



Headingley during England Women's Vitality IT20 against Pakistan. Photo: Getty Images for ECB

May 21, 2024 19:02 BST

## Yorkshire to become a Tier 1 women's side in 2026

The ECB Board today confirmed that Yorkshire will become a women's Tier 1 Club for the 2026 season, subject to meeting a series of conditions.

Yorkshire had been announced as a Tier 1 expansion Club in April of this year, to join by 2027. The decision to confirm 2026 as the preferred season in which Yorkshire will participate in Tier 1 has been taken to provide greater certainty about the introduction timeline for the Club and the existing women's professional playing group, as they enter contract negotiations for

2025 from 1 June.

Tier 1 will launch next season - 2025 - with eight clubs, expand to nine for the 2026 season with the addition of Yorkshire, and will expand again to 10 clubs in 2027 when Glamorgan join.

- **Durham**
- **Essex**
- **Hampshire**
- **Lancashire**
- **Nottinghamshire**
- **Somerset**
- **Surrey**
- **Warwickshire**
- **Yorkshire (to join in 2026)**
- **Glamorgan (to join in 2027)**

Yorkshire's funding for 2026 will increase to £1.5m per year, and their introduction to Tier 1 is contingent on adhering to various conditions, concentrating on governance, strategy and finance.

ECB Director of Women's Professional Game Beth Barrett-Wild said: "We talked in April about the strength of the bids brought to the ECB and about the pace with which we all want the game to progress to the next level.

"Yorkshire's desire to be part of Tier 1 as soon as possible is clear, and we believe it's the best decision for them, the women's game, and most importantly for the players as they enter a phase of contract negotiation, to

provide as much certainty as we can about the introduction timeline for both Yorkshire and Glamorgan.

“As Yorkshire are existing regional hosts they are starting from a different position to Glamorgan, who we think will benefit from having two years between 2025-2027 to develop their talent pathway across Wales and experience running a women’s senior team in Tier 2. This extra lead-in time will therefore enable them to establish a solid platform from which to build a competitive Tier 1 team and proposition in due course.

“We look forward to getting the new three-tiered structure underway next summer, and to setting in motion the next, exciting stage of women’s professional domestic cricket.”

For the duration of the 2025-2028 seasons all three tiers will be ‘closed’, with no promotion or relegation.

The three-tier structure aims to build on the impact of the existing Regional Model, which has accelerated performance levels within women’s cricket and laid solid foundations, to further grow the depth and reach of the women’s professional game.



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