

Introducing Disability Cricket Champion Clubs

Cricket is a game that unites communities and improves lives. The ECB want every individual and community to be united by the feeling that cricket is a game for them. The Disability Cricket Champion Clubs programme will support cricket clubs to create or develop playing opportunities for disabled people. Champion clubs will be supported to welcome individuals with different needs and varying abilities to become valued members of their club – celebrating that the game of cricket has something to offer everyone.

Each champion club will receive a brand-new kit bag of **playing equipment** with a range of balls, bats and adaptive equipment, designed to help make the game easy to pick-up and play. Club coaches will be given **guidance and support** to increase their confidence. Throughout the cricket season they will then be supported to deliver regular sessions and build relationships with their local disability service providers and schools. Links between champion clubs and the wider disability pathway within a county will help create a vibrant disability cricket playing offer; with new champion clubs coming on board each year. Finally, at the conclusion of an exciting summer of activity, clubs will receive **£500 grant funding** to help towards the costs of promotion, development and delivery of their new disability cricket section.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has put additional strain on every sinew of the fabric of our society. With no population impacted greater than disabled people¹. For many cricket clubs returning to play will be their greatest challenge in 2021, but we know that there are some who would provide outstanding opportunities for disabled people to return to an active lifestyle. Cricket will be at the forefront of overcoming the inequalities of accessibility to sport, that have only been magnified over the past year. Enabling everyone to say that **'Cricket is a game for me'**.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Disability Cricket Champion Clubs will be forward thinking, vibrant, inclusive and exciting places to be. Whilst there are some generic eligibility criteria to qualify for ECB funding, the key attributes are as follows:

- ✓ **A commitment from the club to provide a fun and welcoming environment for all,**
- ✓ **At least one qualified club coach to lead the sessions and make them a mainstay of the club's future offer,**
- ✓ **An ambition to imbed the new section at the heart of the club, from committee to training nights and everything in between.**

The application window opens on 25th January 2021 and closes on 30th April 2021, with clubs asked to complete an [application form](#) to be considered. Full [guidance notes](#) are available and interested clubs are encouraged to discuss prospective applications with their County Cricket Board, with any queries welcomed received at disabilitycricket@ecb.co.uk

Whether a cricket club aiming to launch a new disability cricket section or a club who have previously supported disabled people to access the game, all will be considered for an application in 2021. Click below to learn about two great clubs already reaping the rewards of diversifying their playing offers:

Walton-On-Thames Cricket Club

The Merstham Magics

¹ www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/demographic-knowledge/coronavirus



ONGOING SUPPORT

In order to develop a welcoming environment and positive playing experiences for disabled people, champion clubs will be supported in a range of different ways, by both the ECB and their local County Cricket Board. The expectations of support provided are set out below.

ECB	CCB
<p>Equipment: on approval of their application – by both the ECB and their local CCB – champion clubs will be sent a kitbag of ECB branded playing equipment.</p>	<p>Promote the programme to suitable clubs who are looking to create or develop a diverse and accessible playing offer. https://www.ecb.co.uk/play/open-age/disability-cricket/championclubs</p>
<p>Online Support: a range of online resources are available to help clubs and coaches to deliver an inclusive cricket programme.</p>	<p>Ongoing local support to each champion club. Supporting clubs to make links with local disability service providers and schools. Aligning provision with the wider county disability cricket pathway.</p>
<p>Grant funding of £500 will be paid on completion of a summer programme of activity. The Club will provide evidence that the activities have been delivered and details of attendee figures.</p>	<p>Programme Evaluation: Assist clubs and ECB with collation of end of season data and evaluation of each champion club programme.</p>
<p>Future support: Both ECB and CCB to continue to provide support to champion clubs to ensure that activity becomes embedded and a part of the regular playing offer. As part of this support, clubs may qualify for #FUNDS4RUNS funding to help broaden or develop their disability cricket offer further.</p>	

