



Jul 23, 2024 10:58 BST

## **ECB launches new £5m Grass Pitch Improvement Fund to provide more cricket pitches across England and Wales**

- The Grass Pitch Improvement Fund will invest £5m of National Lottery funding over a three-year period in around 250 projects, backed by Sport England
- The scheme will target locations most in need of safe, good quality grass cricket pitches and accelerate the ECB's aims to tackle inequalities in access to facilities and drive its ambition for cricket to become the most inclusive team sport in the UK
- Funding will go towards improving facilities for Women's and

## Girls' cricket, cricket in diverse communities, disability cricket and cricket in lower socio-economic areas

The ECB has today launched the Grass Pitch Improvement Fund, which will help cricket to tackle inequalities around access to safe, good quality grass cricket pitches across England and Wales.

In particular, the fund will support the improvement of unsafe or inadequate pitches which need investment to support Women's and Girls' cricket, cricket in diverse communities, disability cricket and cricket in lower socio-economic areas.

Thanks to the backing of Sport England with National Lottery funding, £5m will go to grassroots facilities over three years, with the first £1m being available in 2024. This will enable around 250 clubs and cricket organisations to upgrade their facilities and encourage more people to take up the sport.

With the ECB's ambition for cricket to become the most inclusive team sport in the UK, the launch of the Grass Pitch Improvement Fund aligns with the ECB's strategy for investment in schools, which is targeted towards those areas most in need of support, to bring their facilities up to a higher standard.

The ECB, in partnership with County Cricket Boards, will identify areas of need, whilst clubs and cricket organisations can also submit expressions of interest to receive funding. Successful applicants will then receive a grant from the ECB, enabling their projects to upgrade squares and outfielders, and give clubs the tools they need to manage their ground in future.

Bruce Cruse, Director of Facilities & Infrastructure at the ECB, said: "We are delighted to announce the launch of the Grass Pitch Improvement Fund today which is another step on our journey to become the most inclusive team sport in the UK. This fund is designed for those pitches in need of real help, to invest in them and improve them, making them safe and enjoyable for a game of cricket.

"It will mean clubs and cricket organisations most in need of support will have another opportunity to access funding and, with these new facilities, we are confident that they can attract more people from the local area to play

more often.”

Phil Smith, Executive Director of Partnerships at Sport England, said: “The ECB’s aim to get different kinds of people - including women and girls, disabled people, and people from diverse communities - playing cricket reflects the heart of Uniting the Movement, Sport England’s 10-year strategy. Our ambition is for everyone to have the opportunity to get active and play the sport they choose, regardless of who they are or where they live. Improving local cricket facilities and pitches will give more people the chance to get involved and enjoy the incredible benefits of sport within their communities.”

More details of the fund can be found at [www.ecb.co.uk/play/club-support/club-funding](http://www.ecb.co.uk/play/club-support/club-funding).



## Contacts



### **Chris Tuttlebee**

Press Contact

Corporate Communications Lead

[chris.tuttlebee@ecb.co.uk](mailto:chris.tuttlebee@ecb.co.uk)

+44 (0)7824 551713