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ECB updates Inspiring Generations strategy and launches action plans to detail next steps

- The ECB has today launched its updated Inspiring Generations strategy for cricket in England and Wales, setting out its vision for the game for the next four years.
- Alongside this, action plans specific to five areas of work have been published to drive equity, diversity and inclusion across the sport.

- Key actions include:

- Investing £3.5m into the most ethnically diverse areas of England and Wales by 2027

- Boosting cricket in state secondary schools by training hundreds of secondary school teachers

- Increasing the number of young volunteers by 50%, adding 3,500 young people by 2028

- Training thousands of staff and volunteers in anti-discrimination and inclusion.

- The new plans follow last month's update on the game's progress in delivering recommendations from the ICEC report.

The ECB has today published its updated strategy for cricket in England and Wales – Inspiring Generations – alongside focused action plans to remove barriers to entry to the sport and to drive equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across cricket.

The second iteration of the Inspiring Generations strategy details the ECB's vision of becoming the most inclusive team sport in England and Wales, whilst growing and uniting the game, and leading it through global transformation.

The next strategic cycle to the end of 2028 contains notable events including the hosting of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in 2026, Men's and Women's home Ashes series in 2027 and cricket being included in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

These events provide a golden opportunity to ignite a passion for cricket, and with its ultimate goal of inspiring a generation to believe cricket is a sport for them, the strategy sets out the ambition by 2028 to:

- Expand the numbers of people engaging with cricket – through playing, watching, attending or following online – to an average

of 14m each year.

- Grow the number of children playing cricket in an average week by 10%.
- Make further progress in improving visibility, profile and access across the game for women and girls to drive the perception of cricket as a gender-equal sport.
- Measurably improve cricket's diversity, inclusion, equity and fair access.
- Ensure the health of the men's and women's professional game, supporting 18 high-performing, inclusive and financially sustainable professional counties.

Alongside the overarching strategy, the ECB and its partners, including the county network, will also be focused on delivering action plans to address barriers to entry and diversify the sport at all levels.

These plans, recommended by the Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket (ICEC) last year, set out further details to address the issues identified by the ICEC which found that structural and institutional racism, sexism and class-based discrimination continue to exist across cricket.☒These include:

- **Launching the first major ECB intervention into secondary schools by training hundreds of teachers to deliver free cricket** as part of a State Schools Action Plan. This aims to support cricket to be provided in 500 state secondary schools by 2030. With the Government's commitment of funding **we also aim to provide free cricket for 3.5m children in state primary schools over the next six years**, give opportunities to play cricket in every Special Educational Needs school, and invest up to £26m in improved facilities in 16 towns or cities for state school children to use.
- **Investing £3.5m in the most ethnically diverse areas in England and Wales by 2027 and building 450 new facilities in urban areas** as part of the Ethnically Diverse Communities Action Plan, which also commits to providing thousands of free places on national

youth cricket programmes to remove cost where it is a barrier.

- **Supporting 70 players a year through our partnership with the South Asian Cricket Academy, and engaging 21,000 young people over the next three years through our work with the African Caribbean Engagement (ACE) programme**, while we intend to make further progress in increasing representation in governance and leadership roles across the game.
- Restructuring the talent pathway, delaying introduction of county age group programmes to U13 and doubling the number of players at the entry point through early engagement programmes. **State school players in County Age Group programmes will also be provided with 50% additional coaching at 10 FCCs, initially as part of a pilot programme**, while coaches will be supported to make more informed and transparent decisions on selection and to help reduce bias and discrimination.
- **Increasing the number of young volunteers to 3,500, up by 50%**, as part of a Volunteer Action Plan, which also sets out action to break down barriers to volunteering for under-represented groups. Every volunteer will be provided with access to training in anti-discrimination and inclusion.
- These focused, departmental plans support the ECB's EDI action plan, which includes further action including **training 2,000 staff across cricket in inclusion and tackling discrimination, and educating 150 leaders within the game on racial literacy**.

The aims and objectives of all this work, as reflected in the strategy, are to grow the sport and take cricket to more people, through removing barriers to participation, fostering welcoming and inclusive environments and providing more opportunities for people to play and volunteer in cricket, no matter their background or where they live.

Today's sharing of the strategy and action plans is a continuation of the update provided to the game in September, in which the ECB reported on how the game was progressing in delivering recommendations from the ICEC report. To read September's update, [click here](#).

Richard Gould, ECB CEO said: “Today’s announcements are the roadmap for where we will take cricket over the course of the next four years. The delivery of our strategy and positive change in the sport is the responsibility of all of us, led by the ECB to set out how this change will happen.

“I am fortunate that I get to spend a lot of time in counties and clubs across England and Wales and I have no doubt that everyone in the game, including our charity and commercial partners, and players and volunteers at all levels of the sport, are supportive of this ongoing change.”

Clare Connor, ECB Deputy CEO said: “When the ICEC report was published in 2023, we stated our commitment to long-term change and the publication of our action plans today demonstrates that cricket will not let up in its pursuit of making the sport one in which everyone feels welcome.

“We have made real, tangible progress in recent years and we are investing more than ever to open the sport to more people, from England teams right through to the smallest clubs in local communities.

“A huge amount of work has gone into these plans, with contributions from so many people across the game and I’d like to thank everyone for their extraordinary efforts and collaboration. I’d also like to thank all those working and volunteering in the game who are already bringing progress against these plans to life, whilst also sharing the joy of cricket with more and more people.”

The ECB’s Inspiring Generations strategy and the action plans announced today can be read [here](#).

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Contacts



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