



Hampshire's Ageas Bowl will host the first Test behind closed doors, subject to UK Government clearance.

Jun 02, 2020 14:03 BST

ECB announces proposed dates and venues for England Men's behind-closed-doors Test series against West Indies

- England Men will play three Tests against West Indies in July, subject to UK Government clearance to return behind closed doors
- Ageas Bowl will host first Test, with Emirates Old Trafford staging second and third matches

- **Edgbaston selected as a contingency and training venue**

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has today announced that Hampshire's Ageas Bowl and Lancashire's Emirates Old Trafford will host England Men's Test series against West Indies if international cricket returns behind closed doors in July.

The West Indies squad will arrive in the UK on Tuesday 9 June, travelling to Emirates Old Trafford for quarantining and training. This will be their base for a three-week period before moving to the Ageas Bowl for the start of the first Test.

The ECB's independent Host Venue Panel (HVP) recommended the use of two full matchday broadcast venues for the West Indies Test series. A decision on other scheduled matches for England Men and England Women this summer will be determined at a later date.

- **1st Test v West Indies: 8-12 July at Ageas Bowl**

- **2nd Test v West Indies: 16-20 July at Emirates Old Trafford**

- **3rd Test v West Indies: 24-28 July at Emirates Old Trafford**

International venues were encouraged to submit their expressions of interest during a five-day window, based on several fundamental principles. Four venues submitted an interest in staging matches by the deadline of Monday 11 May, with the final recommendations for the use of the Ageas Bowl and Emirates Old Trafford later ratified by the ECB Board.

Venues had to demonstrate key principles to create a bio-secure environment. The criteria comprised of:

- **Biosecurity**

- Venue perimeter, access and access control
- Hotel accommodation (onsite or nearby)

- **Medical screening/testing provision**

- Designated areas for isolation of anyone presenting symptoms.
- Car parking requirements (approx. 200)
- Medical Screening and Testing sites (approx. 1500 m2)

- **Footprint to enable social distancing**

- Extendable Players and Match Official areas
- Extendable space for broadcast compounds, studios and written media.

- **Venue/Cricket operations**

- The number and suitability of TV pitches
- Provision for warm-up matches
- Indoor and outdoor practice facilities

The Ageas Bowl and Emirates Old Trafford will receive an administration fee for staging the Test series and all additional central costs will be met by the ECB.

The HVP also confirmed that Edgbaston was selected as a contingency venue and will be used to stage additional training throughout July.

ECB Director of Events, Steve Elworthy - who is leading on English cricket's bio-secure operational plans - added:

“Our main objective is to deliver a safe environment for all stakeholders including players, match officials, operational staff, essential venue staff, broadcasters and media.

“We are in daily dialogue with Government and our medical team, who have been incredibly supportive during this period. These are our proposed dates and they remain subject to UK Government approval.

“We would like to thank Cricket West Indies for their co-operation and dedication in making this tour a reality, and we all look forward to the prospect of cricket returning in the coming weeks.”

Ticket purchasers for the original England v West Indies Test series will be entitled to a refund. From 2 June, the venues will begin contacting ticket buyers to inform them of the refund process as well as any other options available to them.

For all other fixtures (both domestic and international), the ECB is continuing to work with partners across the game to determine how best to schedule matches and would like to thank supporters for their patience during this process. Further information on international and domestic tickets refunds can be found here: www.ecb.co.uk/refundscheme.

Ends

Editorial Notes:

HVP's rationale for selecting venues:

- Reducing the movement of people as much as possible mitigating the risk of infection.
- Reduces the number of individuals required to deliver the matches and in turn reduces the risk of infection.
- Reduces the movement of core infrastructure between venues and the associated time and costs.
- Opportunity to create 'island sites' for the delivery of matches.
- Venues will be locked down in bio-secure environments for long periods of time.

- Take measures not to add to the burden on the NHS.

On the confirmation of venues, HVP Chair Brenda Trenowden CBE said:

“This has been a difficult and delicate process to navigate, especially with the limited timeframe we have had to make a resolution. I want to thank the Counties for their co-operation and swift responses alongside members of the Host Venue Panel and the Board for coming to this decision in what has been a challenging period for the sport.

“The process was fair and equitable with all international venues given the opportunity to express their interests. We believe the Ageas Bowl and Emirates Old Trafford are well equipped to serve the international game if cricket is to return behind closed doors in July. Their ability to contain all facilities on-site was ultimately the reason why we came to this conclusion.”

Original dates of the West Indies Test series

England Men’s three-match Test series against West Indies was due to start at the Kia Oval on 5 June, followed by the second Test at Edgbaston on 12 June and the third Test at Lord’s commencing on 25 June.

The Kia Oval, Edgbaston and Lord’s will see their respective staging fees reimbursed by the ECB and they will retain all ticket revenues. The ECB, through their insurance policy, will be able to claim for all lost ticket revenues from advance ticket purchases.

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