



Transforming women's and girls' cricket is one of six priorities within ECB's 'Inspiring Generations' strategy for 2020-2024.

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## ECB Launches New Plan To Transform Women's And Girls' Cricket

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has today (8<sup>th</sup> October) launched its action plan to transform women's and girls' cricket with the fundamental goal of making cricket a gender-balanced sport.

Transforming women's and girls' cricket is one of six priorities within ECB's 'Inspiring Generations' strategy for 2020-2024. An unprecedented £20m of funding will be invested over the next two years, with an ambition of investing £50m over the five years, to enable organisations across the cricket

network to recruit more dedicated resources, improve the player experience, and increase the opportunities to build careers in the sport.

Another ground-breaking commitment is the funding of 40 full-time professional, domestic contracts. These contracts will be in addition to the existing England Women Centrally Contracted players.

The comprehensive ten-point action plan aims to transform all elements of women's and girls' cricket in England and Wales to increase engagement, grow representation and improve opportunities across the game. The plan focuses on five key objectives:

- **Participation:** To increase the number of women and girls playing cricket recreationally
- **Pathway:** To develop aspiring female cricketers (U11-17) as players and people
- **Performance:** To drive the performance of England women's cricket through a new semi-professional, eight region structure
- **Profile:** To elevate the profile of women's cricket through The Hundred, the England Women's team and the elite game
- **People:** To increase the representation of women across the cricket workforce

The plan was produced following two years of consultation with all 38 Counties and Cricket Wales, and detailed analysis of thousands of survey responses from the recreational and elite game.

To test some of the recommendations for the recreational game, ECB has run pilot programmes with over 600 cricket clubs to better understand the essential criteria in creating the most sustainable women's and girls' clubs.

**ECB Managing Director, Women's Cricket, Clare Connor said:** "Cricket has been an integral part of my life, as a player and in my role of Managing Director of Women's Cricket. I have never been more excited by the opportunity in front of us right now.

"Recent initiatives have given women and girls more opportunities to play, such as All Stars Cricket for 5-8-year-olds, the South Asian female activators programme, and the Kia Super League for our most talented domestic

cricketers. But to truly transform women's and girls' cricket, we must now move from targeted standalone programmes to addressing the whole pathway as one.

"We have an amazing opportunity to make cricket the sport we want it to be - a sport that is modern, innovative and inclusive. I have been so heartened by the level of enthusiasm, commitment and support for this plan from everyone involved in cricket."

**ECB Chief Executive Officer, Tom Harrison, added:** "During the development of Inspiring Generations, and extensive conversations and research across the game, the strong appetite to transform cricket's relationship with women and girls was abundantly clear.

"There is tremendous energy across the cricket network to pursue the game's largest growth opportunity and to increase the number of women and girls playing, watching and volunteering at every level of the game.

"This plan, formed in collaboration with the whole cricket network, and supported by our commercial and media partners, represents a crucial step in achieving our ambition of making cricket a gender-balanced sport."

**England Women's Captain, Heather Knight said:** "This action plan is a really exciting next step in the continued growth of women's cricket. We need more young girls to be inspired to play and those young girls need to be able to see a clear pathway above them that encourages them to continue pursuing the game.

"As England players we're fortunate enough to meet lots of young girls who love the game and it means so much to us to see how much they love cricket. Much of this plan is about normalising the game for women and girls and I'm excited to see how this increased opportunity takes the game forward."

For more information and to download the action plan in full, please visit [www.ecb.co.uk/news/1373377](http://www.ecb.co.uk/news/1373377) or contact us via [media@ecb.co.uk](mailto:media@ecb.co.uk).

#### **Notes to editors:**

The plan incorporates a ten-point action plan, split into five main areas:

## **Participation:**

- 1. Create cricket offers that inspire girls to say ‘cricket is a game for me’
- 2. Bring cricket to more primary and secondary schools
- 3. Build a strong, sustainable, and inclusive club network

## **Pathway:**

- 4. Raise standards in girls’ County Age Group cricket to provide consistency and excellence

## **Performance:**

- 5. Launch a new regional elite domestic structure for women’s cricket
- 6. Introduce 40 new full-time professional contracts

## **Profile:**

- 7. Drive engagement with The Hundred – Women’s Competition
- 8. Increase the profile of elite women’s cricketers and connect them to a new generation of fans

## **People:**

- 9. Increase the representation of women in the cricket workforce
  - 10. Support more women to take on leadership roles in cricket
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