art dome is a covered outdoor space with elite surfacing, lighting and netting.
- The dome includes two match play courts that convert to ten training lanes.
- 10,000 participants are expected through the facility in year one and weather has proved no barrier with play taking place during storms and snow.
- Community use has included schools, Chance to Shine, visually impaired squads and the “crick-eat” programme providing cricket and meals during school holidays to children from deprived areas.
- The dome has also been used by local clubs, pathway programmes and professional cricket teams – including Yorkshire (men and women) and Northern Superchargers – and hosted national tape ball finals.

ENABLER

PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ACROSS THE GAME

Cricket as a game is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. We must act fast to reduce our own impacts on the environment, build resilience for the future and encourage all across the game to follow suit.

Adverse weather materially impacts cricket at all levels. On a day-to-day basis it results in more challenging conditions to play the game. On a more existential level, two in five clubs are at risk from flood or drought. We need to use cricket's platform, and ability to unite communities, to provide leadership in this space. 80% of the population are concerned about climate change and the younger generations are particularly motivated by this cause.

In 2023, the ECB launched "An Environmental Sustainability Plan for Cricket", our action plan for how to respond to the threat of climate change. In taking leadership for the sport, we are using cricket's platform to drive positive change and supporting professional counties to deliver their own Environmental Sustainability Action Plans. This includes signing up to the UN Sports for Climate Action Framework – a move that a number of professional clubs have also taken.

The ECB Action Plan sets out three priorities for cricket as follows:

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PRIORITIES	WHAT WE WILL DO BETWEEN 2025-2028
Tackle Climate Change by reducing our impacts and building resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act on our plan to halve ECB greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and achieve NetZero by 2040. Invest in 300 projects with recreational clubs to improve environmental resilience to floods and droughts. Create game-wide guidance and training for climate change mitigation and adaptation.
Manage resources and cut waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support venues to find ways to cut down on waste, maximise recycling and minimise waste sent to landfill. Reduce the amount of single use materials used and eliminate single use plastic wherever possible by 2026. Review our procurement processes to ensure we are designing out waste as much as possible and purchasing goods that have minimal environmental impact.
Protecting and Enhancing the Natural Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create guidance for the recreational game to introduce and protect nature within the club boundaries and prevent damage to nature beyond the boundary. Shine a light on initiatives across the both the recreational game and professional game in England and Wales to protect nature. Continue to work on sustainable supply chains for all products procured by the ECB, aiming to work with those who protect and enhance the natural environment.

CASE STUDY

WHALLEY RANGE CC



“

I want to keep the cricket club going as a place to play sport for the next 20 or 30 years. Not being able to find a ball in an overgrown hedge is not the end of the world, but climate change could be.

Mike Hill, Club Chairman at Whalley Range CC, Manchester

”

- Whalley Range Cricket Club is an inner-city community club who have been playing at Kingsbrook Road, Manchester since 1923.
- Every year since 2016, the club experienced drought followed by significant flooding. The outfield was flooding annually in winter, and yet the square required watering by April.
- The club decided to take action to adapt the grounds for climate change and improve biodiversity.
- Native trees and fruit trees were planted on the outskirts of the field to better soak up excess water in the winter.
- Daisies, clovers and other natural ground covers were allowed to grow on the outfield, better retaining water in the summer and welcoming back worms, insects, and birds. The outskirts were left to rewild with reduced mowing and trimming.
- As a result, the club have reduced flooding problems, reduced water and fuel usage. In addition, the club has reached record membership!

ENABLER

DELIVERING A SAFER ENVIRONMENT THROUGH THE CRICKET REGULATOR

Safeguarding

We must make cricket a safe and inclusive environment for all to be involved – in order to create lifelong participants, supporters and fans by providing amazing experiences.

It is the role of the entire cricketing network to create a proactive culture where processes are understood and communicated, and best practice is embedded and shared. We have published a more detailed [Safeguarding Strategy](#).

Uphold integrity through the Cricket Regulator

In 2023 the Cricket Regulator was established to uphold the integrity of the sport. Sitting at arm's length from the ECB, the Cricket Regulator has oversight of a number of key areas which will ensure the game is fair, clean from corruption or doping, and able to swiftly tackle discrimination and ill-discipline.

The Cricket Regulator has taken up the role of bringing charges against those involved in the game, and taking forward cases to the reformed Cricket Discipline Panel, who sit independently and act as an impartial decision maker.

The Cricket Regulator has dedicated teams whose role is to provide support to Counties, Leagues and Clubs in respect of delivering effective safeguarding and tackling discrimination across the game.



CRICKET REGULATOR



CASE STUDY

CRICKET EAST

Since the introduction of Inspiring Generations, Cricket East (covering Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire) has evolved its safeguarding provision to a place of real strength.

Led by the Board Safeguarding Lead, County Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Safeguarding Officer, Cricket East worked in partnership with the Cricket Regulator, to improve its offer across the region.

By taking an organisational approach to developing a safeguarding culture, coupled with their dedication, innovation, and people-centred focus, Cricket East has ensured they are set up to achieve long-term best practice to the benefit of all cricketers in the region. This has seen them move to a leading organisation in safeguarding, under the CPA.



ENABLER

SUPPORTING THE GAME'S WORKFORCE OF VOLUNTEERS AND COACHES

It is no overstatement to say that cricket could not exist without coaches and volunteers. We know we must do more to recognise their contribution and make it easier and more accessible to enter into and serve in these roles.

Volunteers – The Cricket Collective

Cricket volunteers are integral at all levels of the recreational game, from the occasional helpers who tidy up after sessions, to the team managers, fixture secretaries, grounds staff, coaches, activators, scorers, and umpires who facilitate play, and the chairs and committees who sustain and develop the clubs and leagues at the heart of our sport.

All these roles – and many others not listed – make up The Cricket Collective, the army of volunteers who help make cricket happen.

We have published our Volunteer Action Plan to further outline our actions to support The Cricket Collective. This can be found at: <https://www.ecb.co.uk/about/publications>.

There are around **70,000** volunteers



Providing on average **6 hours** of labour a week



This contribution to the game equates to over **£100m** (per annum)



Coaches – a new approach to Coach Development

Coaching is the bedrock of experience, memories and our attachment to the sport. Coaches have an opportunity to have a positive and lifelong impact– we all remember the coach who welcomed, inspired and sparked a passion of physical activity and sport.

We have commissioned independent research to develop insight on what coaches need and ensure the future offer is modern, fit for purpose and impactful.

We acknowledge that one size doesn't fit all for a coach's journey. We will look to introduce flexible routes into coaching, alongside targeted initiatives and leadership programmes. To modernise our training offer we will provide vibrant content which links to the modern game and has sound learning principles embedded within. This includes continuous learning opportunities, acknowledging the need to keep coaching skills up to date with the evolving game. We'll communicate more to the game on our plans later this year.

There are around **19,000** coaches working in the game



With around **550** courses delivered annually

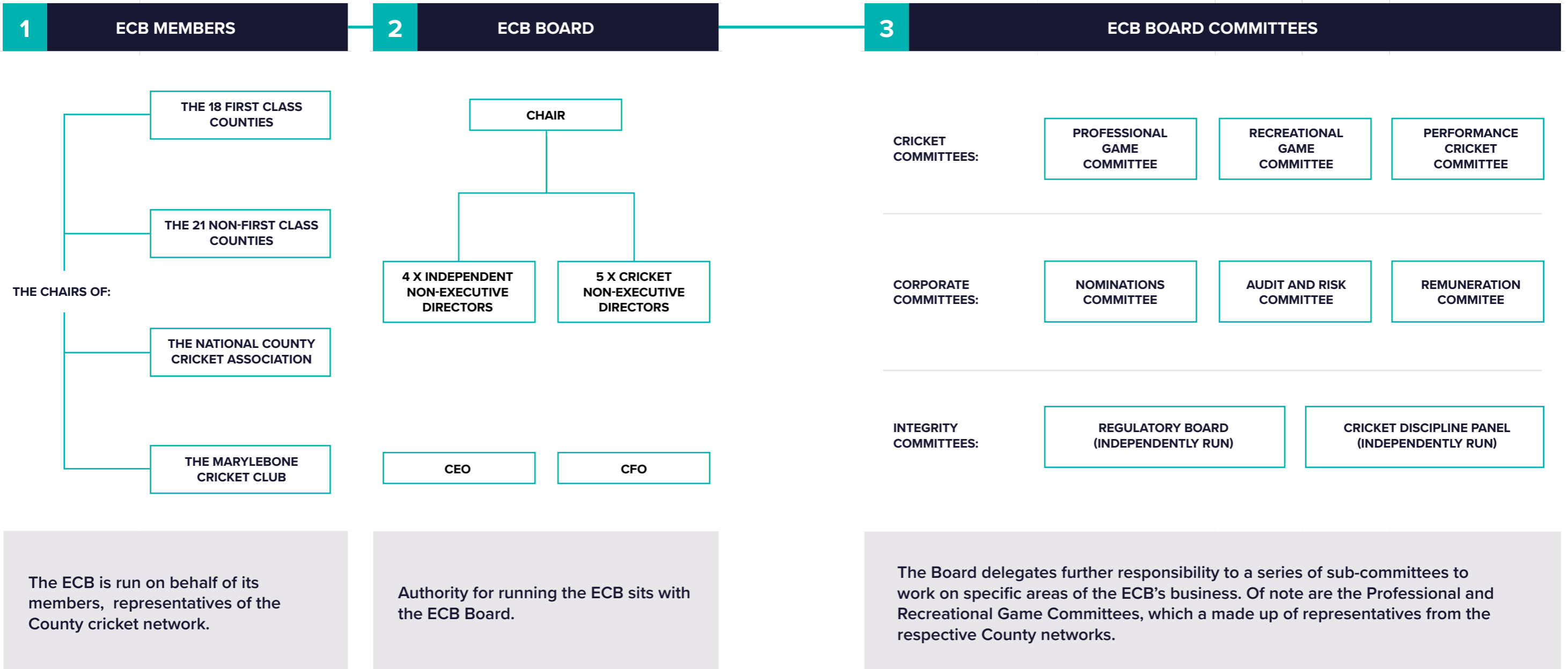


INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION THROUGH MAJOR EVENTS



THE GAME'S GOVERNANCE

The game's leadership must work in partnership and collaboration, to ensure the effective running of the sport. The county cricket network, made up of the 18 professional cricket clubs and the County Cricket Boards delivering recreational cricket, has a key role in shaping and delivering the future of cricket.



Alongside the work of these committees, the ECB collaborates with the county network through regular meetings with various stakeholder groups including at events such as the AGM, FCC and Recreational Assemblies, working groups such as the Blast Steering Group and through frequent consultation processes. The ECB also establishes advisory groups focused on specific topics such as EDI and Commercial, to provide the organisation with added expertise.

THE GAME'S FINANCES

Ensuring the game has long-term financial sustainability is a key ambition of this strategy. The pandemic, closely followed by the cost of living crisis, has demonstrated the importance of supporting the cricket network to maintain a stable financial footing.

As such, through Inspiring Generations we are making the following commitments:

INCREASE INVESTMENT INTO THE COUNTY CRICKET NETWORK

Through the County Partnership Agreements we are committing to increasing ECB financial distributions to the county network by

31% to £512m
over four years.

THERE WILL BE **£404M** DISTRIBUTED TO THE PROFESSIONAL GAME:

£306M

in core distributions to FCCs & the PCA.

£71M

via Strategic Funds.

£27M

available to reward high performance and player development.

THERE WILL BE **£108M** DISTRIBUTED TO THE RECREATIONAL GAME:

£76M

in core distributions to CCBs & NCCCs.

£8M

via the Game Changer Fund.

Minimum of **£24M**

Via our national charity partners.*

Alongside this distribution we will be working to maintain healthy ECB reserves, which were integral to navigating the Covid-19 pandemic for the whole sport. We will also continue as signatories of the Voluntary Broadcast Code, where we seek to reinvest a minimum of 30% of revenue from broadcast rights for the long-term development of the sport..

We will continue to evolve to meet the financial demands of the global cricketing landscape. We will continue to work with the PCA and our players to ensure a career in cricket is well remunerated. We have announced a range of multi-year England central contracts for our players to provide financial and personal stability – something we will look to continue over the course of this strategy.





INSPIRING
GENERATIONS