

# Cheshire Cricket Board County Facility Strategy

“Supporting our clubs and communities to develop accessible, welcoming and sustainable facilities that contribute to the growth of recreational cricket in Cheshire.”



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## Cheshire Cricket Board County Facility Strategy (2023-2033)



### Introduction

The Cheshire Cricket Board *County Facility Strategy (CFS)* has been developed in partnership with ECB to establish the facility priorities and identify some of the investment opportunities for grass roots cricket in Cheshire over the next 10 years.

In line with the requirements outlined in the County Partnership Agreement (CPA), CCB have produced a robust and dynamic CFS which aligns with the aims of ECB's [Inspiring Generations](#) strategy and connects with the ambitions of our own Countywide Plan<sup>1</sup>. The CFS should not be viewed in isolation therefore, but as part of our collective commitment to developing the places and spaces where grass roots cricket is played, both now and in the future. This is underpinned by our CFS mission statement, in which Cheshire Cricket Board pledge to:

*"Support our clubs and communities to develop accessible, welcoming and sustainable facilities that contribute to the growth of recreational cricket in Cheshire."*

Throughout the production of this CFS we have worked closely with a number of key partners and stakeholders, leading to the creation of an insight-led plan which incorporates facility data from a wide range of sources. Examples include ECB national mapping data, Local Authority playing pitch strategies and our own County Board Audits and Surveys. This collaborative approach has enabled us to determine with confidence what the facility 'priorities' for Cheshire Cricket for the period 2023-2033 should be, while acknowledging the need to remain agile and react to any further developments within the recreational game.

### Cheshire Cricket Facility Priorities

1. Transforming Women and Girls' Cricket
2. Developing Cheshire's Player Pathway
3. Creating Welcoming Environments in Cheshire clubs
4. Tackling Climate Change
5. Tackling Supply and Demand in Urban Areas

Each Priority has a dedicated chapter within the CFS, in which we communicate the current facility landscape (what we have) and the updates and additions required to deliver our future objectives (what we need). The analysis also includes a list of the actions we intend to take and some of the investment opportunities that exist to help us achieve our collective goals (how we get there). An [Executive Summary](#) of the above is included on Pages 3 to 5.

In addition to the five main Priority Areas, we have included a sixth *Other Priorities* section in which we discuss some of the wider facility considerations for the grassroots game in Cheshire, including

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix 4: CCB Countywide Plan

access to indoor sports halls and security of tenure for our affiliated clubs. In this chapter we also share the governance model and methodology used to allocate devolved ECB funding and acknowledge some of the day-to-day facility operations undertaken by CCB staff for the benefit of clubs and communities throughout the County.

## Executive Summary

The CCB County Facility Strategy (CFS) explores the facility priorities for the recreational game in Cheshire for the period 2023-2033. Working alongside a number of key stakeholders (including ECB, Local Authorities, affiliated clubs) we have developed an insight-led strategy that has enabled us to confirm with confidence what our **Facility Priorities** for the next 10 years should be.

For each of the five Priority Areas below, we have summarised the main facility requirements (what we need) and outlined some of the investment opportunities that support our collective ambitions. Where relevant, we have included both quantitative and qualitative data to highlight the volume and nature of the projects required to deliver growth throughout the recreational game in Cheshire.

### PA1 – Transform Women and Girls Cricket

Current Landscape (What we have)	County Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>64 clubs with Women &amp; Girls sections</li> <li>53 teams in Cheshire Women's League</li> <li>36 teams in Cheshire Girls' League</li> <li>8 Indoor Leagues (7 softball)</li> <li>20 Women's Softball Festivals</li> <li>11 girls' representative teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grow the number of girls only entry-level programmes (All Stars and Dynamos)</li> <li>Increase the number of teams in the Cheshire Girls Cricket League</li> <li>Support the Cheshire Women's League in their development aspirations</li> <li>Expand the CCB indoor playing offers</li> </ul>
Facility Requirements (What we need)	Investment Opportunities (How we get there)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 additional grounds / pitches</li> <li>47 New (or upgraded) changing spaces</li> <li>26 New (or upgraded) female toilets</li> <li>8 social space refurbishments</li> <li>5 Non-turf practice facilities</li> <li>4 Non-turf match pitches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the <b>ECB County Grant Fund</b> to develop female-friendly changing, toilets and social spaces, and invest in non-turf practice facilities</li> <li>Successfully launch the <b>CCB Ground Hire</b> scheme to identify available pitches</li> <li>Invest in the <b>Pitch Advisory Service</b> to maximise the existing facility stock – subsidise the cost of any reports from ECB County Pitch Advisors.</li> </ul>

## PA2 – Developing Cheshire’s Player Pathway

Current Landscape (What we have)	County Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>40 Cheshire representative teams including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 Men’s senior sides</li> <li>18 District (youth) sides</li> <li>12 County Age Group sides</li> <li>4 Disability teams</li> </ul> </li> <li>Year-round Pathway (for c1000 cricketers) inc: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16 outdoor development courses</li> <li>117 indoor development courses</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grow the number of boys and girls accessing CCB Development Courses (the Pathway)</li> <li>Ensure we have enough venues (indoors and out) to meet the demands of Pathway</li> <li>All venues continue to meet or exceed minimum standards (as per audits and risk assessments)</li> <li>Explore the development of ‘Performance Hubs’ to alleviate demand on other club venues</li> </ul>
Facility Requirements (What we need)	Investment Opportunities (How we get there)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure use of (at least) one additional indoor centre in North / East of County – <i>to meet demand</i></li> <li>Develop existing host venues in line with CCB Facility Audit – including a ‘central’ indoor venue with appropriate flooring for Elite (EP) Players</li> <li>Creation of (up to) 3 Performance Hubs to host representative cricket, with a focus on W&amp;G cricket</li> <li>At least one indoor centre in East Cheshire to support the Disability Pathway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply to the <b>ECB Transform Fund</b> to develop up to three Performance Hubs in North, East and Central locations (see Appendix for venue selection)</li> <li>Support education providers to upgrade indoor facilities – share <a href="#">technical guidance</a> for ‘new build’ sports halls to ensure cricket is prioritised</li> <li>Use the <b>ECB County Grant Fund</b> to develop our existing (club) venues including non-turf practice facilities and female friendly changing.</li> </ul>

## PA3 – Creating Welcoming Environments (in Cheshire clubs)

Current Landscape (What we have)	County Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>109 affiliated clubs (85 Clubmark accredited)</li> <li>75 Clubs running ECB National Programmes</li> <li>7 Disability champion clubs</li> <li>1,478 open age and junior teams</li> <li>133 squares (1471 grass wickets, 38 NTPs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the ECB Creating Welcoming Environments Guide to affiliated clubs. Champion diverse committees and membership</li> <li>Encourage annual completion of club audits and stakeholder surveys &gt; Facilities Master Sheet</li> <li>Secure CPD for club-facing staff – technical support for facility projects</li> </ul>
Facility Requirements (What we need)	Investment Opportunities (How we get there)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16 new pavilions</li> <li>64 new/upgraded changing rooms</li> <li>62 indoor/outdoor social pace projects</li> <li>16 new / upgraded toilet facilities</li> <li>58 new / refurbished non-turf practice nets</li> <li>14 non-turf match pitches</li> <li>33 fine turf projects (in drainage, levelling etc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the <b>ECB County Grants Fund</b> to develop strategic on/off field including changing rooms, social spaces and non-turf practice facilities.</li> <li>Leverage <a href="#">partnership funding</a> from stakeholders (Sport England, Local Authorities, other NGBs) to support large scale projects including new pavilions</li> <li>Promote the use of the <b>ECB Interest Free Loan</b> for fine turf projects.</li> </ul>



## PA4 – Tackling Climate Change

Current Landscape (What we have)	County Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✎ No Cheshire clubs at serious risk of flooding</li> <li>✎ One Cheshire club (Bollington CC) at 'medium risk of flooding, all others considered 'low risk'</li> <li>✎ No applications from Cheshire clubs to ECB Emergency Fund</li> <li>✎ £54,000 invested in 'green' projects in Cheshire via the ECB County Grants Fund (2021-2023)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✎ Raise awareness of the impacts of climate change (flooding, drought) through regular communication with clubs</li> <li>✎ Challenge clubs to include sustainable facility solutions in their Development Plans</li> <li>✎ Encourage and support funding applications for climate-related projects</li> </ul>
Facility Requirements (What we need)	Investment Opportunities (How we get there)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✎ 10 Cheshire clubs have identified 14 'green projects' in their development plans, including: Solar Panels (x3), Rainwater Harvesting (x2), Irrigation (x2), Heating Schemes (x2), Targeted drainage (x3), Greywater Recycling (1), Electric Mower (1)</li> <li>✎ Ensure all new-builds (pavilions, changing blocks etc) use sustainable / energy-saving materials where possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✎ Allocate (at least) 20% of annual <b>County Grants Fund</b> budget to Tackling Climate Change theme</li> <li>✎ Support clubs to leverage <b>partnership funding</b> (letters of support etc) from other stakeholders investing in green projects including Local Authorities and landfill operators.</li> <li>✎ Promote the <b>ECB Energy Saving Guide</b> and other resources / share best practice through bespoke 'Sustainable Futures Page' on Board website</li> </ul>

## PA5 – Tackling Supply and Demand in Urban Areas

Current Landscape (What we have)	County Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✎ Urban population of c 1million</li> <li>✎ Cheshire has more residents per grass pitch than the national average and 4 (out of 8) Local Authorities have a population density above national average</li> <li>✎ 158 Casual / Midweek teams</li> <li>✎ 13 Urban All Stars and Dynamos Programmes</li> <li>✎ 1 Chance to Shine Street Programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✎ Work with key stakeholders including Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)</li> <li>✎ Identify and develop safe urban spaces for the delivery of participation programmes</li> <li>✎ Grow the portfolio of non-turf match and practice facilities in public spaces</li> <li>✎ Enhance facilities for community groups involved in informal play, including refugees</li> </ul>
Facility Requirements (What we need)	Investment Opportunities (How we get there)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✎ Support the development of new 'Play Zones' in Stockport and Wirral and MUGAs at strategic sites within each Local Authority (see appendix)</li> <li>✎ Install Non-Turf match and practice facilities in Trafford and Tameside to support casual play</li> <li>✎ Secure access to the new Urban Cricket Centre to be built in Stretford for Cheshire communities</li> <li>✎ Identify (at least) two clubs per year to benefit from the <a href="#">Volunteer it Yourself (VIY)</a> scheme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✎ Secure additional funding through <b>GMCA Partnership</b> to deliver more non-turf pitches and VIY projects in Cheshire</li> <li>✎ Apply for <b>Sky Intros</b> (Dynamos) funding to develop MUGAs in Greater Manchester area</li> <li>✎ Work with Local Authorities to unlock <b>Section 106 Funding</b> for other strategic urban sites in</li> <li>✎ Generate awareness off the <b>CCB Ground Hire Scheme</b> to support casual and midweek teams</li> </ul>

## County of Cheshire – General landscape

Cheshire is a county in Northwest England. It borders Lancashire to the North, Derbyshire to the East, Wales to the West and Staffordshire and Shropshire to the South. The county covers 905 square miles (2,344 sqkm) and has a mix of urban and rural areas.

Cheshire has a population of 2.15 million, of which 130,000 (6%) are from ethnically diverse backgrounds.<sup>2</sup> The County is serviced by eight Local Authority areas, including: Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Warrington, Stockport, Trafford, Tameside, Wirral and Halton. Stockport, Trafford and Tameside also form part of the [Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#), while Wirral and Halton are members of the [Liverpool City Region Combined Authority](#).

The urban population of Cheshire is approximately 1 million, with several major towns including Stockport, Warrington, Crewe and Chester. In rural Cheshire, the landscape is dominated by the [Cheshire Plain](#), an area of flat land divided by the [Mid-Cheshire Ridge](#). To the east the landscape rises to the [Pennines](#), where the county contains part of the [Peak District National Park](#).

## Cheshire Cricket - Current landscape



Understanding and evaluating the current cricket landscape was a crucial first step in our CFS, as we look to build on some strong foundations and identify where future investment is most needed (our Facility Priorities). The graphic above shows the breadth of recreational cricket activity in the County and the wide range of playing offers delivered by Cheshire Cricket Board, and on the following pages we have included the most recent participation figures<sup>3</sup> for each of the highlighted programmes.

<sup>2</sup> Insight from ECB Data Pack

<sup>3</sup> Based on data collected at the start of the 2023 season



**Club Network:** There are 109 affiliated clubs in Cheshire boasting more than 15,000 playing members across their respective senior and junior sections. Of these clubs, 85 have attained [Clubmark status](#) with a further four working towards accreditation in summer 2023. The majority of our affiliated clubs field (open age) teams within the Cheshire Integrated League Structure (CILS), which comprises the flagship [Cheshire County Cricket League](#) and the feeder [Cheshire Cricket League](#). The remaining clubs play in various cross-border competitions<sup>4</sup> and there are also six midweek leagues operating within the county. This is in addition to the popular '[Get the Game On](#)' friendly fixture pool, which is organised by Cheshire Cricket Board.

Junior cricket is flourishing in Cheshire, with more than 700 teams engaged in weekly fixtures throughout the summer. This activity is supported by nine junior leagues<sup>5</sup> of which the Cheshire County League, Cheshire High Peak League and South Manchester Junior League accommodate the most teams. The junior league programme is complemented by a number of high-profile cup competitions, including the Under 13, Under 15 and Under 19 T20 events run by the County Board.



**Pathway and Performance:** Cheshire Cricket operate a comprehensive Player Pathway which aims to '[support every child to reach their full cricketing potential](#)'. The Pathway includes development courses throughout the calendar year, with talented individuals selected to play representative cricket at District and County level. In 2023, Cheshire fielded 18 District Teams and 12 County Age Group teams,<sup>6</sup> under the banner of [Cheshire Youth Cricket \(CYC\)](#), while the [Cheshire County Cricket Club](#) ran two men's teams and four 'seniors'<sup>7</sup> sides in the National Counties Cricket Association.



**Women and Girls':** Women and girls' Cricket is thriving in Cheshire, with 64 clubs providing female playing offers during the current season. Competitive women's cricket is played almost exclusively<sup>8</sup> in the [Cheshire Women's Cricket League](#) (CWCL), which currently comprises five divisions of hardball and softball competition and 53 teams. The CWCL also operate a junior girls' section, with 36 teams competing across seven divisions in East and West Cheshire. In addition to the structured league programmes, there are a large volume of Women and Girls' Softball Festivals played in Cheshire each year, with more than 20 organised in the 2023 season.



**Disability Cricket:** Cheshire's [disability and inclusion programme](#) continues to grow, with a range of playing offers for participants with additional needs. In partnership with Lord's Taverners, CCB have established four [Super 1s hubs](#) at community venues around the County and a comprehensive Table Cricket programme in SEND schools. Meanwhile, seven of our affiliated clubs have achieved ECB [Champion Club](#) status, reflecting their ability to deliver inclusive sessions for members with a disability. There is also an established disability talent pathway in Cheshire, with County teams competing in the [D40 \(hardball\) and Super 9s \(softball\) leagues](#) and a Visually Impaired representative team, the [Cheshire Cobras](#).



**Schools and National Programmes:** Over the course of the last academic year, Cheshire Cricket Board have engaged more than 25,000 children in educational settings, across a range of activities including PE lessons, extra-curricular clubs and school festivals. CCB staff delivered face-to-face sessions at 190 primary and second schools, with a further 197 schools

<sup>4</sup> North Staffordshire and South Cheshire Cricket League, Liverpool and District Cricket Competition, Derbyshire and Cheshire Cricket League, Greater Manchester Cricket League

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix 1

<sup>6</sup> 7 boys and 5 girls teams

<sup>7</sup> Cheshire fielded teams in the NCCA Over 50s, Over 60s and Over 70s competitions

<sup>8</sup> A small number of clubs play in the Liverpool and District and Derbyshire and Cheshire Leagues



involved in the wider competition structure. Many of the pupils transitioned into ECB National Programmes, with more 3,500 children attending All Stars and Dynamos Cricket centres in 2022.



**Communities:** The creation of the [CCB Urban Action Plan](#) has led to greater levels of engagement with community groups throughout the County. In the last 12 months we have seen the successful role out of the Chance to Shine Street programme, a new partnership with the North Bangladesh Cricket League and CCB have delivered a number of Roadshows for disadvantaged groups (including refugees). Volunteers from diverse communities have also benefited from bursary-led coach development courses, with some becoming Activators for All Stars and Dynamos centres and others gaining formal coaching qualifications.



**Coach Development and Officials:** The 2022/23 Coach Development programme was the biggest in Cheshire's recent history. A total of 189 volunteers gained formal qualifications from courses including the ECB Support Coach (58 candidates), ECB Foundation Coach (63 candidates) and ECB Core Coach (68 candidates), while a further 50 teaching and support staff attended formal Teacher Training sessions. *There are now more than 600 volunteers in active coaching roles around the County, including 352 members of the ECBCA.* Meanwhile, the last year saw a record 247 people book onto umpiring and scoring courses in Cheshire and a further 35 volunteers attend CPD sessions organised by the Cheshire Association of Groundsmen.

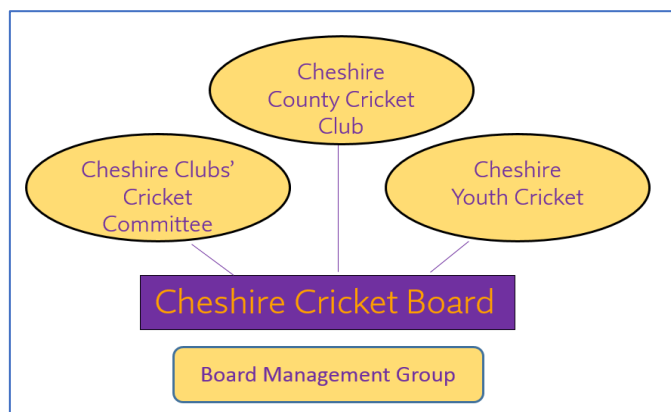


**Summary:** The graphic below pulls together some of the key performance indicators for Cheshire Cricket Board and our delivery partners in 2022. It paints a healthy picture of participation and a strong platform from which to deliver further growth over the next five years. The next section of our CFS looks at the organisational structure of Cheshire Cricket and the mechanisms in place to support the club and community network to deliver our collective ambition to provide 'accessible and welcoming' environments for all members of the grassroots cricket family.



## Cheshire Cricket Organisational Structure

[Cheshire Cricket Board](#) was established in 1998 as one of 39 County Boards responsible for leading, influencing and inspiring the recreational game in England and Wales. The Board has three constituent members – Cheshire County Cricket Club, Cheshire Youth Cricket and the Cheshire Clubs' Cricket Committee (responsible for senior recreational cricket) - in addition to a separate *Board Management Group* appointed to oversee the day-to-day financial operations of the business.



Led by Director of Cricket Richard Newton, CCB currently employ 30 full time and part time professional staff working across a variety of development, coaching, safeguarding and business support roles. Several staff have been appointed 'line managers' with a remit to oversee performance in their respective fields. These include Player Pathways, Club Development, Women and Girls, Coach Development, Communities, Schools,

National Programmes and Disabilities. Other key posts that have recently been created as we look to maximise support for our clubs and communities are those of Volunteer Coordinator, Grounds Coordinator and Officials Coordinator. Each of the above roles is supported by an individual Development Plan (or Strategy), all of which contribute to the overarching [Countywide Plan](#).

## CCB Facilities Operations

Throughout this CFS we make several references to the work of the [CCB Facilities Team](#) a small group of club-facing staff who have undergone specific training and CPD in this area. Led by the Facilities and Club Support Officer, other team members include the Board's Development and Coaching Officers (DCOs) and the Clubs and Participation Manager. The team work closely with key partners including the ECB Regional Facilities Planning Manager and our four County Pitch Advisors, creating a strong network of support for the grass roots community in Cheshire.

In the introduction, we alluded to the importance of an 'insight-led' approach to facilities development. This starts with the DCOs, who work closely with all affiliated clubs to review their Development Plans and identify any specific facility needs. Clubs are also encouraged to complete and update the annual [Club Audit](#) and to return any relevant facility surveys, including those issued by Local Authorities in support of Playing Pitch (and Outdoor Sports) Strategies.

Information from each of the above sources is fed into the [Club Facilities Master Sheet](#), a central county database which combines all facility data for Cheshire clubs (and communities). The Master Sheet is developed and maintained by the Facilities and Club Support Officer and the information is used to inform the work of the CCB 'Prioritisation Panel,' whose role is to allocate funding – including the [ECB County Grants Fund](#) - on behalf of the Board. This approach ensures CCB are well placed to make defensible investment decisions that clearly align with the strategic aims (Facility Priorities) of our County Facility Strategy.

## Priority Area 1: Transform Women and Girls Cricket

Women and Girls cricket is a [national priority](#) for ECB and forms one of the five central pillars of the CCB Countywide Plan. Cheshire is recognised nationally as a leading county in this field, owing to a flourishing league structure and an abundance of participation offers across school, club and community settings. To support this activity, CCB has invested heavily in female staff - as of April 2023 the Board had [seven female coaches and administrators](#) working across the W&G game. This professional resource, combined with a strong and passionate volunteer network, has helped lay the foundations for a thriving W&G scene in Cheshire, with 64 (out of 109) clubs and more than 2,600 female participants now engaged in various forms of softball and hardball cricket.<sup>9</sup>



The rapid (and welcome) growth in the W&G game has placed pressure on our existing facility stock, meaning additional (and continuous) investment will be required to deliver a gender-balanced sport in Cheshire in the future.

This section of our CFS focusses on the female playing offers (softball and hardball) at Cheshire clubs. Through feedback collected via Club Audits, Club Development Plans and a [bespoke W&G Facility Survey](#), we have compiled a strong evidence base from which to communicate the future facility needs for W&G cricket in the County.

### Current W&G Landscape (what we have)

#### Softball Cricket

The popularity of softball cricket has led to exponential growth within the W&G game in Cheshire. Inexpensive, inclusive and accessible (games can be played practically anywhere), this fast-paced version of the game has captured the imagination of thousands of women and girls around the country. The softball pathway in Cheshire is constantly evolving, with a myriad of formal and informal playing offers available to female participants across school, club and community settings.

Activity	Current position	Planned additional activity (next 5 years)
Clubs with Women and Girls sections	64	77
Girls only All Stars / Dynamos	7	28
Girls' softball teams	22	28
Girls' hardball teams	15	30
Women's softball teams	33	24
Women's hardball teams	21	33

<sup>9</sup> Appendix 2: Women and Girls Participation Offers in Cheshire



## Girls Softball

ECB National Programmes provide a fantastic first experience of cricket for girls aged five to 11. The entry-level All Stars and Dynamos Cricket programmes have been embraced wholeheartedly by Cheshire clubs, with more than 3,500 participants (including 1,000 girls) registering across 82 centres in 2022. Recognising the potential of these programmes, a number of Cheshire clubs have opted to run 'girls only' sessions, hoping this will act as a catalyst to launch new girls' softball teams or supplement existing ones. At the time of publication there were seven girls only Dynamos Programmes in Cheshire, with a further 28 planned over the next five years.

For clubs with existing softball sections, the majority compete in the [Cheshire Girls Cricket League](#). Matches are mostly played during the week, although some clubs host festivals at weekends and during school holidays, with large numbers of teams competing at a single venue. Fixture scheduling for girls' softball can present a challenge, but the nature of the activity - played on outfielders rather than squares - means most clubs can accommodate additional games with careful planning.

## Schools and community

Thanks to funding from partners including [Chance to Shine](#), Cheshire Cricket Board connect with thousands of girls across educational settings each year. In addition to the 'mixed' primary school programmes, CCB deliver 'girls only' sessions to a range of secondary schools, combining curricular and extracurricular coaching with leadership activities and softball festivals. The competitive element of these programmes relies heavily on the good will of our affiliated clubs, who offer free use of their facilities to host festivals and matches during the summer. The [CCB Community Coaching scheme](#) follows a similar pattern, with initial sessions delivered 'on site' to groups including Girl Guides before transitioning the participants to local clubs.



## Women's Softball

Softball cricket is one of the fastest growing women's sports in the UK and the number of female players and teams in Cheshire continues to surge. At the time of publication, 32 clubs were competing in either the [Cheshire Women's Cricket League](#), the [Derbyshire and Cheshire Cricket League](#) or the [Liverpool Competition Women and Girls League](#), while many other attend one of 20 Softball Festivals organised by CCB each year. Women's softball is not restricted to the summer season however, with CCB Indoor Leagues providing a competitive playing opportunity throughout the winter. There were seven indoor leagues in 2022 (with 39 teams across 5 venues) with plans to expand this activity in the coming years, subject to the availability of sports halls and a need to ensure Cheshire clubs can also access quality indoor provision during the winter.

## Hardball Cricket

Women and Girls hardball cricket is already well established in Cheshire. The [Cheshire Women's Cricket League](#) is recognised nationally as a leading organisation, while the feeder Cheshire Girls Cricket League (CGCL) - which has both hardball and softball playing offers – is expanding at a rapid rate. The current position in our County set out below.



### Girls Hardball

Though many young female cricketers have expressed a desire to continue along the softball pathway, there are equal numbers who wish to try their hand at hardball cricket, hoping to one day emulate their heroes like Cheshire and England's [Sophie Ecclestone](#). There are now 26 affiliated clubs in Cheshire with a girls' hardball section,<sup>10</sup> with 15 playing competitively in the East or West Division of the CGCL. This competition looks set to expand three-fold over the coming years, with a further 30 girls hardball teams planned around the County.

### Women's Hardball

The [Cheshire Women's Cricket League](#) is the jewel in the County's crown. The format of the CWCL continues to evolve - *Division One is played over 40 overs, Division 4 fixtures are T20 for example* - indicating a willingness from league officials to engage with, and listen to, the view of their players and member clubs.

Such has been the success of the CWCL that teams from neighbouring counties continue to apply for membership, with nine non-Cheshire clubs currently included. While this exported demand is good for the profile of the league, it can (and does) place additional strain on facilities, with all new enquires carefully considered by the league executive. The location of prospective cross-border teams is another factor for consideration, and some applications have been rejected on the grounds that the travel time for existing CWCL member clubs would be too great.



<sup>10</sup> Appendix 2: Women and Girls Participation Offers in Cheshire



As interest in women's hardball cricket continues to grow, many players have expressed a desire to receive additional coaching to aid their development. In winter 2022/3, Cheshire Cricket Board established 'Women's hardball training' and a Women's Hardball indoor league, which were open to players of all abilities. These pilot sessions were fully booked and CCB intend to develop these offers further over the coming years, subject to sports hall availability.

### Developing W&G Cricket (what we need)

As interest in Women and Girls' cricket soars – *there are an additional 115 teams planned over the next five years* - the pressure on the existing facility infrastructure in Cheshire will continue to grow. Our [W&G Facility Survey](#) asked clubs to communicate 'what they need' from their facilities to attract and retain female members. The survey responses were combined with data from Club Audits and Club Development Plans to provide a comprehensive list of future facility projects (see table below).

Facility requirement	Future projects (next 5 years) <sup>11</sup>
New / updated changing spaces	49
New / updated toilets	27
Ground Hire / additional pitch	11
Non turf match and practice facility	9
Modernise social spaces	8
Other	New pavilion (x2), Roll on batting cage, improved drainage, storage for female equipment

The primary concern for [softball teams](#) is access to outfield, and while most clubs can accommodate growth through careful scheduling, some insist their grounds are already 'at capacity' and have expressed a desire for a **second venue**.

*"Interest in girls' cricket is increasing rapidly but we are struggling to accommodate all the games. Some 'standby' pitch options would be amazing."*

**Hale Barns CC**



<sup>11</sup> Based on responses to the W&G Facility Survey and annual Club Audits

The extra footfall created by more softball teams brings welcome revenue to clubs on training and match days, but also creates additional pressures on pavilions and other ancillary facilities. The need for more **female toilets** and the creation of **family-orientated social spaces** all featured heavily in the Club Audits and our Facility Survey replies, with clubs acknowledging a need to create a more welcoming environment for their female players, members and guests.

*“We want to see the ladies’ toilets modernised and to be able to spend time in a female-friendly social area that doesn’t seem so male dominated.”* **Cheshire Club**

Access to **high quality grass pitches** is a primary concern for Women and Girls’ hardball fixtures. While most CGCL matches are played in midweek, the CWCL is played predominantly on Sunday afternoons, leading to clashes with senior men’s league and cup fixtures. Those clubs with established women’s teams often give priority to their female cricketers, although some of the ‘emerging’ women’s teams are forced to look for alternative home venues or agree to play away.

*“Pitch availability is an issue for us. We get to use our home ground occasionally, but we are forced to use other grounds for most women’s and junior girls’ games.”* **Didsbury CC**

According to our W&G Facility Survey there are a further 63 hardball teams planned over the next five years. While these figures may be aspirational, even a small increase in the number of teams will present a capacity challenge at some venues, as clubs are forced to rest and rotate their grass pitches to meet the additional demand.



Data from the most recent Playing Pitch Strategies<sup>12</sup>

indicates there is spare capacity for hardball cricket in midweek and on Sundays across some Local Authorities, although this picture can vary significantly from one club to another. ‘Overplay’ is common in Stockport and Wirral, meaning clubs located in these Boroughs are less likely to be able to start (or expand) their hardball playing offers without further investment into new pitches.

*“Conversations at our annual rules meeting are now often centered not around how much cricket clubs want to play but how much they will realistically be able to play when considering what ground availability they have.”* **Caroline Sheridan, CWCL Chairperson**

<sup>12</sup> Appendix 3: Playing Pitch Strategies in Cheshire

The nature of hardball cricket means players require a safe and sheltered place to change. Except for a few larger multi-sport venues, very few Cheshire clubs have dedicated 'female changing', while the configuration of some older pavilions presents safeguarding issues, with changing blocks adjoining the men's shower or toilet facilities. In their W&G Survey responses, 49 clubs nominated **changing room upgrades** as their number one facility priority.

*"The whole of the changing end of the pavilion (changing rooms, showers) is geared towards men's cricket. Lines of sight and general privacy need much attention as does the whole layout. At present there is no provision for disabled access either." **Alvanley CC***

Comments like the one above from Alvanley CC were commonplace, with clubs communicating a desire to **modernise their pavilions** through the W&G Survey, Club Audits and Development Plans. Major rebuilds or extensions may be out of reach financially for some organisations, but there are many incremental changes (such as converting 'open' shower spaces into cubicles, the addition of personal changing lockers) that can be made on a smaller budget while still helping to enhance the playing and social experience for female cricketers.



As women's hardball cricket continues to grow, so does the need to invest in **additional practice facilities**. Through the W&G Survey, we identified nine clubs who wish to install new practice nets, or to refurbish existing facilities deemed no longer fit for purpose.

**Non-Turf practice areas** are not only crucial for player development, but also enable clubs to increase the capacity on training nights, with some groups utilising the outfield while others practice safely in the nets. Clubs looking to invest in this area are directed to the [ECB's list of approved non-turf suppliers](#), with the County Grants Fund one potential avenue of support (see below).

### **W&G investment Opportunities (how we get there)**

The popularity of Women and Girls' cricket is testament to the ambition displayed by players, officials and volunteers throughout the recreational game in Cheshire. To sustain this interest and enable future growth, significant investment into facilities will be required, with a number of solutions identified below:

**Development Planning** – Through our team of W&G Development Officers, we aim to work closely with all affiliated clubs to ensure their Development Plans reflect the needs of the 'whole club' and that the priorities of female cricketers are clearly communicated. Having female representation on





club committees is a vital first step to achieving this. Clubs will also be signposted to the [ECB Creating Welcoming Environments guide](#), which gives helpful hints on how to become more inclusive, in addition to providing approximate costings for small, medium and large-scale facility projects.

**ECB County Grants Fund** – Our W&G survey revealed a need to invest in female-friendly changing, toilets and social spaces. We aim to use the CGF proactively to develop these facilities, where necessary conditioning grants to ensure clubs give priority to their W&G teams at ‘peak times’. Some projects are smaller in nature, but many clubs will require the maximum £10,000 grant to make the modifications needed. With at least 49 clubs looking to upgrade changing rooms before 2028<sup>13</sup>, we will need to draw heavily on the CGF while also signposting clubs to other sources of potential funding.

**Invest in grass pitches** – Cheshire Cricket Board have four [ECB County Pitch Advisors](#) and a proactive [County Groundsman’s Association](#). With support from the Cheshire Clubs’ Cricket Committee, we aim to subsidise the cost of the Pitch Advisory Service to encourage more clubs to take advantage of this resource. Once launched, clubs will be expected to use the Pitch Power App to benchmark and better understand the quality of their squares and outfield. By investing time and expertise into their playing tables, the quality of squares will increase, enabling more fixtures to take place.

**NTPs** – Investing in Non-turf match and practice facilities is priority for CCB. Non-turf match pitches can support up to 60 games per season, alleviating the pressure on existing grass squares, while non-turf practice facilities can support the development of hardball cricketers at all levels. Through our partnership with the [Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#), Cheshire have benefitted from the installation of five non-turf match pitches to date, with further installations earmarked in the future. As part of the scheme, CCB are charged with activating each site and it is intended that some will become host venues for additional W&G teams. Clubs with a competitive female team(s) can also apply to the County Grants Fund for an NTP.

**Grounds for Hire** - With the pressure on grounds a growing concern for many clubs, CCB have created a [Grounds for Hire](#) page on the Board website. This was launched ahead of the 2023 season and aims to connect those struggling to accommodate fixtures with any clubs that have spare capacity. The Board have also created [WhatsApp groups](#) for each of the Cheshire districts, encouraging club officials to communicate on several topics including ground hire.



<sup>13</sup> Based on responses to the W&G Facility Survey and annual Club Audits



**All Weather venues** - Where cricket clubs play at multi-sport sites, opportunities exist to export some softball play onto suitable 'all weather' surfaces, helping teams to 'get the game on' when poor weather or lack of outfield space might otherwise intervene. A recent example of this was the successful CCB Women's Autumn League, which took place under floodlights at Timperley Sports Club in 2021. Where clubs are willing to offer facilities of this nature 'in kind' it can provide a significant boost to participation programmes.

**ECB / Partner agency funding** - While softball cricket is generally considered the most affordable format of the game, families can still incur start-up costs

(clothing, club membership fees) which can present a barrier to participation. CCB will continue to signpost both clubs and individuals to any grant funding opportunities as they arise (for example the ECB Inspired to Play Fund) to ensure the game can continue to be accessible and inclusive for people from every background.

Transform Women & Girls Cricket: Summary	
County Priorities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✍ Grow the number of girls only entry-level programmes (All Stars and Dynamos) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✍ Increase the number of teams in the Cheshire Girls Cricket League</li> <li>✍ Support the Cheshire Women's League in their development aspirations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✍ Expand the CCB indoor playing offers</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
What we need	How we get there
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✍ 10 additional grounds / pitches</li> <li>✍ 47 New (or upgraded) changing spaces</li> <li>✍ 26 New (or upgraded) female toilets</li> <li>✍ 8 social space refurbishments</li> <li>✍ 5 Non-turf practice facilities</li> <li>✍ 4 Non-turf match pitches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✍ Use the <b>ECB County Grant Fund</b> to develop female-friendly changing, toilets and social spaces</li> <li>✍ Launch the <b>CCB Ground Hire</b> scheme to identify available pitches</li> <li>✍ <b>Install more NTPs</b> with funding via the GMCA.</li> <li>✍ Invest in the <b>Pitch Advisory Service</b> to maximise the existing facility stock</li> </ul>



## Priority Area 2: Developing Cheshire's Player Pathway

Cheshire Cricket Board operate a comprehensive [Player Pathway](#) for participants of all ages and abilities. For players to enjoy their experience and maximise their talents they need access to safe and high-quality facilities at every stage of their development. For most cricketers their playing journey begins within a club or community-based setting, however for those attending Cheshire Pathway courses the onus is on the County Board to ensure these sessions are accessible, affordable and delivered at venues that are fit for purpose.



Like many National Counties, Cheshire do not have a dedicated home venue and so we rely on short and medium-term hire agreements at educational sites (for indoor courses) and the 'good will' of affiliated clubs for our outdoor representative fixtures. Maintaining strong relationships with our host venues is crucial therefore, as we seek to establish some minimum requirements for each site and look to secure investment to improve the facilities for all users.

The analysis in this section considers both the **indoor** and **outdoor** aspects of our Player Pathway, as we aim to communicate the current facility landscape and the improvements needed to ensure we continue to deliver sessions that *"enable every player to reach their full cricketing potential"*.<sup>14</sup>

### CCB Player Pathway (what we have)

#### Indoor Pathway

Taking the academic year as our starting point, the indoor element of the CCB Player Pathway commences with the [Autumn Coaching Programme](#). Open to boys and girls of all abilities, the Autumn programme runs for six weeks in September and October across a range of independent and state secondary school venues. The sessions are hugely popular<sup>15</sup> with high-quality coaching offered during a window when most clubs have concluded their playing offers for the year.

From late October, the Pathway switches to Performance mode with the start of the [Advanced Coaching Programme](#). These sessions are for children nominated by their clubs or CCB coaches, together with those who impressed on the Autumn courses (or Summer Holiday camps). CCB run more than 40 Advanced Courses each year (including several girls only sessions) at nine indoor venues countywide<sup>16</sup>, with more than 1,000 boys and girls taking part.

<sup>14</sup> Appendix 4: Cheshire Cricket Board Countywide Plan Priority Areas

<sup>15</sup> Appendix 5: CCB Pathway Courses – participation trends

<sup>16</sup> Appendix 6: List of CCB Indoor Pathway Venues

Indoor Activity	Sessions / teams	Current facilities used
CCB Autumn, Advanced, District, Excellence Courses	117 courses (14 girls only) countywide from Sept-April	Various school sites (see appendix for full list)
Boys EP Training programme	Weekly from Oct-April	King's School Macclesfield
Girls EP (&) Academy Training Programme	Weekly from Oct-April	The Grange School (Hartford)
NCCA Men's Indoor Training Men's Seniors (Over 50s,60s, 70s)	2 sessions annually Weekly from Feb-April	Total Cricket (Ashton) Birkenhead Park CC
Disabled Training - Regional	Weekly from Oct-Dec	Birkenhead Park CC Bridgewater High School
Disabled Training - Central	Fortnightly from Jan-April	The Grange School (Hartford)

At the conclusion of the Advanced Courses in late January, some children are selected for the next tier of the Player Pathway – the **District and Excellence Level courses**. These courses run until mid-April and help to inform selection for the CCB District and County Age Groups teams. Typically, around 700 children take part in these sessions each year, with District Courses operating across multiple venues and the Excellence Courses at a designated single venue for each age group.

Each year, high performing boys and girls aged 13 to 18 are selected for Cheshire's **Emerging Player Programme**. The EP Boys work closely with neighbours Lancashire while the EP Girls feed into the **North-West Thunder** training programme. *We also run a Girls Academy as a feeder to the EPP.* The indoor element of these programmes includes three hours of contact time each week from October to April, with technical coaching supplemented by sessions in psychology and



strength and conditioning. Access to additional facilities such as classrooms and a working gym are an essential part of the planning around venue selection for EP programmes ('see what we need').

The Cheshire Pathway is not simply a 'youth programme' and it is important to acknowledge the demand placed on facilities by our other representative teams, namely the two **Men's NCCA** senior sides, the **County Over 50s/60s/70s** teams and our **County Disabled teams**.

The Men's NCCA squads have a very limited indoor schedule, holding two sessions pre-season sessions for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> X1 players at Total Cricket in Ashton before moving outdoors. The 'Overs' are a little more active in the winter, with sessions taking place at Birkenhead Park CC's Indoor Cricket Centre from February through to the start of the outdoor season in April.



The **County Disabled Squad** comprises both softball and hardball cricketers, and they attend sessions jointly in the Autumn – at Birkenhead Park CC and Bridgewater High School – before switching to a central county venue (Grange School, Hartford) in the new year. The fortnightly sessions at The Grange are three hours in length, combining elements of technical, tactical, physical and mental player development.

**Cheshire Cobras**, the County Visually Impaired team, do not host seasonal indoor training but have delivered a series of taster sessions at selected venues countywide to raise awareness of VI cricket and recruit additional squad members.

## Outdoor Pathway

The **CCB Summer Holiday Programme** is another entry point to the Children's Pathway. Delivered at affiliated clubs throughout the County, these week-long sessions are open to boys and girls of all abilities. Host venues are subject to an annual risk assessment<sup>17</sup> and each club receives a weekly hire fee in return for exclusive access to facilities including practice nets, indoor social space and changing, outfield space and (for hardball courses) grass wickets or NTPs on the square. The sessions are incredibly popular<sup>18</sup> and act as a feeder for some of our Indoor Pathway courses, with talented children signposted to the Advanced programme.

Outdoor Activity	Sessions / teams	Current facilities used
CCB Summer Holiday Programme	16 courses over 5 weeks 80 days at host venues	Various club venues (see appendix for breakdown)
CYC District Match Programme	12 boys and 6 girls district teams 64 match days	King's School Macclesfield Sandbach School Various club venues
CYC County Age Group match programme	7 boys and 5 girls county teams 73 home match days (plus cup rounds)	Various club venues Northwich CC (hub) Warrington CC (hub)
EP Match Programme (Boys and Girls)	Minimum 4 home match days	Club venues Sale CC
NCCA match programme	2 men's teams (1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> ), 4 seniors teams (O50s, 2 x O60s, O70s) 44 home match days	Various club venues (see appendix for breakdown)
County Disability match programme	D40 and two Super 9s teams Cheshire Cobras VI team 23 home match days	Various club venues Cheadle Hulme CC / Cheadle Hulme Ladybridge CC

<sup>17</sup> Appendix 7: CCB Outdoor Risk Assessment

<sup>18</sup> Appendix 5: CCB Pathway Courses participation trends





The **CYC District Match Programme** is substantial, with a combined 18 teams competing across 64 rounds of fixtures each summer. Organised in a Festival format, matches are played over both 40 and 20 overs, with boys and girls teams competing at U11, U12, U13, U14 and U15 level. The Festival relies largely on the ‘good will’ of host clubs, although a small annual budget is set aside by Cheshire Youth Cricket to reimburse volunteer ground staff at venues hosting a large volume of games.

The **CCB County Age Group** match programme is equally comprehensive, with 12 boys and girls teams representing Cheshire from U10 to U18 level. Most Cheshire CAG teams play in the ECB ‘North’ group in addition to national knock-out competitions and inter-county friendlies. Excluding additional cup fixtures, the CAG teams play a minimum of 77 home games each calendar year. With no central County ground in Cheshire, fixtures take place at club venues, with a small number of sites (including Warrington CC and Northwich CC) acting as ‘hubs’ for teams competing in the ECB Performance age groups and the **Cheshire EP squads**. Sale CC in Trafford – which received investment from ECB towards a new pavilion in 2019 is currently on the circuit for the North-West Thunder home fixtures.

Between the senior Men’s and ‘Overs’ squads that play under the Cheshire Cricket banner, there are 44 home match days each season. The **Cheshire Men’s First X1** are the County’s flagship team, competing across multiple white and red ball formats in the **NCCA Championship**. The red ball competition takes place over three days (weather and result permitting), placing a unique set of demands on host venues, particularly in terms of wicket preparation. Accordingly, the Cheshire CCC committee have devised a set of **Ground Requirements**<sup>19</sup> for all NCCA fixtures and a copy of this document is included in the Appendix.

Cheshire’s **Disability Teams** have enjoyed considerable success in recent years, winning multiple trophies at regional and national level. England Learning Disability captain **Chris Edwards (BEM)** coaches the County D40 (hard ball) and Super 9s (soft ball) squads, who play in the Northern Divisions of **the National Disabled Cricket Leagues**. Talented players from the D40 Leagues are also signposted to the ECB Disability Premier League structure, with several Cheshire players featuring regularly at this level of competition. As with all other representative fixtures, Cheshire’s home matches are played at

A purple and yellow poster for the Cheshire Cobras V.I.C.C. (Visually Impaired Cricket Club). The top half is purple with yellow text, and the bottom half is yellow with purple text. A large white circle on the right contains a stylized illustration of a cobra. The text on the poster includes the club name, a list of fixture dates, and contact information.

**OUR CHESHIRE COBRAS V.I.C.C. NEED YOU!**

Cheshire Cobras V.I.C.C.

Fixture Dates:

- 23rd April
- 7th May
- 28th May
- 2nd July
- 23rd July
- 6th August
- 20th August
- 3rd September
- 17th September

**CHESHIRE COBRAS VISUALLY IMPAIRED CRICKET CLUB**  
If interested, please contact: [fixtures@cheshirecobras.co.uk](mailto:fixtures@cheshirecobras.co.uk)

<sup>19</sup> Appendix 8: Ground requirements for NCCA fixtures

club venues, although there are a small number of additional considerations and adjustments required depending on the nature of the fixture (see 'what we need'). The **Cheshire Cobras VI team** play around 10 home fixtures each year, with regular venues including Cheadle Hulme CC and Cheadle Hulme Ladybridge CC. When selecting grounds, the Cobras look for venues with good public transport links and away from busy (loud) main roads.

## Player Pathway (what we need)

### Indoor Pathway

Access to high quality indoor facilities is essential at every stage of the Pathway so our players can develop their skills and confidence in a safe and inclusive environment. Cheshire Cricket Board do not own a County indoor venue and are reliant on hire agreements with school and leisure operators for all Pathway sessions. Historically, when selecting venues for our **Children's Pathway** courses, the following factors were taken into account:

- 📍 **Location** - Must be accessible for players and parents
- 📍 **Availability** – Able to book sessions at 'peak times' (evenings and weekends)
- 📍 **Quality** – Nets, flooring, lighting and other facilities required for hardball cricket
- 📍 **Safety** – Risk Assessment<sup>20</sup> with safeguarding considerations
- 📍 **Cost** – Negotiate competitive hourly rates through block bookings

One of the key considerations when selecting indoor venues is the **location** of each sports hall, as we aim to minimise travel time (and costs) for parents of children on the Pathway. The **CCB Travel Distance Matrix**<sup>21</sup> is a tool we have developed to assist with this process. The Matrix charts the distance between each of our affiliated clubs and all the venues used for Pathway sessions – the aim being to ensure there is at least one venue within 15 miles of each club. *We acknowledge this is not an exact science as the children travel from their 'home' and not club venue, but the data has proved useful in confirming which postcodes are currently better served than others.*

Aligned to the Travel Distance Matrix is our **Player Data Sheet**, a live document containing information about all the unique participants on the Children's Pathway. The 2023 data revealed that one third of our Pathway Players come from clubs in Greater Manchester (Stockport, Trafford and Tameside) while a



<sup>20</sup> Appendix 9: CCB Indoor Facility Risk Assessment

<sup>21</sup> Appendix 10:: CCB Travel Distance Matrix



further 20 per cent reside in the Macclesfield area. Additionally, we know from [waiting list](#) data that two of our centres – Wilmslow High School and Blessed Thomas Holford – are often oversubscribed. This analysis informs us of a need to increase the capacity for Pathway sessions in the North and East of the County, either by adding additional courses at existing sites or sourcing other venues in these postcodes.

Activity	Future facility requirements
CCB Indoor Courses: Autumn, Advanced, District, Excellence	Additional venue (or increased capacity) in North / East of County to meet demand. <i>All centres to meet minimum standards from CCB Facility Audit</i>
Boys EP Training programme	Central venue with classroom and gym, ideally with full length run-ups and access to bowling machines
Girls EP & Girls Academy Indoor Training Programme	Central venue with classroom and gym, ideally with full length run-ups and access to bowling machines
NCCA Men's Indoor Training	Indoor venue with full length run-ups and bowling machine
Disabled Training - Regional Disabled Training - Central	Additional indoor sites near to Super 1s Hubs and ECB Champion Clubs – venues with good transport links

Though course location is key, the **quality** of each venue is arguably of equal if not greater importance. As part of this CFS, we have developed a new **Indoor Facility Audit**<sup>22</sup> which sets out some minimum standards for venues hosting CCB Pathway Courses. The document outlines the basic facility requirements for all indoor centres, with a further list of 'desirables' aligned to certain courses - for example Excellence and EP programmes require access to a classroom (psychology) and a gym (strength and conditioning). Many of the venues used on our Indoor Pathway have excellent facilities, but still fall short of the purpose-built centres owned by first class counties.

*"It would be great for Cheshire to have a purpose-built cricket centre that would be the base for all CAG programmes and Regional EPP centre. They are currently using multipurpose sports halls where mats, nets & run up space isn't ideal."*

**Paul Hindmarch, North West Thunder Regional Talent Manager**

At an average cost of £55 per hour<sup>23</sup> to hire a Sports Hall in Cheshire, **affordability** is a consideration in all venue decisions, as ultimately some of this cost will be passed onto the participants. In line with our [County EDI Plan](#) we aim to make all Pathway sessions accessible and affordable, with discounted course fees for families receiving Universal Credit and other payment plans available on request. Hire fees have risen considerably in recent years and we must continue to be agile and look for the best value solutions for our players without compromising on the quality of the experience.

With only a handful of indoor sessions each year, the men's **NCCA teams** have fewer considerations when it comes to selecting and booking indoor venues. The squad currently train at Total Cricket in Ashton (which is just outside the county border) and while exporting this demand is not ideal, the purpose-built cricket facility (extended run ups, access to bowling machines) is deemed more suitable than some of the Cheshire-based centres. Indoor training for the 'Overs' squads has evolved

<sup>22</sup> Appendix 11: CCB Indoor Facility Audit

<sup>23</sup> Based on 2022/2023 hire agreements with 12 indoor venues

**Cheshire Cricket – Disability Squad  
(Super 9s & D40)**



**Every Sunday  
Starting January 23rd 2022**

**Time: 10am – 12pm**

**Location: The Grange School, Bradburns  
Ln, Northwich CW8 1LU.**

**Want to get involved?**  
**Contact: Chris Edwards**  
**Chris.edwards@cheshirecricketboard.co.uk**  
**07799503377**




in recent years - the Birkenhead Park CC indoor centre has been a popular host venue due to having availability during the day (the majority of players are retired) when educational sites are occupied.

The **County Disabled** teams have a structured indoor programme to aid their development for the summer season. This commences in October across two sites (East and West) with the players coming together at a central venue (The Grange, Hartford) on a fortnightly basis between January and April. Key considerations for venue selection include good transport links (motorways, rail and bus routes) and the cost of facility hire. The CCB Disability Teams would like to run additional indoor sessions in future, ideally located close to Super 1s hubs or ECB Champion Clubs<sup>24</sup>, to aid with the transition of players from the club and community network into the County talent pathway.

## Outdoor Pathway

With approximately 290 ‘home’ match days each summer - plus additional County and District training sessions - the demand placed on the facility infrastructure at Cheshire clubs is substantial. In the following section, we will explore in greater detail the facility requirements for Cheshire’s Outdoor Pathway and the actions we intend to take to protect and enhance these facilities for future generations. This includes developing the current stock of pitches, pavilions and practice facilities in addition to the creation of several regional ‘Performance Hubs,’ as we aim to deliver strategic investment into venues capable of hosting a large number of representative fixtures each year, with a particular focus on the development of Women and Girls cricket.

Activity	Future Facility Requirements
CCB Summer Holiday Programme	Availability of club venues across five consecutive days – invest in facilities including indoor social space and non-turf pitches
CYC District Match Programme	Host grounds with multiple-squares, investment into changing rooms, access and arrival and fine turf schemes
CYC County Age Group match programme	Creation of ‘Performance Hubs’ capable of hosting a high volume of CAG fixtures, develop ancillary facilities for women and girls
EP Match Programme (Boys and Girls)	As above for CAG match programme – EP teams would use new Hub sites or existing club venues with best quality pitches
NCCA match programme	As above for EP Match Programme, County Club also have separate host grounds requirement form
County Disability match programme	Club venues with accessible toilets and changing facilities. Ample car parking

<sup>24</sup> Appendix 12: List of Super 1s venues and ECB Champion Clubs and their locations

The **Outdoor Facility Audit**<sup>25</sup> was devised to determine the suitability of venues used for CCB Pathway sessions including Summer Holiday Courses and boys and girls' representative fixtures. Used in conjunction with our Outdoor Risk Assessment, the Audit establishes a set of minimum facility requirements for each venue based on the nature of the session being delivered. The Audits can also be used to generate feedback for those clubs wishing to host CCB Pathway sessions in future and act as an evidence base for potential investment. *Some of the considerations for venues used at each stage of the CCB Outdoor Pathway (what we need) are listed below:*

**Summer Holiday Programme** – The enduring success of the CCB Summer Holiday programme owes much to the quality of the provision at our host venues, with clubs paid a weekly hire fee<sup>26</sup> for access to facilities both on and off the field. All host venues must be Clubmark accredited, and other minimum requirements for Holiday sessions include the use of non-turf practice facilities, daily access to the outfield and a suitably sized indoor space (to shelter from wet or excessively warm weather). CCB also run a small number of 'invite only' hard ball courses, for which use of the square (either



grass or non-turf pitches) is required. Another consideration is 'course location' and we intend to use the *Travel Distance Matrix* to ensure an equitable spread of Summer Holiday venues, with each course situated no further than 15 miles for one of our other affiliated clubs.

**District match programme** – The outdoor District programme is played in festival format across two rounds of fixtures, the first during the Whit (May) school holidays and the second at the end of July. School and club venues with multiple squares are deemed most suitable for District fixtures, enabling two or more games to take place simultaneously. Other considerations for District Cricket include ample car parking (matches are always well attended) and changing space for four teams. These requirements are highlighted on the Outdoor Facility Audit, along with the need to ensure grounds are spread throughout the county to minimise travel time for parents where possible.

**CAG match programme** – Securing venues for the 73 CAG 'home' fixtures is an annual challenge, with ground availability on Sundays at a premium due to the expansion of women's (hardball) cricket

<sup>25</sup> [CCB Host Club report](#)

<sup>26</sup> Clubs receive £550 per week (figures as at 2023)



and a growing number of men's friendly teams. Scheduling for weekday fixtures is easier, but a requirement to play on the best wickets (ideally in the centre of the square) places additional demands on our volunteer ground staff - *CYC set aside a small annual budget to help pay for pitch preparation*. To combat this, we aim to develop several regional **Performance Hubs** at strategically chosen club sites around the County. Using the *ECB Transform Fund* as the driver, the chosen clubs will receive financial investment into facilities (on and off the field) in return for hosting an agreed number of CAG sessions each summer. Cheshire's Hub venues will be expected to prioritise female playing offers for club and county cricketers, contributing to the gamewide aim of 'Transforming Women and Girls Cricket'.

**EP Match Programme** – Owing to a smaller number of fixtures, the Emerging Player programme places less demands on Cheshire's facility infrastructure. Additionally, some of these 'home' matches take place outside of the county with Cheshire's EP Boys teams combining with Lancashire, and the Girls' group feeding into the Regional North-West Thunder team. These high-profile fixtures are always well attended, not only by friends and family but scouts from the ECB Talent teams, and venue selection is therefore crucial to enable the players to showcase their talents. Accordingly, the Counties will look to identify those grounds with consistently high pitch marks, ample warm-up facilities (multi-lane nets, wide flat outfield) and welcoming social and changing spaces.

**NCCA Men's Teams** – The Men's NCCA teams have developed a bespoke **Grounds Criteria Sheet**<sup>27</sup> which is used to inform venue selection for their red and white ball fixtures. There are a number of regular venues on the County circuit, however the list is reviewed annually by the CCCC committee and new grounds are considered where they can demonstrate an ability to meet the requirements. Some of these considerations are listed below:



- 🔧 **Geography:** look to play countywide and accommodate opponents (minimize travel time)
- 🔧 **Type of fixture** – T20, 50 over or three-day – can the pitch meet the demands?
- 🔧 **Facilities (off-field):** dressing rooms, catering (one and three day), scoreboard, spectators (catering, toilets etc.), car parking, practice nets, Wi-Fi
- 🔧 **Facilities (pitch):** quality of wicket and outfield, covers, sightscreens (black and white), availability of ground staff – *use annual league pitch markings*
- 🔧 **Feedback:** player/member/spectators/officials - formal and informal
- 🔧 **Track record:** player/member/spectator feedback

The demands placed on host venues for NCCA fixtures can be far greater than those for a typical children's District or CAG game, however the prestige of hosting the County's flagship men's team continues to provide ample motivation.

<sup>27</sup> Appendix 8: CCCC Grounds Criteria Sheet

**Cheshire Disability Teams** – The Cheshire D40 and Super 9s squads are an integral part of the County Pathway, enabling those with a disability to play representative cricket. Cheshire compete in the Northern Divisions of the National Disability Cricket League, which is split into both hard ball (D40) and softball (Super 9s) competitions. The requirements for Cheshire’s Disability teams are not too dissimilar to those of our District and CAG sides, albeit with some minor adjustments as Head Coach Chris Edwards explains:

*“Access to a decent wicket is a minimum ask, but we are more concerned with some of the ‘off field’ facilities, in particular the quality (and location) of any car parking, whether the pavilion has suitable disabled access and the size of dressing rooms and toilets. We are fortunate to have a number of excellent facilities in Cheshire, but further investment will be needed to bring other clubs up to date and make them truly accessible for all participants in future.”*



The **Cheshire Cobras VI team** play a mix of competitive and friendly fixtures each summer in addition to hosting several outdoor training sessions. The team are based in Stockport, with Cheadle Hulme Ladybridge CC and Cheadle Hulme CC two regular host venues. In the case of Cheadle Hulme CC, the design for their non turf practice facility (installed in 2023) was chosen specifically with the Cobras in mind, the lighter coloured playing surface deemed more suitable for visually impaired players. Other considerations for the Cobras include sourcing venues close to bus and railway routes (most players cannot drive) or ‘quieter’ venues with fewer external distractions such as busy main roads or other sports teams on site.

### Pathway investment Opportunities (how we get there)

Building and maintaining strong relationships with our ‘host venues’ will be critical to the longevity of Cheshire’s Player Pathway, with the current indoor and outdoor training and match programme exclusively reliant on hired facilities. A move towards ‘Performance Hubs’ will help to alleviate some of the demand on the club network and this is one of the solutions we have highlighted below as we look to build a sustainable model for future generations.

**Performance Hubs (Transform Fund)** - Following consultation with Cheshire's Men’s and Women’s Performance Managers, it was determined that a move away from the current venue selection model and towards the use of regional ‘Performance Hubs’ is a desired future outcome. Securing venues for representative games has become increasingly challenging, and the presence of several



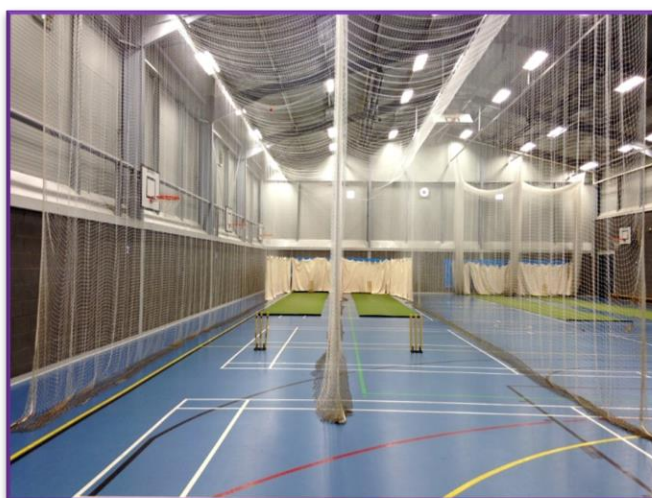
Performance Hubs will ease the burden on the current stock of facilities. [The ECB Transform Fund](#) will be used to secure significant investment into a small number of Cheshire sites where an outstanding Women and Girls outcome can be demonstrated. With a growing number of female District and CAG teams, a blossoming relationship with North-West Thunder and the planned reintroduction of the Cheshire Women's County team from 2024, there is plenty of evidence for ECB investment in Cheshire. Two potential Hub venues include Northwich CC and Warrington CC (clubs that already host a large volume of W&G fixtures each year), while a further venue to the North/East of the County is a priority given more than 50% of our Pathway players live in this region.



**ECB County Grants Fund** – We will continue to use the CGF to help modernise, improve and transform facilities at clubs in line with future needs. We aim to be proactive with the CGF and encourage applications under the 'Enhanced Facilities' theme, investing in priority projects such as changing rooms and non-turf practice facilities at venues hosting a high volume of Pathway sessions.

**Invest in grass pitches** – By investing time and expertise into the playing tables of our host clubs, the quality and carrying capacity of squares will improve, enabling more fixtures to take place. CCB have four [ECB County Pitch Advisors](#) and through support from the Cheshire Clubs' Cricket Committee, we aim to subsidise the cost of this service for affiliated clubs. Clubs wishing to host representative games will also be expected to use the new Pitch Power App once launched, to benchmark and better understand the quality of their squares and outfield. Where the subsequent report highlights areas for improvement, CCB will consider further requests for financial support.

**New / Upgraded facilities** – Using the [Indoor Facility Audit](#) as our evidence base, we aim to open (or continue) discussions with host venues around facility upgrades to help meet the needs of our players. Examples include increasing the number of net lanes to allow more hard ball activity to take place or installing a central divider so multiple games can be played simultaneously. Where CCB or the venue are not able to fund upgrades directly, we aim to facilitate discussions with other stakeholders (ECB, Local Authorities, other NGBs) in an effort to source the required funding. Where plans are submitted for a new sports hall, CCB aim to influence the design to ensure the inclusion of [cricket-specific flooring, netting and lighting](#)<sup>28</sup>. Securing access to new venues (particularly those in prime post codes) is a priority for CCB, either via long-term hire agreements or through Service Level Agreements where CCB have helped secure funding towards the facility. *Where an outstanding Women and Girls outcome can be demonstrated, there*



<sup>28</sup> Appendix 13: ECB Technical Specifications for Indoor Facilities

may be potential to apply to the [ECB Transform Fund](#) in partnership with other stakeholders.

**Venue selection** – Combined with the Player Data Sheet, the [CCB Travel Distance Matrix](#) provides an evidence base from which to determine some prime locations to host our Pathway courses. With a better understanding of ‘where our players come from’ we can address any capacity challenges at indoor venues and open discussions to hire additional ones. The development of the [Outdoor Facility Audit](#) provides a useful strategic tool for determining which venues best serve the needs of our players. We aim to combine information from the Outdoor Audit with other CCB documents (including the Travel Matrix, NCCA Ground Selection Form, League pitch markings) to create a more comprehensive grading system for all levels of host venues, which can also serve as an evidence base for future investment needs.

**Partnership Funding** – Cost should not be a barrier to participation and CCB have systems in place – such as bursaries, discounted course fees and payment plans - to promote inclusion throughout the Cheshire Pathway. We will continue to research other funding opportunities and identify any partners whose aspirations align with those of our Pathway. For example, the [Cheshire Clubs Cricket Committee](#) is a keen supporter of the County Disability teams, providing an annual grant to offset the cost of venue hire and any specialist equipment they may need.

Developing Cheshire’s Player Pathway: Summary	
County Priorities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🔧 Grow the number of boys and girls accessing CCB Development Courses (the Pathway)</li> <li>🔧 Ensure we have enough venues (indoors and out) to meet the demands of Pathway</li> <li>🔧 All venues continue to meet or exceed minimum standards (as per audits and risk assessments)</li> <li>🔧 Explore the development of ‘Performance Hubs’ to alleviate demand on other club venues</li> </ul>	
What we need	How we get there
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🔧 Creation of (up to) 3 outdoor Performance Hubs to host representative cricket, with a focus on W&amp;G cricket</li> <li>🔧 Secure use of (at least) one additional indoor centre in North / East of County – <i>to meet demand</i></li> <li>🔧 Develop existing host venues in line with CCB Facility Audit – including a ‘central’ indoor venue with appropriate flooring for Elite (EP) Players</li> <li>🔧 At least one indoor centre in East Cheshire to support the Disability Pathway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🔧 Apply to the <a href="#">ECB Transform Fund</a> to develop up to three Performance Hubs in North, East and Central locations (see Appendix for venue selection)</li> <li>🔧 Use the <a href="#">ECB County Grant Fund</a> to develop our existing (club) venues including Non-Turf practice facilities and female friendly changing.</li> <li>🔧 Support education providers to upgrade indoor facilities – share <a href="#">technical guidance</a> for ‘new build’ sports halls to ensure cricket is prioritised</li> <li>🔧 Invest in our current stock of grass pitches – Subsidise the cost of the <a href="#">Pitch Advisory Service</a> to encourage clubs to improve their squares and outfields.</li> </ul>

## Priority Area 3: Creating Welcoming Environments (Clubs)

The ECB's Inspiring Generations strategy is a five-year strategic plan which aims to connect communities and inspire current and future generations through cricket activity. One of the key priorities of the strategy is to increase the number of people playing cricket recreationally through a strong, sustainable and inclusive club network which ensures that everyone is made to feel welcome and an integral part of the club cricket landscape.



The ECB [Creating Welcoming Environments](#) guide is intended to provide guidance for cricket clubs to help make cricket facilities more inclusive and welcoming to all, by creating better environments for everyone using them and to encourage a more diverse range of people to get involved in the game at a recreational level. The guide is accompanied by a [Facilities Review Checklist](#) and a [Facilities Survey](#), enabling clubs to benchmark the quality of their current provision and seek feedback from officials, members and guests on the first impressions and overall feel of the club.

In this next section of the CFS, we will examine the current facility landscape at Cheshire clubs and where future investment is needed to create and maintain welcoming spaces for all. The analysis is divided into two parts (off-field and on-field) allowing us to highlight the facility priorities in each area, together with the steps we will take to ensure all members of our cricket family can confidently say “[cricket is a game for me](#)”.

### Current Club Landscape (what we have)

#### Participation trends

Cheshire clubs are responsible for a wide range of playing offers, each placing a unique set of demands on facilities. The table below shows the level of activity in the County as of April 2023.

Category	Number	Comments
Total number of affiliated clubs <i>Of which Clubmark accredited</i>	109 85	Plus some midweek teams with secondary affiliation
Clubs with W&G sections	64	Running weekly training in summer
Clubs running ECB National Programmes	75	72 All Stars, 33 Dynamos (30 both)
ECB Disability Champion Clubs	7	
Men's senior teams	734	League or friendly teams
Women's senior teams	53	Of which 32 softball, 21 hard ball
Junior teams	744	Data from 2022 season
Girls only junior teams	36	Of which 21 softball, 15 hard ball



With seven [ECB Disability Champion Clubs](#) currently operating in Cheshire (and others expressing interest in the scheme) the need to create accessible and inclusive indoor and outdoor spaces has never been greater. And with requests for ‘ground hire’ from rising numbers of casual and midweek teams, plus CCB-led school and community programmes culminating in ‘festival days’ at local clubs, it is not difficult to make the case for investment into our existing stock of club facilities.



Further to the above, Cheshire Cricket Board rely heavily on the affiliated club network to host our Outdoor Pathway sessions which include representative fixtures for our District, CAG, Senior Men’s and Disability teams. With a combined 290 ‘home match days’ each summer, plus additional training sessions as required, the annual demands placed on pavilions, pitches and practice facilities are substantial (see [Performance and Pathway section](#) for more detail).

### Club Facilities (off-field)

There are a number of indicators of ‘what clubs have’ that help to inform our future investment priorities. With data collected from the ECB [Investment Management System](#), we can show the range of projects Cheshire clubs have successfully applied for since the County Grants Fund went live in September 2021, and these are included in the table below.

Project Theme	Projects Supported	Total Awarded	Comments
Outdoor Social	16	£98,567	Some projects include elements of catering (BBQs), heating and lighting
Indoor Social	8	£59,189	Range of projects including flooring, furniture, glazing
Toilets	5	£41,556	Upgraded or additional female toilets
Catering	3	£21,823	Kitchen Refurb and new appliances
Arrival and Access	2	£15,500	Car parking, disabled spaces
Digitising	1	£2,535	Wi-Fi package and EPOS equipment
Non-Turf practice facility	3	£24,000	Lots of enquiries, anticipate more projects in 2024
Non-Turf Match Pitch	0	£0	
Enhanced changing facilities	0	£0	Several projects ongoing but need to secure planning / partnership funding
Energy saving	5	£37,401	Solar, LED lighting and heating systems
Electric Mower/roller	2	£9,000	Replacement square mowers
Drought Resilience	1	£3,654	Rainwater harvesting – several other enquiries
Water management	0	£8,000	
Flood Resilience	0	£0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>£321,135</b>	

From the above we can see that the [Creating Welcoming Environments](#) theme (coloured section) has proven by far the most popular, with more than £230,000 allocated to these projects since the

scheme was first launched. A growing number of Cheshire clubs are also choosing to invest in ‘green projects’ with more than £50,000 allocated under the [Tackling Climate Change](#) theme to date.

One area that has been underrepresented is the [Enhanced Facilities](#) theme. While Non-turf practice facilities and changing room developments can be transformational for clubs, they typically require large amounts of partnership funding to turn ambition into reality. For some, this (and the need to obtain planning permission) as led to long delays, or clubs withdrawing applications altogether. CCB aim to address this challenge by working with clubs throughout every stage of the application process, sharing best practice and signposting them to other sources of funding and support as necessary (see ‘how we get there’).

## Club Facilities (on-field)

Though Creating Welcoming Environments relates primarily to off-field activities, we must also acknowledge the correlation between the quality of a club’s on-field provision and the overall experience for members. Clubs must continue to invest in fine turf (squares and outfield) and non-turf facilities if they wish to retain their existing players and attract new ones. We will explore this relationship in greater detail in the ‘Other Priorities’ section, but the table below gives a snapshot of the current ‘on-field’ provision across the County.

Local Authority	No of clubs	No of squares	Square quality		Total no of grass wickets	No of NTPs on square	Squares overplayed
			Good	Standard			
Tameside	6	6	6	0	65	1	2
Halton	2	2	2	0	28	1	0
Warrington	5	7	7	0	80	0	1
Wirral	15	23	15	8	224	5	9
CWAC	21	24	18	6	231	10	7
Cheshire East	33	39	32	7	420	11	12
Trafford	8	10	7	3	128	3	2
Stockport	19	22	19	3	295	7	8
	<b>109</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1,471</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>41</b>

Data from the [ECB Insight Pack](#) revealed that Cheshire has 3,000 more residents per grass pitch (aged 16+) than the national average. This figure is higher still in some local authorities – *Halton, for example, has more than twice the national average* – where the pressure on our existing stock of squares and outfield) will only continue to grow in line with the predicted rise in the number of players and teams across the County.



Though the majority of squares at Cheshire clubs are rated as good quality<sup>29</sup>, almost one third of these squares are currently ‘overplayed,’ where the demand for matches is greater than the supply. Additionally, around 20 per cent of the current stock of Cheshire squares are classified as ‘standard,’ meaning the number of fixtures they can safely accommodate is greatly reduced. In

<sup>29</sup> Good quality squares can accommodate 5 games of cricket (per pitch), standard squares 4 games per pitch

areas where overplay is most prevalent such as Stockport, Cheshire East and Wirral, this can present a barrier to participation and a less welcoming and inclusive environment for recreational cricketers.

Improving the quality of playing surfaces at Cheshire's 109 affiliated clubs is a key priority for CCB, together with securing regular access to some of the 79 grass cricket squares and standalone non-turf pitches at school and community sites throughout the County. Investing in the 'on field' facilities at these additional venues will ultimately encourage more people in Cheshire to pick up a bat and ball and develop a lifelong affinity with the game - see *Other Priorities section for more detail*.

## Creating Welcoming Environments (what we need)

### Facility needs (off-field)

The most detailed survey ECB has ever undertaken was carried out in 2019 in which cricket clubs gave insights into the current condition of their facilities and the potential barriers to participation, particularly amongst women and girls. The survey responses ultimately informed the ECB's [Creating Welcoming Environments](#) Guide, in which these perceived 'barriers' were grouped into three distinct categories<sup>30</sup> and accompanied by some suggested facility improvements (and associated costs).

The [Club Facilities Master Sheet](#) provides an excellent platform from which to analyse the current infrastructure in Cheshire. Using data from multiple sources we can say with confidence what our affiliated clubs 'need' to deliver a first-class playing and social experience for members. The table below shows the facility projects planned at Cheshire clubs over the next five years. The projects have been grouped into categories to show where clubs feel investment is required to create more inclusive environments for members and guests.

Category	Number of clubs wanting to invest in these projects	Further comments
New Pavilion	16	Some clubs have obtained planning
Clubhouse refurb	41	Indoor social, catering, digitisation
Changing room upgrades	40	Including shower facilities
New changing rooms	24	Additional, unisex
Outdoor Social Spaces	21	Includes element of catering (BBQs)
Toilets	16	More female only spaces
Arrival and access	7	Parking, lighting, disabled access
Green projects	8	Solar panels, energy saving schemes, water management

For 16 of our affiliated clubs, the construction of a **new pavilion** is critical to their long-term vision. Many claim to have outgrown their currently facility and now require the additional space (and infrastructure) of a new build to accommodate the growing number of playing and social members. Pavilion projects often take many years from concept to completion, with planning consent and partnership funding two of the principal barriers. Some clubs are better placed than others to achieve their goal - *'multi-sports' clubs for example, may be able to draw on financial support from other national governing bodies* – however CCB aim to support **all clubs** in their ambitions. Working alongside colleagues at ECB, we provide advice on every stage of the planning process, much of which is captured within the [ECB Pavilions and Clubhouses \(TS5\)](#) document.

<sup>30</sup> *First Impressions / Overall Feel, Club and Spectator Facilities, Changing and Sanitary*



For many clubs, a new purpose-built facility is beyond their financial capabilities, and they must look to smaller-scale projects to deliver the outcomes needed to satisfy their members and connect with the wider community. More than one third of Cheshire clubs (41) have expressed a desire to **refurbish** their existing **pavilions**, with a range of schemes including the creation of new family-friendly social spaces, digitisation projects (Wi-Fi, electric points of sale) and additional catering facilities. Updating the existing infrastructure will also help some clubs to shed their stereotypical 'male-orientated' image and appear more welcoming and accessible for all users.



*"Our clubhouse has an old-fashioned bar and a very traditional male set up. We have women's and girls' teams at the club now and we want to create a space that everyone feels a connection too and can be proud of."*  
**Cheshire Club**

One of the barriers to participation identified in both the ECB Club Survey and the CCB Women and Girls Facility Needs Survey is a lack of adequate **changing and sanitary facilities**. In the ECB survey, 55% of women and girls asked said they were not happy with the quality of toilet and changing provision at their clubs, while 70% of players said their club only offered communal shower facilities. Here in Cheshire, more than two thirds of clubs (80) have identified changing and toilet projects as their number one priority, sending a clear message to members that they value their comfort and privacy and will endeavour to upgrade their facilities as soon as possible.

*"An update of the women and girls changing/ toilet facilities would help to make the club more welcoming and attractive."*  
**Appleton CC**



The first impressions created on arrival to any cricket ground can have a lasting impact on how people feel when they use the club. In the CWE guide, clubs are encouraged to think objectively about their outdoor spaces and how welcoming they appear to new visitors.

Acknowledging the importance of these 'first impressions' CCB have allocated more than £100,000 of ECB funding to **Outdoor Social** and **Arrival/Access** schemes since 2021, with a further 28 projects planned over the next five years. Outdoor spectator seating, improved external lighting and dedicated visitor parking all appear high on Cheshire clubs' wish-lists, in addition to creating more accessible spaces for those with a disability or additional needs.

An increasing number of clubs are looking to ‘future proof’ their facilities by investing in **green projects**. Examples include solar panels, energy efficient heating and lighting and water management solutions. This trend looks set to continue in 2023 and beyond, and CCB will continue to encourage clubs to take a sustainable approach to facility development, with the dual benefit of reducing our carbon footprint and generating savings that can be reinvested into the wider game. *More details of our priorities in this area are included in the ‘Tackling Climate Change’ section.*

### Facility needs (on-field)

Category	Number of clubs wanting to invest in these projects	Further comments
NTP - Practice Nets	58	Includes ‘mobile cages’ for those who don’t have room / permission to build permanent structures
NTP – match pitch	14	On both square and outfield
Fine turf (square/outfield)	33	Projects include drainage, levelling
Machinery / storage	20	Includes square and outfield mowers, rollers and other items such as scarifiers plus dedicated storage
Scoreboard / scorebox	17	Both manual and electric
Sightscreens and other equipment	19	Includes covers, flat sheets, boundary rope, coaching equipment
Tenure / 2 <sup>nd</sup> ground	8	
Ball stop netting	2	We are aware of many more clubs who need / would benefit from this

The number one (on-field) facility priority<sup>31</sup> for Cheshire clubs is the installation of new **non-turf practice facilities** or ‘nets’. Though most clubs already have a dedicated outdoor space for hard ball practice, some of these facilities are in need of refurbishment, while others are too small to meet the current demand. As additional hard ball teams are created the pressure on the existing stock of NTPs will increase, and further investment will be needed to deliver and maintain safe environments in which to practice. Clubs with a *competitive* female playing offer can look to the ECB for financial support, but with new NTP installations typically costing £15-£20K per ‘bay’<sup>32</sup> they will need to secure a significant amount of partnership funding to see the project through to completion.



As player and team numbers grow, some clubs are looking to alleviate the pressure on their squares via the installation of **Non-Turf match pitches**. Good quality NTPs can (in theory) accommodate up to 60 matches per season or provide an additional practice facility if accompanied by a **mobile netting cage**. This type of solution is often sought by clubs who do not have the space to accommodate a permanent structure beyond the boundary, or who have failed to gain permission (or planning consent) from landowners or the local authority. NTPs

<sup>31</sup> Data from Club Facilities Master Sheet

<sup>32</sup> Average price based on quotes from ECB approved suppliers

from approved suppliers typically cost in the region of £8K-£12K and CCB are keen to support clubs looking to enhance the 'on-field' experience for their members and the wider cricket community.

For clubs to consider themselves fully 'inclusive' they must endeavour to make all facilities available to all sections of their membership, including granting equal access to squares and outfield. Playing Pitch Strategy analysis indicates one third of Cheshire squares are currently 'overplayed,' meaning there is no capacity to increase the number of fixtures at these venues. To overcome this challenge, our clubs have identified a range of **fine turf projects** aimed at improving the quality of their playing surfaces, which in turn will provide more opportunities for traditional and softball play. Aligned to the above is a need to invest in specialist **machinery**, with many clubs needing to replace old (and inefficient) square and outfield mowers or purchase essential grounds maintenance equipment like scarifiers and aerators.

The provision of a functioning **scoreboard** is central to creating an enjoyable matchday experience for players, officials and spectators alike. A number of Cheshire clubs (17) are planning to upgrade their currently facility to include a digital fascia for electric scoring, with many now offering 'live' scoring to accommodate supporters who cannot attend the game in person. The ECB County Grants Fund may be a viable option for these clubs if they are applying for a scoring solution as part of a wider digitisation package including the installation of WiFi and electric points of sale (EPOS).



For some clubs, the only way to grow their playing membership is by securing access to a **second ground** on either a permanent or match by match basis. Several clubs already have rental agreements in place at second venues, while others will hope to take advantage of Cheshire's **grounds for hire scheme** or forge closer relationships with local authorities or educational sites where grass pitches and NTPs have been listed for community use.

While most clubs are actively looking to enhance their facilities, there are a small number for whom the primary focus is preserving what they have. For the eight Cheshire clubs with **unsecured tenure** (less than five years) their ability to pursue improvement works may be hampered by the terms of their lease or rental agreement. CCB aim to work with each club on an individual basis to understand their needs and influence stakeholders (including Local Authorities) to carry out any facility upgrades on their behalf.

Outlined above are some of the facility priorities for Cheshire clubs as they seek to make their 'on-field' offers as inclusive and accessible as possible. While some of the projects listed above can be completed on a relatively conservative budget, others will incur considerable costs. In its CWE guide, ECB acknowledge most clubs have limited financial resources and have published a list of suggested improvement projects in the £5,000, £10,000 and £25,000 range to encourage clubs to choose the most appropriate and realistic option. In the next section, we will explore the ways CCB can support the club network and help organisations turn their facility ambitions into reality.



## Investment Opportunities for Clubs (how we get there)

There are a number of actions CCB can take to help our clubs deliver more 'welcoming environments' for their members and guests. Some of these outputs are listed below:



**Development Planning** – All cricket clubs should aim to allow everyone to participate equally and confidently at whatever level they choose. Accordingly, clubs are encouraged to appoint a wide range of personnel to their committees, ensuring all sections of the playing and social membership are represented, including female members and those from diverse backgrounds. Inclusive design is about creating places that everyone can use and enjoy regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, race, faith or disability.

At the planning stage, clubs should consider carefully the different groups that will use the facilities and how best to accommodate their needs. Feedback from [members' surveys](#) and focus groups is crucial when determining which projects to pursue and the information gathered can help demonstrate to funding partners the strategic need for investment.

**ECB Funding Support** – The County Grants Fund will continue to play a pivotal in facility development at Cheshire clubs, with grants of between £1,000 and £10,000 available on an annual basis. CCB aim to identify transformational projects that help make the communal spaces at clubs more accessible and inclusive. We anticipate the CWE theme will continue to prove most popular, however we also aim to deliver more projects under the **Enhanced Facilities** theme in line with club's needs, including non-turf practice facilities and gender-neutral changing and toilet facilities. For all other projects – including fine-turf schemes and machinery purchase - the ECB Interest Free Loan is a potential source of finance.

**Partnership Funding** - Some of the more ambitious facility projects identified above will require substantial partnership funding to bring them to fruition. The devolved County Grants Fund budget can only go so far, and clubs must look to other sources to complete their funding jigsaw. Cheshire have a dedicated Funding Page on the CCB website, with links to several providers and live schemes including Sport England, National Lottery, Crowdfunding and Landfill Sites. CCB also host regular funding workshops and our staff use their contacts within Local Authorities to scope any funding opportunities such as Section 106 monies derived from local housing or commercial developments.





**CCB Pitch Advisory Service** – Before clubs commit to any major fine turf improvements, we strongly advise they engage the services of one of Cheshire’s County Pitch Advisors (CPAs). The CCB [Pitch Advisory Service](#) provides clubs with a range of options, including access to a full Performance Quality Standard (PQS) assessment, which gives a detailed breakdown on the quality of squares and outfields, together with advisory notes from the visiting CPA. These PQS reports may be needed as evidence to secure access to finance (both grants and loans), with funding partners keen to confirm that any planned improvement works have a high degree of success.

**Stakeholder relationships** – CCB enjoy close working relationships with several stakeholders including County Sports Partnerships and the eight Local Authorities within the Cheshire borders. Where the priorities of these partner organisations align with our own, we aim to collaborate for the benefit of our affiliated clubs. For example, cricket clubs who play on multi-sport sites may be able to apply jointly to the Football Foundation for investment into fine turf works including drainage and outfield levelling. Local Authority budgets are often limited, and CCB aim to use our influence on PPS Steering Groups (and other forums) to highlight how investment into grass roots cricket facilities can bring health and social benefits to the wider community. This is particularly important for our clubs with unsecured tenure, as we seek to promote positive relationships where all parties are working to deliver the most inclusive and welcoming environments for all users.

Creating Welcoming Environments: Summary	
County Priorities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🔧 Promote the ECB Creating Welcoming Environments Guide to affiliated clubs. Champion diverse committees and membership</li> <li>🔧 Encourage annual completion of club audits and stakeholder surveys &gt; Facilities Master Sheet</li> <li>🔧 Secure CPD for club-facing staff – technical support for facility projects</li> </ul>	
What we need	How we get there
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🔧 16 new pavilions</li> <li>🔧 64 new/upgraded changing rooms</li> <li>🔧 62 indoor/outdoor social pace projects</li> <li>🔧 16 new / upgraded toilet facilities</li> <li>🔧 58 new / refurbished Non-turf practice nets</li> <li>🔧 14 Non-turf match pitches</li> <li>🔧 33 fine turf projects (drainage, levelling etc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🔧 Use the <a href="#">ECB County Grants Fund</a> to develop strategic on/off field including changing rooms, social spaces and non-turf practice facilities.</li> <li>🔧 Leverage <a href="#">partnership funding</a> from stakeholders (Sport England, Local Authorities, other NGBs) to support large scale projects including new pavilions</li> <li>🔧 Promote the use of the <a href="#">ECB Interest Free Loan</a> for fine turf projects.</li> </ul>

## Priority Area 4: Tackling Climate Change

In May 2019, the UK Parliament approved a motion to [declare an environment and climate emergency](#). MPs called on the government to make a range of pledges and commitments including setting new 'net zero' emissions targets by 2050. In response, Local Authorities were tasked with publishing or updating their own Climate Action Plans<sup>33</sup> which establish any local priorities in addition to meeting central government targets (see Appendix for list of Cheshire LA documents).

One of the central aims of Inspiring Generations is to 'Grow and Nurture the Core,' an ambition underpinned by ECB's commitment to invest in club facilities. Through the [County Grants Fund \(CGF\)](#), clubs are invited to apply for financial support for a wide range of projects under three distinct themes – one of which is devoted to 'Tackling Climate Change'.

The CCB Countywide Plan does not mention climate change explicitly, however one of Cheshire's Priorities is to "maintain a strong and sustainable club network". This section of the County Facility Strategy explores some of the local challenges presented by climate change, together with the opportunities we have identified to make recreational cricket in Cheshire more sustainable.

### Cheshire Climate (what we have)



Cheshire has an [oceanic climate](#) with typically warm rather than hot summers and cool to cold winters. On average July is both the hottest and driest month, while January is the coldest and November sees the most rainfall. The County rarely experiences extreme weather and to date there have been no applications from Cheshire clubs to the [ECB Emergency Fund](#), reserved for those who have suffered significant financial losses due to flooding and other events.

Though thankfully the most severe weather is often reserved for other parts of the country, Cheshire is by no means immune to the effects of Climate Change, a fact highlighted by the [record high temperatures](#) experienced in the summer of 2022. During this period of extreme heat, a small number of recreational and representative fixtures had to be postponed and the CCB Facilities Team saw an increase in enquiries from clubs looking to become more drought resilient.

Though some cricket grounds drain better than others (owing to the topography of the land, type of soil, thatch content etc) there are very few sites in the Cheshire deemed 'at risk' of flooding from rivers and seas. Using data from the Environment Agency<sup>34</sup> we have established that none of the 108 affiliated clubs in Cheshire are at 'high risk' of flooding and there is currently only one club (Bollington CC) deemed at 'medium risk'. All other sites are risk rated as 'low' or 'very low', meaning flooding events in these locations are likely to be extremely rare.

<sup>33</sup> Appendix 14: List of Climate Action Plans for Local Authorities in Cheshire

<sup>34</sup> Flood Risk Data from Environment Agency via [ECB Data Hub](#)



Number of affiliated clubs	Clubs at high risk of flooding	Clubs at medium risk of flooding	Clubs at low / very low risk of flooding
109	0	1 (Bollington)	108
<i>There are a small number of clubs adjacent to (but not currently within) High or Medium Risk flood areas as defined by the Environment Agency – Neston CC, Offerton CC, Ashton on Mersey CC, Trafford Metrovics CC, Glazebury CC, Kingsley CC</i>			

Though the numbers in the table above do not present an immediate concern, we will continue to monitor, check and challenge the Environment Agency data and support our clubs to respond accordingly should the risks from flooding increase in the future (see ‘what we need’).

## Investment in Green Projects

At the time of publication, Cheshire Cricket Board had invested more than £50,000 from the ECB County Grants Fund (CGF) into sustainable schemes at affiliated clubs, representing just over 15% of the total spend. Successful projects included the installation of solar panels, energy efficient heating, rainwater harvesting, LED lighting and electric mowers. As this trend of ‘going green’ continues, CCB will continue to provide financial support to clubs through the CGF (and other related schemes) in addition to sharing any best practice to help clubs better understand and overcome their climate-related challenges.

County Grant Fund Project Area	Investment to date (since Sept 2021)
Solar Panels	£16,600
Energy efficient heating	£10,000
Electric machinery (mowers, rollers)	£9,000
Greywater recycling	£8,000
Energy efficient (LED) lighting	£7,147
Rainwater harvesting	£3654
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£54,401</b>






## Cheshire Climate (what we need)

Though it is difficult to quantify exactly what each club ‘needs’ in relation to climate change, we know investment into greener facilities brings many benefits to sporting organisations. Investing in green projects not only helps to offset our collective carbon footprint but can also lead to efficiency savings across the recreational game, generating much-needed revenue for other facility projects and participation programmes.

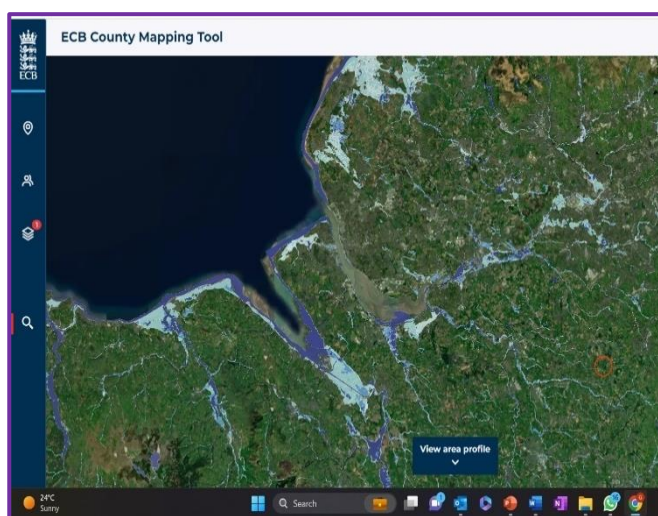
The **ECB Emergency Fund** provides a lifeline for clubs who have suffered significant losses from extreme weather events such as flooding and high winds. This is a strong example of cricket ‘reacting’ to the needs of the network, addressing the challenges as they arise and looking for short term solutions. Though Cheshire clubs have been largely sheltered from the worst of these weather events, we must continue to guard against complacency and aim to be proactive wherever possible. Through the publication of this CFS we aim to educate our clubs on green issues and invest in sustainable facilities that meet the needs of future generations.

## Sustainable solutions

One way to tackle the challenges posed by climate change is to expand the portfolio of green projects at affiliated Cheshire clubs. Through this lens, we intend to utilise the [County Grants Fund](#) to ‘future-proof’ our facilities, with clubs eligible to apply under the following sub-themes:

-  **Flood Resilience** – building protection / targeted drainage\* / ditch or culvert clearance
-  **Drought Resilience** – rainwater harvesting / bore holes / irrigation\*\*
-  **Energy Saving** – Insulation / LED lighting / Solar / heating systems / double or triple glazing
-  **Water Management** – Water-saving sanitaryware / greywater recycling / efficient appliances
-  **Electric mower or roller** – New to the market

**Flood resilience** has historically been a low priority for CCB, with no Cheshire clubs currently at ‘high risk’ of flooding. We recognise this position is subject to change however, as global temperatures (and sea/river levels) continue to rise, and new housing and commercial developments are approved by local authorities, impacting our existing floodplains. We will continue to monitor the flood risk data from the Environment Agency and will encourage our clubs to the same, while also ensuring the few clubs who are deemed ‘at risk’ have adequate levels of insurance.



**Drought resilience** is likely to feature more prominently in future CGF applications, with clubs searching for environmentally friendly ways to irrigate their squares and ensure pitches remain safe and playable throughout the summer months. In 2022, CCB received several enquiries about rainwater harvesting and associated projects, with the CGF Prioritisation Panel investing in one such scheme at Rostherne CC – this will be used as a best practice example for others to follow.

**Energy Saving** schemes continue to grow in popularity as clubs search for ways to reduce their overheads and demonstrate to members they are environmentally conscious. Several Cheshire clubs have successfully installed solar panels on pavilions and changing blocks, while others have secured grants for energy efficient heating and lighting. The cost of these green schemes can vary dramatically, and we aim to signpost clubs to other sources of partnership funding opportunities wherever possible.

Water-saving sanitaryware and greywater recycling are becoming more commonplace in commercial properties and Cheshire clubs will be encouraged to explore **water management** solutions as part of their future Development Plans. By installing more efficient appliances throughout their buildings, clubs will make further savings that can be reinvested in other facility projects.

**Electric machinery** (mowers and rollers) are relatively new to the sports market but have already generated a great deal of interest among clubs. Some grounds volunteers have suggested the current range of products are not suitable for their needs, but as technology (including battery life) continues to improve, we anticipate further applications under this sub-theme. CCB will engage our

County Pitch Advisors and County Groundsman's Association to better understand the pros and cons of electric mowers, so we are well placed to advise those clubs looking to upgrade existing models.



Though every green facility project has merit, CCB are not able to approve every funding request, meaning we must prioritise some applications over others. Schemes that can demonstrate both a sustainable outcome and help to maximise revenue may therefore have an advantage of those with lesser impact. For example, installing solar panels may incur a significant 'up front' payment, but the pay-back over time will ensure the investment for cricket is a sound one, with the ability to sell energy back to the grid and simultaneously reduce each clubs' carbon footprint.

The **Club Facilities Master Sheet** pulls together facility data from a wide range of sources, including Club Development Plans, Club Audits and Surveys and Local Authority Playing Pitch Strategies. The table below highlights the type and volume of sustainable projects planned over the next few years as Cheshire clubs look to safeguard their members from the effects of climate change.

Tackling Climate Change theme	Number of projects
Solar Panels	3
Targeted drainage	3
Energy efficient heating	2
Irrigation systems	2
Rainwater harvesting	2
Electric machinery (mowers, rollers)	1
Greywater recycling	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>

Where clubs are planning to build **new pavilions** our outbuildings there is a fantastic opportunity to 'go green' from the outset. By introducing sustainable solutions at the design phase, this will be much more cost effective than trying to retrofit at a later stage. And while some schemes can incur costly installation charges, clubs will be able to apply for financial support, not only from ECB but from other funding partners who are looking to push the green agenda (see 'how we get there').

### Tackling Climate Change (how we get there)

Having explored the impacts of climate change and the associated facility needs of our clubs, this next section highlights the actions we intend to take to safeguard the future of recreational cricket in Cheshire:



**Generating Awareness** – Though climate issues are discussed frequently in the mainstream media, we can certainly do more to raise awareness of this important topic in the context of recreational cricket. Our Club Development Forums provide an excellent platform to address the challenges posed by climate change and to share some potential solutions with our affiliated clubs. Inviting specialist guest speakers will add further credibility to these discussions, and we also plan to create a ‘Sustainable Futures’ page on the CCB website. The

introduction of the Tackling Climate Change category at the [ECB Grass Roots Awards](#) will enable us to reward and recognise those clubs who can demonstrate best practice in this field.

**Club Development Plans** – CCB staff review Club Development Plans (CDPs) on an annual basis, enabling us to discuss, shape and influence the way these documents are used to drive each organisation forwards. In conjunction with the Club Audits, these ‘live’ documents help to identify any challenges clubs may be facing, together with any specific facility wants and needs. Through the annual review process, we aim to encourage clubs to think more sustainably, using resources like the [ECB Energy Saving Guide](#) as a starting point for a discussion.

**ECB County Grants Fund** – Where clubs have identified specific ‘green’ targets within their CDPs, we will encourage them to apply to the County Grants Fund for funding towards any eligible projects. The CCB Facilities Team aim to be proactive with this fund, allocating up to 20% of our budget on the ‘Tackling Climate Change’ theme each year. All applications will be evaluated for impact, and we intend to use the most successful ones as case studies to motivate other clubs to ‘go green’ too. If CCB are successful in applying to the **ECB Transform Fund**, then we will ensure any facility upgrades have a clear focus on sustainability as we aim to demonstrate to stakeholders that we are a socially responsible organisation.

**Partnership Funding** – Many climate-related projects require significant financial investment and additional partnership funding will be crucial therefore to help turn ambition into reality. CCB are aware of several community funders (such as Landfill operators, Lottery schemes) that support green projects and we aim to signpost clubs towards these opportunities to help any ECB investment go further. *The CCB Facility Team are pleased to write letters of support for any formal applications.* Clubs will also be encouraged to liaise with their respective



Local Authorities and to consult their local Climate Action Plans to identify any shared priorities – for example the [Stockport CAN \(Climate Action Now\)](#) policy, which informs local decisions in the Borough of Stockport.



Tackling climate Change: Summary	
County Priorities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✏️ Raise awareness of the impacts of climate change (flooding, drought) through regular communication with clubs</li> <li>✏️ Challenge clubs to include sustainable facility solutions in their Development Plans</li> <li>✏️ Encourage and support funding applications for climate-related projects</li> </ul>	
What we need	How we get there
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✏️ 10 Cheshire clubs have identified 14 'green projects' in their development plans, including: Solar Panels (x3), Rainwater Harvesting (x2), Irrigation (x2), Heating Schemes (x2), Targeted drainage (x3), Greywater Recycling (1), Electric Mower (1)</li> <li>✏️ Ensure all new-builds (pavilions, changing blocks etc) use sustainable / energy-saving materials where possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✏️ Allocate (at least) 20% of annual <b>County Grants Fund</b> budget to Tackling Climate Change theme</li> <li>✏️ Support clubs to leverage <b>partnership funding</b> (letters of support etc) from other stakeholders investing in green projects including Local Authorities and landfill operators.</li> <li>✏️ Promote the <b>ECB Energy Saving Guide</b> and other resources / share best practice through bespoke 'Sustainable Futures Page' on Board website</li> </ul>

## Priority Area 5: Tackling Supply and Demand in Urban Areas

Cheshire has a total population of 2.15 million and an Urban population of around 1 million.<sup>35</sup> Through the publication of our [Communities \(Urban\) Action Plan](#) and the County [EDI Action Plan](#), CCB have identified a desire to ‘develop and maintain inclusive environments’ for people to play. This aligns with the Make Cricket Accessible theme within Inspiring Generations, in which ECB commit to: “install non-traditional playing facilities in urban areas” and “[deliver the South Asian Action Plan](#)”.

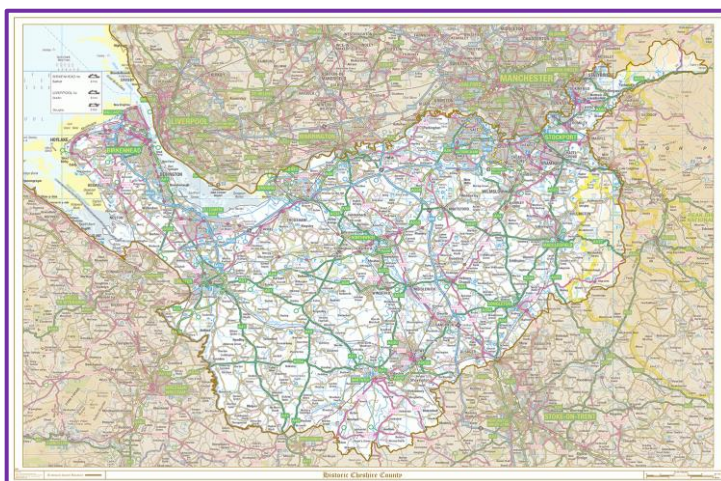
For the purposes of this CFS, we define our ‘urban’ delivery as any cricket development work that exists outside of the traditional club scene. By its nature, most of this activity takes place in densely populated or deprived areas or where the ethnicity of the population is substantially more diverse. Our analysis in this section has been divided into several sub areas. For each sub area below, we will describe the current cricket landscape and highlight some of our priorities for future investment:

- 📍 Local Authority outreach work
- 📍 Midweek, Casual and Informal Play
- 📍 Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Strategy

At the time of publication, the [ECB Community Fund](#) had not been made available to counties, meaning any direct investment into urban spaces may initially be limited. This next section of the CFS seeks to address some of the challenges and opportunities that exist within those spaces, and how together with key stakeholders we aim to invest in and transform our facilities so that everyone in Cheshire can confidently say: ‘[cricket is a game for me](#)’.

### Local Authority Outreach

Cheshire is serviced by eight Local Authority areas, some of which cross borders with neighbouring counties. Most of these Local Authorities are well served by affiliated cricket clubs, however some have fewer clubs and grass pitches per population while others boast a higher number of deprived (and diverse) wards, where access to traditional playing offers and facilities may be limited.



The [ECB County Mapping Tool](#) and accompanying [Insight Pack](#) has helped us better understand the demography and diversity of each Local Authority. While the perception of Cheshire may be of an affluent, ‘leafy’ county, the reality is that half of the County’s Local Authority areas have a population density exceeding the national average and that Cheshire as a whole has 3,000 more residents per grass pitch (aged 16+) than the national average. This illustrates a need to pursue investment in both traditional and non-traditional facilities for the benefit and enjoyment of individuals and communities throughout Cheshire.

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<sup>35</sup> Data from ECB Insight Pack 2023

Local Authority	Total Population	Population Density <i>Population per sq kilometre</i>	Number of people per grass pitch <i>Aged 16+</i>
Stockport	294,197	2,334	11,798
Tameside	227,117	2,202	15,141
Trafford	237,579	2,240	11,879
Wirral	324,336	2,015	14,743
National Average		1,749	14,202
Halton	129,759	1,641	32,440
Warrington	209,397	1,159	13,087
Cheshire West and Chester	343,823	374	10,112
Cheshire East	386,667	332	7891

Central to Cheshire's ambition to enhance our urban spaces will be our relationships with Local Authorities and the key personnel who work there. As part of this CFS, we engaged with representatives from the eight Cheshire Boroughs to better understand 'what we have' from a facility perspective and 'what we 'need' in future to better serve our communities.

The four Cheshire Boroughs with a population density greater than the national average are [Stockport](#), [Tameside](#), [Trafford](#) and [Wirral](#). Following consultation with each LA, we identified a number of key sites and priorities for future investment and these are listed in the commentary below. The four remaining LA's – Halton, Warrington, Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC) and Cheshire East – were also consulted as part of this process and some local facility priorities noted.

### Cheshire's Local Authority Areas (what we have)

## Stockport MBC

Stockport has a population of just over 294,000 (5% of which are South Asian), and a population density of 2,334 people per square kilometre, which exceeds the national average.<sup>36</sup> As of April 2023, there were 231 cricket teams competing in the Borough across 22 affiliated clubs.

There are 25 council owned (or maintained) Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs) in Stockport with several based at locations earmarked for investment by the council. Additionally, Stockport MBC have registered interest in the Football Foundation 'Play Zone' scheme with sites in Heaton Norris, North Reddish and Hazel Grove all listed as potential venues.<sup>37</sup>

As part of the [Greater Manchester Combined Authority Plan](#), Stockport MBC recently secured investment into five non-turf match pitches in the borough (see GMCA section below). The pitches are due to be activated in summer 2023 and will provide playing opportunities for members of our urban communities. This is in addition to the two council-owned grass cricket squares at William Scholes Playing Fields, which are [available for hire](#) by the public during the summer season.

<sup>36</sup> Figures correct as of April 2023

## Tameside BC

The Local Authority of Tameside borders Cheshire and Lancashire, with a population of around 227,000. According to the council website, 11 of 141 council areas fall within the 5% of most deprived wards nationally and a further 18 are within the 10% most deprived. Furthermore, the South Asian population in the Borough (7%) is almost twice the county average and there is a large Bangladeshi community in the town of Hyde.



There are six affiliated cricket clubs in the Cheshire part of Tameside, each with their own grass pitch, but space for non-traditional play in the Borough is very limited. Following the consultation exercise for the GMCA Non-Turf pitch scheme, no suitable sites were identified in Tameside, primarily due to safety issues arising from 'ball-strike.' With a population density of 2,202 people per square kilometre (above the national average), there is certainly a need to address the lack of facilities and to seek further investment in urban spaces.

Tameside MBC are very proactive in their efforts to tackle inequalities – the recently published [Equality Strategy \(2023-2027\)](#) highlights some key objectives for the next five years. The council operate alongside charity partner Active Tameside, whose stated mission is *“to provide the local community with outstanding leisure, pastime and holistic wellbeing activities which generate both social and economic benefits for our users. We do this in a sustainable manner that is both inclusive and socially considered.”*

## Trafford BC

The Local Authority of Trafford spans both Cheshire and Lancashire, with a combined population of 237,000. The Cheshire postcodes are located south of the M60 motorway, with those to the north serviced by Lancashire Cricket Foundation. Trafford has the highest percentage of non-white British inhabitants in the County, with 15% of the population from ethnically diverse backgrounds.

There is a huge appetite for cricket within the Borough, with eight affiliated clubs on the Cheshire side of the boundary fielding more than 80 junior and senior teams (in 2023). Additionally, a number of Trafford clubs also act as host venues for casual midweek teams (see separate section) placing additional demand on the existing facilities at these venues including grass pitches and pavilions.



## Wirral BC

Wirral has a population of 374,000 and is the last of Cheshire's local authority areas with a population density above the national average (2,015 people per square kilometre). Despite being home to 15 affiliated clubs and 29 grass pitches, Wirral is one of three Cheshire LA's where the population per grass pitch is also above the national average, highlighting a need to protect the facilities we have and to work with key stakeholders to develop new ones.



Wirral BC have published their [Active Wirral Strategy \(2021-2026\)](#) which highlights ‘the potential for sport and physical activity to make a positive difference to people’s lives’. The document reveals that more than 25% of Wirral residents live in the 10 most deprived communities in the country, while 28% of households have no access to a car. The Strategy also talks of a clear ‘East/West divide’ on the Peninsula, with the M53 motorway a defining line between areas of affluence and poverty.

Wirral BC have also commissioned a project called [Positive Futures](#), enabling members of the Sports Development Unit to interact with disadvantaged young people. This included the purchase of a Transit van fitted with telescopic lighting and a generator to floodlight an area of land in the evening allowing organised sports to take place. The mobile sports unit operates in parks and MUGAs across the Borough, providing opportunities to deliver physical activity in deprived wards.

## Cheshire’s Local Authority Areas (what we need)

### Stockport MBC

While the club cricket scene in Stockport appears to be thriving, there are areas within the Borough not currently supported by the traditional cricket infrastructure, and it is in these spaces we intend to focus our attention. Stockport MBC operate a [formal sports priority list](#) which seeks to address inequalities in leisure provision through the strategic allocation of commuted sums (Section 106 monies).

Through consultation with the council, we identified three sites in [Heaton Norris](#), [Reddish](#) and [Cheadle Heath](#) that best support this profile and could shortly be in line for investment. Each of these sites have MUGAs with good ancillary provision and would be suitable host a range of formal and informal playing offers in future. More details are included in our [Strategic Site List](#) on Page ... In addition to the above, the MUGA at Alexandra Park (SK3 9RG) is currently used to host the CCB Chance to Shine Street programme, and is therefore a priority site for the Board. We aim to protect and enhance this venue to enable our programme to thrive.

### Tameside BC

Cheshire Cricket Board work closely with Tameside BC and Active Tameside on a number of projects (including delivery of ECB National Programmes). Together we have identified some key sites for future activation and investment to help meet the needs of the local community (see Strategic Site List)

Further to the above, a new housing development at [Godley Green](#) has received outline planning permission. The plans include a new East and West village with local amenities including shops, a doctors’ surgery, a pharmacy, a town square and a primary school. No sports centre has been allocated but there may be an opportunity for a MUGA



and CCB are keen to ensure that any associated leisure facility can incorporate some cricket activity.

Representatives from ECB recently visited Millennium Park in Hyde as part of a scouting mission to identify sites for the Dynamos Intros scheme (funded by Sky Sports). A final venue had not been determined, but CCB will continue to monitor the situation, knowing that a multi-agency approach presents the best opportunity to secure investment into urban sites within the Borough.



**Trafford BC** - As part of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Plan, Trafford BC were invited to apply for some Non-Turf Pitches to increase participation within the community. The exercise identified several potential sites, with one at **Crossford Bridge**. At the time of publication, no further progress had been made with NTP installation, but CCB remain committed to activating these sites to alleviate pressure on existing club grounds.

Trafford council have also identified CCB as a potential delivery partner for their summer holiday programmes, which aim to deliver fun activities in areas of the Borough where physical inactivity is highest. These communities were identified as Broomwood (South), Partington (West), Sale West (West), Sale Moor (Central).

## Wirral BC

The Active Wirral Strategy shares several priority areas with those in Cheshire's Countywide Plan. These include creating more opportunities for women and Girls and supporting members of the community with a long-term disability. In partnership with Wirral's Sports Development Unit, CCB have identified several locations in the Borough where a new or enhanced cricket offer could contribute to the overarching Strategy vision to "create accessible, affordable and environmentally sustainable facilities that encourage residents to be more active, more often."

Wirral BC have also expressed interest in the [Football Foundation Play Zones scheme](#), and public consultation is now underway to help determine the preferred locations. CCB are part of the steering group for this project and have been tasked with identifying potential user groups. If the sites are managed correctly, Play Zones present a perfect opportunity to expand cricket's footprint in urban areas, providing safe, accessible and affordable spaces for people to begin a lifelong affinity with the game.



## Urban Areas Strategic Site List

Venue and postcode	Type of Facility	IMD Rating	County Board and stakeholder comments
Heaton Norris Rec (SK4 1HZ)	MUGA	1	Sub-base of the MUGA is sinking, so significant investment needed. Section 106 monies available. Close to Brinnington, has a thriving community centre.
North Reddish Park (SK5 6ET)	MUGA	2	Playing Pitch strategy site. Investment in tennis but MUGA needs major overhaul. One of 7 Destination Parks in Stockport so plenty of footfall throughout the year.
Cheadle Heath (SK3 0JA)	MUGA	4	Central location. Floodlit area with a thriving community centre and cafe. Big play day on Fridays, including football coaching. Opportunity to add cricket to the portfolio of activity
Millennium Park, Hyde (SK14 1HT)	MUGA	1	The land is on a 999-year lease to the Millennium Green Trustees. MUGA is carpeted with a mesh fence, cricket is played on the site by members of the Bangladeshi community
Mona Street, Hyde (SK14 1QE)	MUGA	2	Could house a fully enclosed net facility if funding could be found and it was secured. Ideal space to activate some cricket including All Stars and Dynamos sessions.
Hyde Park, (SK14 2EL)	MUGA	1	Currently a basketball / tennis court. Well used, with Flowery Field Primary and Hyde Community College nearby. Active Tameside run holiday camps, would welcome input from CCB.
Crossford Bridge (M33 7BG)	Playing fields	7	A multi-sport site with athletics track, grass pitches and Astro pitches (with planning applications submitted for further Astros). Opportunity to house school, club and community cricket matches through the installation of an NTP.
The Hive Birkenhead (CH41 4EA)	Youth Centre	1	Purpose-built facility for young people aged 8-19, and up to 25 for those with disabilities. Features a gym, sports hall, climbing wall, Astro pitch and skate park. Hosts the Lords Taverners Super 1s hub. Opportunity to develop further activities
The Oval, Bebbington (CH63 7LF)	Leisure Centre	4	Grass cricket square is played to capacity on Saturdays in the summer, but has spare capacity on Sundays and in midweek. . Other facilities on site include a sports hall and Astro pitches, which could be utilised for softball activity.
Guinea Gap, Wallasey (CH44 6PX)	Leisure Centre	1	Leisure centre houses a gym, swimming pool and 5-a-side football pitches, well utilised by the local community. Opportunity to bring cricket activity to the football cages

## Halton, Warrington, Cheshire East, CWAC

Though the four remaining Local Authority areas in Cheshire have a population density below the national average, they each have urban areas where access to traditional playing facilities may be limited. Cheshire Cricket Board continues to engage with key personnel from each LA, and we have communicated some shared priorities below.

**Halton** has a population of 130,000 and is served by just two cricket clubs after Moorfield CC folded in 2016 and Birchfield CC relocated to Merseyside in 2020. As a result, the number of people per grass pitch in the Borough is now more than double the national average<sup>38</sup>. To combat this, CCB have consulted with Halton BC to identify some strategic sites to include in the Council's community outreach programme. These sites, suitable predominantly for informal softball play, are divided across the two major towns of Runcorn and Widnes and a full list is included within the Appendix.



Halton BC has just commenced construction of a [new leisure centre in Widnes](#) which will replace the existing Kingsway Leisure Centre, with a planned completion date of February 2025. While the new building will be state of the art, the sports hall will only be half the size of Kingsway with a net loss of indoor space. Two indoor cricket lanes have been included in the design and CCB have provided details of contractors to ensure specialist flooring, netting and lighting can be considered.

There are now just five affiliated clubs in **Warrington** after Rylands CC and Stretton CC folded in recent seasons. Of the remaining clubs, four are located in the 'South Analysis Area' leaving large swathes of the Borough's 209,000 residents without a traditional playing offer on their doorstep. In line with the recently refreshed [Warrington Playing Pitch Strategy](#) CCB aims to secure investment for additional NTPs in school and community locations to ensure a more equitable spread of playing facilities throughout the Borough.

Additionally, we aim to continue working with the council's leisure centre provider Livewire to deliver physical activity at key urban sites including Orford Hub (Community All Stars and Dynamos Programmes) and Woolston Learning Village (Lord's Taverners Super 1s). CCB are also committed to supporting the 'Warrington Blasters' – a group of 50 South Asian cricketers who play Tape Ball on the non-turf pitch at Dakota Park in Great Sankey (see section on Informal Play).

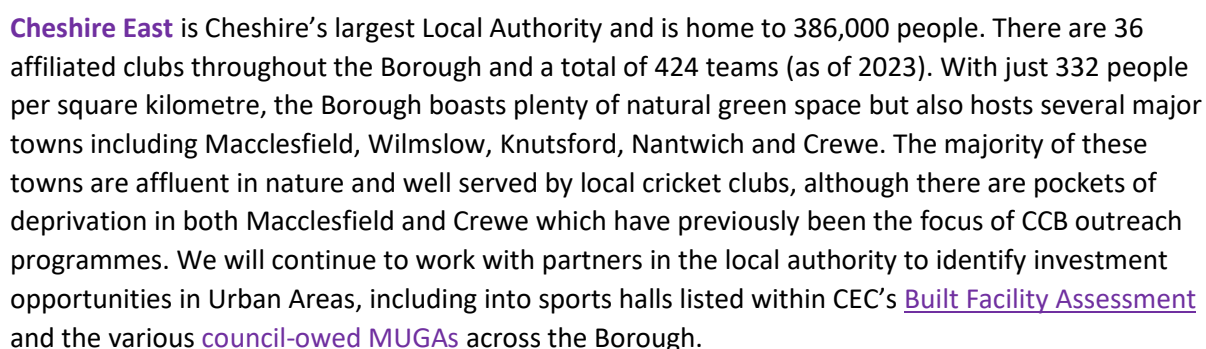


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<sup>38</sup> Figures from ECB Insight Pack – November 2022



In its [Council Plan 2020-24](#), CWAC identifies six priorities to build greener, fairer and stronger communities. These include ‘supporting children to make the best start in life’ and ‘enabling more adults to live, longer, healthier, happy lives’. The document aligns with the [Cheshire West Place Plan](#) which seeks to invest in the most deprived wards across the borough to help tackle inequalities. These include Blacon and Lache Ward in Chester, Over & Verdin Ward and Wharton Ward in Northwich and Winsford and Ellesmere Port Town Ward. CCB aim to work alongside delivery of community cricket initiatives, in



To meet the needs of our urban communities, both now and in the future, we must continue to invest in the development of inclusive and accessible facilities in public spaces. Working alongside our partners and key stakeholders, we have identified a number of solutions and investment opportunities to enable cricket to thrive in Cheshire's urban areas, and these are listed below:

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## Midweek, Casual and Informal Play



**Non-Turf Pitch Scheme** – Investing in Non-turf match and practice facilities is a priority for CCB. Through our partnership with the [Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#), Cheshire have benefitted from the installation of five non-turf match pitches in Stockport to date, with further installations earmarked for Trafford and Tameside in the future. As part of the scheme, CCB are charged with activating each site and ensuring new opportunities are created for both formal and informal play. For those NTPs based on education

sites (such as Marple High School, pictured above), [Community Use Agreements](#) will be negotiated to ensure the pitches are accessible for all members of the community.

**Upgrade existing MUGAs** – Following consultation with colleagues in several Local Authorities, CCB have produced a [Strategic Site List](#) which highlights a number of urban venues across the County with the potential to support softball and hard ball cricket in future. The majority of these venues are located within areas ranked 1<sup>st</sup> on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and contain MUGAs that have been identified to benefit from Section 106 monies or other community sums. Though CCB are not in a position to make a direct financial contribution to all sites, we will work with ECB to investigate the potential for partnership funding through the [Sky Intros \(Dynamos\) scheme](#), which aims to regenerate community spaces and create opportunities for informal play.

**Activate Existing Urban Spaces** – Many of the venues on our Strategic Site List already support some form of physical activity, demonstrating an appetite for sports within the local community. Working with Community Sports Partnerships like Active Tameside, CCB intend to ‘activate’ these sites for cricket, delivering a range of participation programmes including ECB National Programmes (All Stars and Dynamos) and [Chance to Shine Street](#) sessions. There is also an opportunity to collaborate with colleagues already delivering on these sites – CCB can provide community coaches to deliver cricket sessions on holiday programmes and other council initiatives. Offering our services ‘in kind’ is an excellent way to build local relationships and ensure cricket remains part of the portfolio of community activities.

### FREE STREET CRICKET

**YOUTH - AGED 8-15**

**WHERE:**  
Alexandra Park, Edgeley  
SK3 9RH - 5pm to 7pm

**WHEN:**  
Starting Monday 12th June

**CONTACT:** Rehaan Rather  
07809443307 (every Mon)

**Partners:**

**CHANCE TO SHINE STREET**  
[chancetoshine.org/street](http://chancetoshine.org/street)

- TAPE BALL CRICKET
- ALL ABILITIES WELCOME
- EXPLOSIVE ACTION
- NO EXTRA EQUIPMENT NEEDED
- COVID SAFE

**Make cricket accessible / affordable** - Using bursary monies from ECB, CCCB continue to deliver a number of non-traditional All Stars and Dynamos programmes each year. These sessions cater for participants from low-socio economic or ethnically diverse backgrounds, with up to 24 free places available at urban sites throughout Cheshire. CCB also work with several Faith Groups around the County, with [Cheadle Mosque](#) in Stockport the latest to benefit from the Bursary scheme. Cheshire operate a C2S Street Programme – which is free to all participants – at Alexandra Park in Stockport. As previously identified under the LA outreach section, we aim to protect and enhance this site, working alongside our partners at Stockport MBC to secure future investment.



Midweek League cricket Cheshire is played almost exclusively at affiliated club grounds, with more than 100 teams hiring venues on an annual basis. Established in 1962, the [Chester and District Midweek League](#) is the longest-running midweek competition in the County and currently boasts a membership of 38 teams competing across five divisions. Two thirds of these teams are 'Cheshire based' with the remainder playing at venues in North Wales. Of the Cheshire teams, all play at affiliated club grounds, with the exception of three who hire a pitch at King's School in Chester and two teams who play on the Parish Council owned NTP at [Doddleston Sports Ground](#).

Other midweek leagues operating within the county borders include the Greater Manchester Casual Cricket League (GMCCL), which has eight teams, and the [Greater Manchester Amateur Cricket League](#) (GMACL), which features 30 teams playing at club sites across Stockport and Trafford. [Last Man Stands](#) also has a footprint in Cheshire, with venues in Warrington, Wirral and Greater Manchester, while the CCB '[Get the Game On](#)' (GTGO) initiative encourages Cheshire clubs to organise additional friendlies – both senior and junior - around their scheduled league fixtures.

Name of League	Number of teams	Cheshire venues used
Chester and District Midweek League	38	17
Greater Manchester Amateur Cricket League	30	9
Last Man Stands	59	7
Greater Manchester Casual Cricket League	8	7
T25 / T35 Leagues	23	1

With short format cricket growing in popularity in Cheshire and the surrounding areas - *other local competitions include a T25 Wednesday League and T35 Sunday format* – this places additional strain on the facilities of host clubs, in particular the existing stock of grass pitches. Securing access to high-quality playing surfaces presents an annual challenge for most midweek and casual teams, with very few enjoying the assurance of a long-term hire agreement. This is not surprising given the rapid growth of women and girls cricket, which is now taking priority at a number of Cheshire grounds.

To tackle this problem, CCB created a new '[Grounds for Hire](#)' page on the County Board website. This feature was launched ahead of the 2023 season and aims to connect those struggling to accommodate fixtures with clubs that have spare capacity. A recent CCB audit revealed more than 40 Cheshire clubs were willing to hire their facilities at some stage during the summer, although many did not have spare capacity at peak times. CCB also aim to alert teams to the potential of hiring Non-Turf pitches, including those recently installed in Stockport under the GMCA Inspiring Generations scheme (see more below).





One successful example of ground sharing has been the partnership between Hyde Boys CC – who play in the [North Bangladesh Cricket League](#) – and Bredbury St Marks CC, who agreed to act as a host venue for the previously nomadic club. CCB have determined that clubs who make pitches available to others – including members of diverse communities - will be prioritised for investment through the County Grant Fund, providing they can demonstrate the positive impact of these relationships and a growth in participation at the host venue.

### Informal Play

In addition to the structured midweek and casual cricket formats, Cheshire Cricket Board are aware of (and aim to support) diverse groups that choose to play cricket informally at sites throughout the County. At Dakota Park in Warrington, a group of 50 South Asian cricketers known as the **'Blasters'** play tape ball cricket on Thursdays and Sundays.



The group are acknowledged within the Warrington Playing Pitch Strategy, and the Local Authority recently invested in refurbishment of the NTP at Dakota Park to enhance the playing experience for the group. Cheshire Cricket Board have also struck up a strong working relationship with the Blasters, delivering an ECB Support Coach course for group leaders and securing tickets for matches at Lancashire CCC.

In Ellesmere Port, a similar group made up of cricketers from diverse communities are occupying the site of the former Sutton High School, using an old MUGA to play tape ball matches with friends and family. CCB aim to source a suitable roll-out pitch for the group to ensure these sessions can take place safely, while also entering into discussions with CWAC about a more 'permanent' venue with associated ancillary facilities. Subject to venue availability, we are also exploring the viability of an

Indoor Communities League to enable year-round competition for the above groups.

### Refugees

Some urban areas in Cheshire have experienced a dramatic increase in the number of refugees in recent years, many of whom are passionate cricketers of South Asian background. Through our [Urban Action Plan](#), we aim to engage with refugee groups and provide playing opportunities in safe environments. Recent refugee outreach programmes include community sessions in Sandbach School and Arden Primary School (Stockport), while discussions continue with other Local Authorities including in Trafford and Wirral. Our Communities Manager will continue to work with other key stakeholders to identify appropriate venues for this important activity to take place.





## Greater Manchester Combined Authority Plan

Cheshire Cricket Board are proud to be part of [Inspiring Generations: A Strategy for Cricket in Greater Manchester](#). CCB are one of several partners tasked with delivery a £4.9million investment into the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) area, which aims to amplify the impact of the national ECB Inspiring Generations Strategy.

With the Local Authority areas of Stockport, Trafford and Tameside falling within the GMCA catchment, Cheshire Cricket Board are a key stakeholder within Strategy, which includes a '10-point action plan' that contributes to the overarching aim:

*"To use cricket to improve young people's lives and create stronger, healthier communities in Greater Manchester."*

CCB are involved in the delivery of several GMCA workstreams, including two that have a direct bearing on urban facility investment in Cheshire. The Non-Turf pitch scheme and the Volunteer it Yourself (VIY) programme have already made a positive impact throughout the County and the two initiatives are discussed in more detail below.

### Non-turf Pitches

The GMCA Non-Turf pitch scheme aims to install 100 new artificial grass pitches in public spaces across the region by 2025. To date<sup>39</sup>, 33 NTPS have been installed, helping to reduce inequalities in provision and delivering new opportunities for formal and informal play.



Working alongside the three Cheshire-based Local Authorities – Stockport, Tameside and Trafford – CCB were asked to identify suitable locations for up to five NTPs in each Borough. Using data from the ECB Mapping Tool and insight from the latest Playing Pitch Strategies, we drew up a provisional site list, focussing initially on venues in public parks or within deprived wards. A number of these sites were immediately ruled out on safety grounds however due to the risk of 'ball strike' with many locations deemed too small to safely host hard ball cricket<sup>40</sup>. The final site list for Stockport is included in the Appendix, with consultation in Trafford and Tameside ongoing.

Following successful installation, CCB's role is to help each local authority activate the NTPs - [all ECB approved systems](#) – by engaging members of the local community and encouraging their use. We have identified a number of user groups for each site and will also link the NTPs with our central 'Grounds for Hire' scheme where possible. Once operational, the LA's are responsible for maintenance of the NTPs including weekly brushing (and rolling if necessary) to ensure the surfaces

<sup>39</sup> Figures as of April 2023

<sup>40</sup> ECB standard for Ball Strike Risk Assessment is 80m from the point of strike

remain safe for use. Where external partners are responsible for the management of sites, Community Use Agreements will be drawn up to ensure equitable access for user groups and to maximise the impact of the scheme.

## Volunteer It Yourself (VIY)



Volunteer It Yourself (VIY) combines DIY and volunteering by challenging young people aged 14-24 to repair and refurbish youth and community facilities. VIY work with young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or at risk of disengagement from mainstream education. The learners are mentored by local professional tradespeople and can work towards and gain Entry Level City and Guilds trade skills accreditations.

As a part of the GMCA Strategy, VIY work with County Cricket Boards to identify projects that can enhance facilities for clubs and community groups in areas of deprivation in Cheshire and Lancashire. Materials and labour for each project are funded through the GMCA partnership (with contributions from Sport England) and the young volunteers get an opportunity to some gain hands-on experience. Some examples of viable projects include:

- Redecorating
- Decking
- Patios
- Toilets/sinks
- Accessible ramps
- Widening doors
- Bespoke furniture
- Carpentry



GMCA have set aside funding for up to 10 VIY projects per year. To date, two projects have been completed in Cheshire at [Newton CC](#) and [Stalybridge CC](#), with further projects planned for Stockport CC and Bredbury St Marks CC in 2023. The programme has enabled clubs to develop and enhance their facilities for the benefit of members, guests and other community users, and CCB will continue to work closely with VIY to identify future projects across the three Cheshire-based GM Boroughs.

## Urban Centres

A key element of the GMCA strategy is the development of a minimum of three Urban Cricket Centres; creating suitable, accessible, affordable, adaptable, informal community hub facilities to support the development and delivery of a range of cricket opportunities, projects and programmes to help deliver growth in line with 'Inspiring Generations'.

The first Urban Cricket Centre in Greater Manchester is due to open in late 2023 as part of the Abraham Moss Leisure Centre re-development in the City of Manchester. A second Urban Cricket

Centre has been approved in principle as part of the Stretford Leisure re-development in Trafford. Though neither of these Urban Centres is within the Cheshire boundary, the Stretford Mall site is only a few miles from several Cheshire clubs and could be used to export some demand and alleviate the pressure on existing facilities.<sup>41</sup> Once open, we will work closely with our partners at Lancashire Cricket Foundation to identify suitable booking slots for Cheshire clubs and community groups at peak times.



Throughout this section, we have demonstrated the scope of non-traditional cricket activity in Cheshire and some of the challenges and opportunities that exist within our urban spaces. The [CCB Urban Action Plan](#) underpins our commitment to developing inclusive playing offers, with investment into people, programmes and places (facilities) among the core objectives.

As this area of work continues to develop, we recognise the need to invest in additional staff to support our Communities Manager (pictured left) and to amplify the impact of our Plan. CCB will continue to lobby partners including ECB to invest in talented and passionate ‘people’ who can help bring these strategies to life, and to make additional funding available for community-based projects. Below is a summary of our Priorities in the non-traditional space.

Tackling Supply and Demand in Urban Areas: Summary	
County Priorities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🔧 Work with key stakeholders including Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)</li> <li>🔧 Identify and develop safe urban spaces for the delivery of participation programmes</li> <li>🔧 Grow the portfolio of Non-Turf match and practice facilities in public spaces</li> <li>🔧 Enhance facilities for community groups involved in informal play, including refugees</li> </ul>	
What we need	How we get there
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🔧 Support the development of new ‘Play Zones’ in Stockport and Wirral and MUGAs at strategic sites within each Local Authority (see appendix)</li> <li>🔧 Install Non-Turf match and practice facilities in Trafford and Tameside to support casual play</li> <li>🔧 Secure access to the new Urban Cricket Centre to be built in Stretford for Cheshire communities</li> <li>🔧 Identify (at least) two clubs per year to benefit from the <a href="#">Volunteer it Yourself (VIY)</a> scheme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🔧 Secure additional funding through <a href="#">GMCA Partnership</a> to deliver more Non-Turf pitches and VIY projects in Cheshire</li> <li>🔧 Apply for <a href="#">Sky Intros</a> (Dynamos) funding to develop MUGAs in Greater Manchester area</li> <li>🔧 Work with Local Authorities to unlock <a href="#">Section 106 Funding</a> for other strategic urban sites in</li> <li>🔧 Generate awareness off the <a href="#">CCB Ground Hire Scheme</a> to support casual and midweek teams</li> </ul>

<sup>41</sup> See ‘Other Priorities’ Section – Indoor Facility use in Cheshire

## Other Priorities – Considerations for Cheshire Cricket

In this final section of our CFS, we will highlight some of the additional facility considerations and priorities for Cheshire Cricket Board and our affiliated clubs. We will share the methodology behind our strategic funding decisions and demonstrate how relationships with key stakeholders can help to secure further investment into facilities and drive growth across the recreational game. For each of the ‘other priorities’ listed below, we will address the challenges and opportunities for the network, together with the actions CCB intend to take to deliver the best outcomes for grass roots cricket.

### Security of Tenure

Tenure is defined as “the conditions under which land or buildings are held or occupied.”<sup>42</sup> Sports organisations applying for a grant or loan to develop their facilities are often asked to demonstrate ‘security of tenure’, which is “the right to occupy for a period of time without interruption”. Some schemes like the ECB County Grants Fund require only 12 months’ tenure, while other funders may demand a much longer term depending on the nature of the project or the amount requested.

Most Cheshire clubs own their grounds or enjoy the security of a long-term lease. These clubs have much greater freedom to develop their assets, although covenants can still place restrictions on the occupiers and there can be a great deal of variance in the terms of some lease agreements. A small number of our clubs have unsecured tenure<sup>43</sup> - a lease or rental/licence agreement of less than five years - which can reduce their ability to apply for funding. Additionally, some clubs rent their grounds or rely on maintenance from the Local Authority, meaning some facility improvements are often out of their control. The table below shows the current picture in Cheshire.

Local Authority	No of clubs	Freehold	Lease / Rent (secure)	Lease / Rent (unsecure)	Maintained by club	Maintained by Council
Tameside	6	6	0	0	6	0
Halton	2	1	1	0	2	0
Warrington	5	3	1	1	4	1
Wirral	15	5	9	1	9	6
CWAC	21	10	10	1	20	1
Cheshire East	33	17	11	5	28	5
Trafford	8	7	1	0	8	0
Stockport	19	16	3	0	19	0
	<b>109</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>13</b>

Evidence of tenure is important to funding partners like the England and Wales Cricket Trust, who need to demonstrate they are investing responsibly and with due diligence. Under the terms of its [Interest Free Loan scheme](#), the EWCT ask for a minimum of five years security of tenure, to be confident they are investing in organisations with sufficient control of their assets to legally develop them. For larger scale investments, funders need to understand any break clauses, developmental

<sup>42</sup> Definition from Oxford Dictionary

<sup>43</sup> Tenure of less than 5 years



rights or other risks to be able to calculate the return on investment. Understanding the limitations of tenure arrangements can help identify alternative approaches to a project.



Though the number of Cheshire clubs with unsecured tenure is relatively small (eight as of April 2023), the number of players, supporters and other facility users at these sites is considerable. To ensure cricket can continue to thrive in these environments, CCB must seek to establish good relationships with the landowners (including Local Authorities) and ensure our clubs are aware of their rights and responsibilities and any national policy frameworks that may afford them some protection. We will continue to work closely with the ECB Facilities Team and the Sport England Regional Planning Manager to provide the necessary technical support and to champion the causes of our affiliated clubs at every opportunity.

## Playing Pitch Strategies

To increase opportunities for sports participation, Local Authorities must create a high quality and sustainable network of sports pitches and outdoor leisure facilities. Playing Pitch Strategies provide a framework to assess the current playing pitch provision and to develop a plan for improvement. This involves reviewing existing facilities across each Borough by looking at pitch type, usage and conditions to understand the current and future supply and demand of playing pitches. PPS also help to inform planning decisions by the Council and can act as a guide to investment decisions from a wide range of bodies that seek to provide high quality sports facilities across the area.

As one of the primary grass sports in England, cricket is expected to contribute to the PPS process, with ECB and CCB staff included on the Steering Groups for each of the following areas - *Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Wirral, Halton, and Warrington*. Each Local Authority has published a PPS,<sup>44</sup> with an Assessment Report highlighting current activity levels and facility usage and an 'Action Plan' which sets out recommendations to either 'provide', 'protect' or 'enhance' the facilities at each site. This includes commentary on the number and quality of grass wickets and non-turf pitches and which squares are currently 'overplayed'. The table below shows the current on-field provision at Cheshire clubs based on the most recent PPS publications.

Local Authority	No of clubs	No of squares	Square quality		Total no of grass wickets	No of NTPs on square	Squares overplayed
			Good	Standard			
Tameside	6	6	6	0	65	1	2
Halton	2	2	2	0	28	1	0
Warrington	5	7	7	0	80	0	1
Wirral	15	23	15	8	224	5	9
CWAC	21	24	18	6	231	10	7
Cheshire East	33	39	32	7	420	11	12
Trafford	8	10	7	3	128	3	2
Stockport	19	22	19	3	295	7	8
	<b>109</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1,471</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>41</b>

<sup>44</sup> Appendix 3: Playing Pitch Strategies in Cheshire

In addition to the affiliated club venues listed above, there are a further 79 sites across Cheshire featuring grass cricket squares, standalone non-turf pitches or both. Securing access to some of these additional sites will be crucial if we want to alleviate the pressure on our existing club facilities and enable our recreational playing offers to grow throughout the County. The following table shows the picture for those sites not currently employed by the Cheshire club network.

Local Authority	Non-club sites				Total no of grass wickets	No of NTPs	Available for community use
	Education	Council owned	Private / other	Total			
Tameside	2	0	0	2	0	2	0
Halton	1	0	2	3	12	1	0
Warrington	5	1	2	8	16	6	4
Wirral	11	2	1	14	40	8	2
CWAC	11	1	0	12	35	12	5
Cheshire East	20	2	4	26	99	17	11
Trafford	4	1	0	5	9	4	0
Stockport	7	2	0	9	36	6	5
	<b>61</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>27</b>

From the above we can see that roughly one third of 'non-club' venues in Cheshire are available for community use.<sup>45</sup> Working alongside other key stakeholders, CCB aim to invest in these sites to improve the quality (and carrying capacity) of both fine turf and non-turf pitches. This will enhance the experience for current users and provide an outlet for additional club, community and pathway fixtures if Service Level Agreements (SLAs) can be negotiated for each venue. SLAs will be crucial to ensure all members of the community can access the sites, particularly at 'peak times' during the evenings and at weekends.

One of the key benefits of the PPS process is the opportunity to forge strong working relationships with other members of the Steering Groups, including NGBs, Local Authorities and any consultants they employ to carry out services on their behalf. In addition to the formal group meetings, CCB aim to engage with each of the stakeholders on an individual basis, to discuss the development of cricket facilities in Cheshire and any funding opportunities that may arise. This includes the distribution of Section 106 monies by Local Authorities and where other NGBs are planning to invest in 'multi-sport' venues where cricket is currently played on site.

PPS Steering Groups play an important role in the development of each strategy, with discussions and 'sign off' required at the following key stages:

- Stage A: Initial preparation
- Stage B: Information gathering
- Stage C: Assessment Report
- Stage D: Strategy development
- Stage E: Sign off and implementation



<sup>45</sup> Correct as at April 2023

To ensure the information published in each PPS is both accurate and robust, members of the Steering Group must complete a number of key tasks. With a comprehensive network of club contacts and our own Club Facility Master Sheet to fall back on, Cheshire Cricket Board can add significant value to this process and are well placed to fulfil each of the duties outlined below:

- Identifying who should be consulted for supply and demand information
- Helping to achieve club survey response rates
- Establishing the approach to collecting quality data and agreeing quality ratings
- Checking and challenging key findings within the Assessment Report
- Defining the scenarios that need to be tested
- Checking and challenging recommendations and actions within the Strategy

Whether contributing to a full ‘refresh’ or fact-checking the data for an annual update, Cheshire Cricket Board will continue to allocate both time and resource to the Playing Pitch Strategy process. Ensuring these documents remain agile and ‘up to date’ is a key priority for CCB, as we look to use each PPS as a building block to deliver some of the outcomes in our wider County Facility Strategy.

## Fine Turf and Grounds Management



Throughout the CFS we have underlined the importance of access to high quality grass cricket squares and outfielders. Using PPS data as our reference, we know the squares at most Cheshire clubs<sup>46</sup> are of ‘good’ quality - meaning each grass wicket can accommodate five matches per season. A small number of Cheshire squares have a ‘standard’ quality rating, with pitches only capable of hosting four games each summer, leading to challenges with overplay at some sites. To combat this, and to accommodate the growing number of grass roots participants (from new women and girls' teams in particular) we must continue to invest in fine turf facilities at every opportunity.

Through our annual Club Audits, we identified that roughly one third of affiliated Cheshire clubs wish to carry out improvement works to their squares and outfielders over the next five years. Projects of this nature can prove very expensive, and while some clubs may be eligible for support via the [ECB County Grants Fund](#), the majority will need to finance the works themselves. Before committing to a project of this nature, CCB strongly advise clubs to engage the services of a County Pitch Advisor (CPA), who can conduct a Performance Quality Standard (PQS) assessment to identify the cause of any problems and give some recommendations on how to improve the playing surfaces.

Complementing the work of the CPAs in Cheshire are a number of other stakeholders including the Grounds Management Association, representatives from Senior Leagues and our County Groundsman’s Association. To ensure a coordinated approach, CCB have published a [Cheshire Grounds Development Plan](#)<sup>47</sup>, which sets out our five-year vision to become a ‘leading county in fine turf improvement’. The Plan has been developed in partnership with representatives from each of the above groups, with the five Priority Areas for Cheshire Cricket outlined below:

<sup>46</sup> 106/133 squares rated ‘good’ in most recent PPS audits

<sup>47</sup> Appendix 15: CCB Grounds Development Plan

<b>1. Recruitment and Training</b>	To inspire and upskill a new generation of grounds volunteers and officials
<b>2. Reporting and Recording</b>	To encourage timely and accurate collection of data to support our facility development aims
<b>3. Supporting the Network</b>	To enable easy access for clubs to the County Pitch Advisors and Pitch Advisory Service
<b>4. Marketing and Promotion</b>	To make grounds management more visible and relevant throughout the County
<b>5. Reward and Recognition</b>	To champion the roles of grounds volunteers and officials through Award schemes and other initiatives

For each Priority Area, the Plan outlines our collective aims and objectives and establishes who is responsible for the delivery of each activity. To ensure the outcomes are measurable, we have included some key performance indicators which will be reviewed by the Steering Group on an annual basis. Where relevant, these figures will feed into the [Club Facilities Master Sheet](#) and act as a further evidence base for any strategic investment decisions involving fine turf projects.

**PA1: Recruitment and Training** - Currently, over two thirds of the volunteer workforce in England and Wales are over the age of 60, a trend that is mirrored here in Cheshire. While these experienced groundsmen and women bring a great deal of passion and knowledge to the role, we must identify and inspire a new generation of volunteers to support and eventually succeed them. To accelerate this process, CCB aim to provide a wide range of formal and informal training for new candidates, including a bespoke [Young Grounds Volunteers](#) course, regular CPD sessions with County Pitch Advisors and subsidies towards the online GMA Level 1 qualification. We will continue to educate our clubs about the importance of succession planning for groundsmen and ensure that grounds development has a prominent place in each of their respective club development plans.

**PA2: Recording and Reporting** – The collection of accurate data is crucial to the development of fine turf facilities in Cheshire so we can identify where future investment is needed most. PQS assessments provide the most detailed analysis of squares and outfield, and these reports are complemented by umpires’ pitch marks<sup>48</sup> and the (non-technical) pitch quality gradings from Playing Pitch Strategies. From 2023, clubs will be able to conduct their own fine turf assessments using the [Pitch Power App](#), an online tool developed by the GMA to enable grounds volunteers to inspect and enhance their playing surfaces. Pitch Power generates a report to help clubs benchmark their current provision and understand where improvements may be needed. Our CPAs will also have access to these reports and will be encouraged to conduct follow-up visits at sites with any complex grounds’ issues.

**PA3: Supporting the network** – A key focus of our Grounds Development Plan is to ensure all stakeholders are ‘proactive’ in their support for the grass roots network. CCB will continue to promote the Pitch Advisory Service, through which our County Pitch Advisors provide a range of services for affiliated clubs, up to and including a full PQS assessment. The CPAs are also responsible for delivering training in partnership with the Cheshire Association of Groundsman (CAG), with courses including pre-season preparation and Autumn renovation, plus additional CPD sessions for Cheshire’s grounds volunteers. CCB continue to work closely with the GMA, ensuring all our clubs have access to the latest support and resources, including the newly developed Pitch Power App.

<sup>48</sup> <https://www.cheshirecountycl.org.uk/pages/pitch-reports>





**JOIN OUR TEAM!**

Groundsman required for the square only at our Hartford site;

- Full training provided
- All equipment provided
- Approx. 3-4 hours a week \*
- Paid position with amount subject to experience
- Free club clothing

\* Must be available through Summer months of April - September, and have flexibility in schedule

INTERESTED? TO ENQUIRE CONTACT  
WP.CC@LIVE.COM

WINNINGTON PARK C.C

**PA4: Marketing and Promotion** - CCB now have a dedicated [Grounds Page](#) on the Board website, through which clubs and volunteers can access a wide range of services, including features like the [grounds' jobs vacancies](#) section. CAG and the GMA also have an active social media presence and their websites are an excellent source of information for clubs looking to enhance their squares and outfield. In addition to the digital offerings above, all Steering Group members are actively engaged in face-to-face marketing and promotion, with CAG and GMA hosting regular networking meetings for clubs and 'grounds development' now a standing agenda item at all Regional CCB Forums.

**PA5: Reward and Recognition** - The grass roots game in Cheshire is indebted to our grounds' volunteers, who devote their time, energy and considerable skill to preparing pitches for players of all ages and abilities. In our Grounds Development Plan, we acknowledge the importance of thanking these selfless individuals, with 'Reward and Recognition' one of our five Priority Areas. Clubs can show their appreciation for their ground staff via the [CCB Volunteer Shout Out](#) and there are several 'fine turf' industry awards to nominate for, including the *ECB Volunteer Grounds Management Team of the Year*. And from summer 2023 onwards, all Cheshire groundsmen and women will be invited to a first-class fixture at Old Trafford as part of a wider recognition scheme for club officials.

## Summary

Grass roots cricket in Cheshire is played almost exclusively on the squares and outfield of our affiliated clubs. To ensure the game can be enjoyed by future generations of players, we must continue to invest in fine turf facilities and the personal and professional development of our grounds' volunteers. The publication of the Cheshire Grounds Development Plan underlines our commitment to this process, and we will continue to monitor the Plan's impact, ensuring the aims and objectives are aligned with the other priority areas within our County Facility Strategy.

## Indoor Sports Halls

Sports Hall availability presents an annual challenge for cricket organisations in Cheshire with more than 100 clubs and community groups all competing for the same indoor spaces. The ECB County Mapping Tool<sup>49</sup> has identified 205 sports halls in the County, with a total of 235 'net lanes' installed at 87 different venues. Securing access to this specialist indoor provision is by no means a guarantee however,



<sup>49</sup> Using Active Places data

with the number of available 'net lanes' varying greatly from one Borough to the next. The current picture for Cheshire is given below.

Local Authority	Number of sports halls	Number of 'net lanes'	Number of clubs	Net lanes per club	Most used venues (number of clubs) <i>* denotes also used by CCB</i>
Tameside	11	18	6	3.0	Total Cricket (5)
Halton	11	10	2	5.0	St Chads (1); Wade Deacon (1)
Warrington	24	24	5	4.8	Bridgewater High School* (7)
Wirral	34	39	15	2.6	Birkenhead Park CC (9)
CWAC	35	44	21	2.1	Hartford High (5), Winsford Academy (4), Queens Park High School (4)
Cheshire East	40	55	33	1.6	Cricket Barn (7), Wilmslow High School *(5)
Trafford	18	18	8	2.3	St Ambrose College (4)
Stockport	32	27	19	1.4	Marple Hall School (6)
	205	235	109	2.2	

The table highlights the disparity between Local Authority areas, with Stockport and Cheshire East offering fewer than two net lanes per club, in comparison to five lanes per club in Halton and 4.8 per club in Warrington.

From the [CCB Club Audits](#) we know some venues are used far more frequently, while others are deemed not fit for purpose (due to poor lighting, low bounce etc) or have no availability during peak times. Consequently, some clubs are forced to look out of



area – and in some cases outside the County<sup>53</sup> – to find a suitable venue for members to practice. This can lead to fewer players participating due to the increased travel time and costs associated with longer journeys.

The majority of our [Indoor CCB Player Pathway](#) sessions take place at educational sites, with the venues carefully selected based on several factors including location, hire cost and most importantly the quality of the facility.

Cheshire Cricket Board are not the sole occupiers of these sites however, with other sports organisations also looking to secure seasonal bookings for their members. The table below shows the indoor venues used by CCB for our Pathway courses and the list of Cheshire clubs who hire the same facilities for their pre-season training.



Venue	Postcode	CCB Pathway usage (by course)	Cheshire Clubs' usage
Wilmslow High School	SK9 1LZ	Autumn, Advanced, District, Excellence, Coach Development	Bramhall, Lindow, Mobberley, Wilmslow, Cheadle Hulme
West Hill School	SK15 1LX	Autumn, Advanced	Newton, Broadbottom
Bridgewater High School	WA4 3AE	Autumn, Advanced	Appleton, Grappenhall, Frodsham, Lymm, Runcorn, Warrington, Widnes.
King's School, Macclesfield	SK10 4SP	Autumn, Advanced, District, Excellence, EPP	Langley, Over Peover, Alderley Edge, Bollington, Macclesfield
King's School, Chester	CH4 7QL	Autumn, Advanced, District, Excellence	Chester County Officers, Christleton
Birkenhead School	CH43 2JD	Autumn, Advanced, District, Coach Development	New Brighton, Oxton
Blessed Thomas Holford School	WA15 8HT	Autumn, Advanced, District	Ashley, Ashton on Mersey, Sale
Brine Leas School	CW5 7DY	Autumn, Advanced, District	Crewe
The Grange School, Hartford	CW8 1LU	Autumn, Advanced, District, Excellence, EPP, Coach Development	Winnington Park, Kingsley

Using our [Indoor Facility Audit](#), we have established a set of minimum standards against which the sports halls on the list above are measured. This document can also be made available to affiliated clubs on request, providing them with a checklist from which to assess the venues they hire. The Audit can act as an evidence base to open discussions with venue providers about facility upgrades, although any decision to invest will ultimately be one for the site owners.

The majority of sports halls in Cheshire are owned or managed by the education sector, meaning cricket must compete with other sports and school departments for access to this provision. Installing and maintaining cricket nets and other bespoke equipment can be a costly exercise, and we must convince our schools and universities to make the most of these facilities and not become reliant on the comfort of year-round hires from sports like badminton and basketball. We will encourage cricket organisations to collaborate during the winter months and to apply for 'block bookings' which may be a more attractive and cost-effective proposition for the owners.





Local Authority	Number of sports halls	Ownership / Management		
		Education	Local Authority	Private / Other
Tameside	11	8	1	2
Halton	11	8	3	0
Warrington	24	17	4	3
Wirral	34	23	7	4
CWAC	35	21	8	6
Cheshire East	40	23	8	9
Trafford	18	14	2	2
Stockport	32	20	6	6
	205	134	39	32

The table above gives a breakdown of sports hall ownership in Cheshire, with education accounting for 65% of the existing stock and Local Authorities (or their appointed leisure providers) a further 19%. The remaining 16% of sites belong to commercial ventures such as [Total Cricket](#) in Tameside and the [Cricket Barn](#) in South Cheshire. With full-length run ups and artificial playing surfaces, these purpose-built cricket facilities have proven very popular with clubs and other organisations including the Cheshire's Men's senior side, who use Total Cricket for their pre-season training.

Indoor sports halls play a pivotal role in the development of our club, community and county cricketers, providing safe and accessible spaces to develop their skills and socialise with teammates. CCB will continue to search for investment opportunities, working alongside our partners and key stakeholders to improve the provision at our existing indoor centres and to make the case for the development of new cricket facilities in the areas of greatest need.

### ECB County Grants Fund

Throughout this County Facility Strategy, we have sought to identify sources of potential investment for club and community projects. At the time of publication, the only 'live' source of (ECB) grant funding available to clubs is the [County Grants Fund](#), with an annual budget determined centrally by ECB and devolved to County Boards. This next section of our Strategy sets out the principles upon which the CGF is allocated to clubs in Cheshire, including the role of the Board's 'Prioritisation Panel' and the importance of strategic (and defensible) decision-making.





## Background

Launched in July 2021, the County Grants Fund aims to support affiliated clubs to deliver sustainable projects in the following three areas:

- ✏ Creating Welcoming Environments
- ✏ Providing Enhanced Facilities and Playing Opportunities for W&G Cricket / Disability Cricket
- ✏ Tackling Climate Change

The criteria for each of the above themes is included within the [Guidance Notes](#), with awards of up to £10,000 available to clubs on an annual basis. Prior to completing a formal application, clubs are asked to submit an initial Expression of Interest, which helps County Boards to determine eligibility and the club's readiness to proceed with the project, as well as the benefits to cricket locally. To assist clubs in identifying where they may need to improve their facilities, ECB have also produced the 'Creating Welcoming Environments' guide and associated resources including the Facility Review Checklist and Facilities Survey.

## CCB Awards (Prioritisation) Panel

The annual budget for the CGF is set nationally by ECB, however the scheme is administered locally, with County Boards given the autonomy to make decisions about which (eligible) projects they wish to support. In order to make clear, objective and defensible decisions, CCB have appointed a [Prioritisation Panel](#) from a cross-section of the Cheshire Cricket community. This Panel comprises of the following post holders:

- ✏ CCB Director of Cricket
- ✏ CCB Facility Support Officer
- ✏ CCB Clubs and Participation Manager
- ✏ CCB Women and Girls Development Manager
- ✏ Chair of the Cheshire County Cricket League
- ✏ Chair of the Cheshire Cricket League

During the annual funding window (Feb 1<sup>st</sup> to Jan 31<sup>st</sup>) the Prioritisation Panel meet monthly to discuss and determine the allocation of available funds. Prior to each meeting, the Facility Support Officer prepares a report highlighting any new Expressions of Interest, the details of each individual project and the amount of funding requested. The report also includes background information on each club (Clubmark status, number of teams, involvement in ECB programmes etc) to assist the Panel members in their deliberations.

## Eligibility

Before applying, clubs in Cheshire need to achieve compliance on the [Safe Hands Management System \(SHMS\)](#) to demonstrate that basic safeguarding standards have been met. *Any clubs not enrolled on SHMS are asked for evidence that the Club Safeguarding Officer and other volunteers working with children have the necessary safeguarding and vetting checks in place.* The Panel then use the Decision-making flowchart<sup>50</sup> to determine



<sup>50</sup> Appendix 16: CCB County Grant Fund decision-making process

whether each application can proceed - this includes confirming that the club is affiliated and can meet the eligibility criteria aligned to each theme (eg clubs applying under 'Enhanced Facilities' must have a competitive women and girls playing offer or be an ECB Disability Champion Club).

### Decision-making process (Priority clubs)

As an ECB-funded scheme, priority must be given to clubs actively engaged in ECB programmes - *All Stars, Dynamos, Women's and Girls' Cricket and / or Disability Cricket* – this is clearly communicated within the guidance notes. Projects that have been thoroughly thought out, with wider club and community consultation including use of the [ECB Creating Welcoming Environments resource](#), will be looked on more favourably.

Where demand for the scheme outstrips supply, the Panel will be tasked with deciding which projects will deliver the best return on investment. To support with this process, CCB have developed a points-based [Priority List](#)<sup>51</sup> which is used to compare the relative strengths of each club both on and off the field. Clubs are allocated a score based on their performance against each criteria, and this is used alongside other supporting evidence (including club surveys, development plans etc) to help the Panel make strategic and defensible investment decisions.



Once the Panel have reached their decision all clubs are notified in writing. Those receiving a conditional 'grant offer' receive further support to enable the successful completion of the application on the Investment Management System, leading to a formal contract offer from ECB. Any clubs that have been unsuccessful will receive feedback from the Facilities Support Officer detailing how they can make a more compelling case for investment, including becoming actively engaged in programmes aligned to the priorities of both CCB and ECB.

### Scale of Support

The County Grants Fund was launched by ECB as a priority for supporting the recreational game and to deliver on the ambitions of its Inspiring Generations Strategy. As such there are very positive levels of investment attributed to the fund. Despite this, as outlined above it may not always be possible to support every application, and even those clubs who are successful may not always receive 100 per cent of the funding request. Though it is not a requirement of the scheme, clubs are encouraged to contribute an element of partnership funding to demonstrate their readiness to proceed with the project and to help ECBs investment into facilities in Cheshire go further.

### Summary and future priorities

The CGF has made a positive outcome in Cheshire to date (more than £300,000 allocated as of April 2023) and we anticipate this will continue for as long as the scheme remains open. Monitoring and evaluation is an important part of this process as it provides an evidence base for ECB that the scheme is working as intended and helps make a case for further investment in grass roots cricket.

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<sup>51</sup> Appendix 17: CCB points-based Priority List

Looking to the future, CCB aim to be more ‘proactive’ in our approach to the Fund, using the data available to us (via the [Facilities Master Sheet](#)) to engage our affiliated clubs in conversation and to encourage them to apply. We hope this will lead to more applications under the ‘Enhanced Facilities’ theme which has been underrepresented to date, due in part to the timescales associated with obtaining planning permission or other necessary documentation. As the scheme continues to evolve, we will ensure our investment decisions continue to align with the priorities within the CCB Countywide Plan and ECB’s Inspiring Generations strategy.

### CCB Facilities Operations

Under the terms of the County Partnership Agreement (CPA), Cheshire Cricket Board are engaged in a number of day-to-day facility operations. Working alongside the ECB Regional Facilities Planning Manager (RFPM), the CCB Facilities Team provide support and guidance to our clubs and communities across several key areas, some of which (County Grants Fund, Pitch Advisory Service) have been discussed in detail throughout this Strategy, while others are listed below.

#### General Funding Landscape

Understanding the general funding landscape is a crucial element of any Facility Strategy as we look to bring additional investment into the grass roots game. A key role for CCB staff therefore is to educate our affiliated clubs about any funding streams that can help turn their facility ambitions into reality, while also managing expectations for those schemes with limited capacity. ‘Funding and Facilities’ is now a standing agenda item at all regional Development Forums and one-to-one club meetings, and with a dedicated funding page on the Board website there is plenty of information for volunteers and officials to digest.



To ensure we continue to provide the best possible service for the network, our club-facing staff have committed to attending regular CPD on funding for recreational sport. The Crowdfunding workshops organised by Sport England have been well received, and the information shared has proved hugely beneficial for Cheshire clubs looking to start facility projects of their own. Workshops of this nature also provide an excellent platform to collaborate with colleagues from other NGBs and key stakeholders and to explore joint investment opportunities for the benefit of all parties.



#### Technical guidance

County Cricket Boards are required to understand basic technical requirements for project development and to signpost clubs (and other partners) to appropriate guidance where necessary. This includes, but is not limited to, the information provided on the [Club Support](#) pages of the ECB website. CCB staff have become familiar with key documents such as ECB’s [technical guidance for pavilions and clubhouses](#), performance standards for non-turf pitches and guidance for sports

halls with cricket provision, enabling us to communicate with clarity when discussing new facility developments around the County.

### Planning Applications

In accordance with its Memorandum of Understanding, ECB are required to provide responses to Sport England on planning applications which impact cricket facilities. Cheshire Cricket Board play a pivotal role in this process, supporting the RFPM with specific requests for information within a timebound period. This typically includes background about the site in question and the likely impact of any new development on future participation levels, with consideration given to issues such as [ball strike](#) which must be resolved before planning consent is given. CCB use the data from the Club Facilities Master Sheet (combining club audits, development plans and playing pitch strategies) to ensure ECB have all the information required to respond in the best interests of recreational cricket.

	Table of Appendix	Footnote
1	Junior Cricket Leagues in Cheshire	5
2	Women and Girls Participation Offers in Cheshire	9,10,11
3	Playing Pitch Strategies in Cheshire	12,44
4	Cheshire Cricket Board Countywide Plan Priority Areas	1,14
5	CCB Pathway Courses – participation trends	15,18
6	List of CCB Indoor Pathway Venues	16
7	CCB Outdoor Risk Assessment	17
8	Ground requirements for NCCA fixtures	19,27
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17	County Grant Fund Panel Point Matrix	51



### **Appendix 1- Junior Cricket Leagues in Cheshire (footnote 5)**

<b>Cheshire Juniors League</b>	<b>Website link</b>
Cheshire County League Juniors	<a href="#">CCJCL Play Cricket</a>
Cheshire High Peak Junior Cricket League	<a href="#">CHPJCL Play Cricket</a>
Derbyshire and Cheshire Junior League	<a href="#">D&amp;CJCL Play Cricket</a>
Liverpool and District	<a href="#">L&amp;DJCL</a>
North Cheshire Junior Cricket Association	<a href="#">NCJCL Play Cricket</a>
South Cheshire Junior Cricket League	<a href="#">SCJCL Play Cricket</a>
South Manchester Junior Cricket League	<a href="#">SManJCL Play Cricket</a>
South Moorlands Junior Cricket League	<a href="#">SMJCL Play Cricket</a>
Wirral Junior League	<a href="#">WJCL Play Cricket</a>











### **Appendix 2 - Women and Girls Participation Offers in Cheshire (footnotes 9, 10, 11)**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Website link (where applicable)</b>
Cheshire Women's Cricket League - hardball	<a href="https://cheshirewomenscl.play-cricket.com/Competitions">https://cheshirewomenscl.play-cricket.com/Competitions</a>
Cheshire Women's Cricket League - softball	<a href="https://cheshirewomenscl.play-cricket.com/Competitions">https://cheshirewomenscl.play-cricket.com/Competitions</a>
Cheshire Girls Cricket League - hardball	<a href="https://cheshirewomenscl.play-cricket.com/Competitions">https://cheshirewomenscl.play-cricket.com/Competitions</a>
Cheshire Girls Cricket League - softball	<a href="https://cheshirewomenscl.play-cricket.com/Competitions">https://cheshirewomenscl.play-cricket.com/Competitions</a>
Women's Softball Festivals	<a href="https://www.cheshirecricketboard.co.uk/women-and-girls/women-girls-festivals/">https://www.cheshirecricketboard.co.uk/women-and-girls/women-girls-festivals/</a>
Women's Indoor hardball league	<a href="https://www.cheshirecricketboard.co.uk/women-and-girls/womens-cricket/">https://www.cheshirecricketboard.co.uk/women-and-girls/womens-cricket/</a>
Women's Indoor hardball coaching	<a href="https://www.cheshirecricketboard.co.uk/women-and-girls/womens-cricket/">https://www.cheshirecricketboard.co.uk/women-and-girls/womens-cricket/</a>
Women's Indoor softball league	<a href="https://www.cheshirecricketboard.co.uk/women-and-girls/womens-cricket/">https://www.cheshirecricketboard.co.uk/women-and-girls/womens-cricket/</a>
ECB Girls U13, U15, U19 Club T20 competition	<a href="https://ecbgirlsu13andu15clubt20.play-cricket.com/home">https://ecbgirlsu13andu15clubt20.play-cricket.com/home</a>
ECB Women's Club T20 competition	<a href="https://ecbwclubt20.play-cricket.com/home">https://ecbwclubt20.play-cricket.com/home</a>
Cheshire Youth Cricket girls-only pathway coaching	<a href="https://www.cheshirecricketboard.co.uk/cricket-courses/children-courses/">https://www.cheshirecricketboard.co.uk/cricket-courses/children-courses/</a>

### Appendix 3 - Playing Pitch Strategies (footnote 12,44)

Local Authority	Links	Report date and refresh
Stockport	<a href="#">Assessment - Strategy</a>	December 2019
Wirral	<a href="#">Assessment - Strategy</a>	July 2021
Cheshire West and Chester	<a href="#">Assessment - Strategy</a>	October 2021
Cheshire East	<a href="#">Assessment - Strategy</a>	June 2021
Tameside	<a href="#">Assessment - Strategy</a>	2016 last official
Trafford	<a href="#">Assessment - Strategy - Review</a>	March 2017, review 2019.
Warrington	<a href="#">Assessment - Strategy</a>	January 2020
Halton	<a href="#">Assessment - Strategy</a>	May 2021.

### Appendix 4 – CCB Countywide Plan Priority Areas (footnotes 1,14)

	Cheshire Cricket Priority Area	Link to Inspiring Generations	
1	To engage and inspire a generation of young people to choose cricket	 MAKE CRICKET ACCESSIBLE	 ENGAGE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE
2	To develop and deliver an accessible Player Pathway that enables every child to reach their full cricketing potential	 INSPIRE THROUGH ELITE TEAMS	 ENGAGE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE
3	To drive growth and achieve excellence across all aspects of Women and Girls' cricket	 TRANSFORM WOMEN'S & GIRLS' CRICKET	 SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITIES
4	To champion the roles of coaches, officials and volunteers to maintain a strong and sustainable club network	 GROW AND NURTURE THE CORE	 SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITIES
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To enable our traditional junior and senior league structures to thrive</li> <li>To deliver 'opportunities for all' through our Urban and Disability cricket programmes</li> </ul>	 GROW AND NURTURE THE CORE	 MAKE CRICKET ACCESSIBLE
Enabled by			
	Good Governance	Strong Finance and Operations	Robust Facilities Strategy
			Safe and Welcoming for all

#### **Appendix 5 – Course participation trends** (footnote 15,18)

<b>Coaching Course</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
Autumn	628	809	944	952
Advanced	969	1089	1118	1214
District	482	<i>Covid</i>	582	661
Excellence	271	<i>Covid</i>	293	278
Summer Camps	442	960	739	TBC

#### **Appendix 6 – List of CCB Indoor venues** (footnote 16)

<b>Venue</b>	<b>Location</b>
Birkenhead School	<a href="https://www.birkenheadschool.co.uk/">https://www.birkenheadschool.co.uk/</a>
Blessed Thomas Holford School	<a href="https://www.bthcc.org.uk/">https://www.bthcc.org.uk/</a>
Bridgewater High School	<a href="https://bridgewaterhigh.org/">https://bridgewaterhigh.org/</a>
Brine Leas School	<a href="http://brineleas.co.uk/">http://brineleas.co.uk/</a>
The Grange School	<a href="https://www.grange.org.uk/">https://www.grange.org.uk/</a>
King's School Chester	<a href="https://www.kingschester.co.uk/">https://www.kingschester.co.uk/</a>
King's School Macclesfield	<a href="https://www.kingsmac.co.uk/">https://www.kingsmac.co.uk/</a>
West Hill School	<a href="https://westhillschool.co.uk/">https://westhillschool.co.uk/</a>
Wilmslow High School	<a href="https://www.wilmslowhigh.com/">https://www.wilmslowhigh.com/</a>

## Appendix 7 – Outdoor Risk Assessment (footnote 17)

### Cheshire Cricket Board Outdoor Risk Assessment

Event/Activity: Name	Risk Rating Likelihood	Risk Rating Severity/Impact	
Location:	1 = Unlikely 2 = Possible 3 = Quite likely 4 = Almost certain	1 = Minimal (minor injury or low impact on event) 2 = Moderate (moderate injury that may require hospital treatment or moderate impact on event) 3 = Serious (more serious injury requiring hospital admittance or serious impact on event) 4 = Critical (Fatality or number of persons seriously injured or major impact on event or ECB)	
Date:			
Date of Assessment:			
Assessor:	Total risk rating: 1-5 = Low priority (minimal or no action required) 6-10 = Medium priority (additional control measures or change of arrangements may be required) 11-36 = High priority (stop activity until actions to restrict/ reduce risk have been completed.)		
Other Related Documents:			



No.	Area / Activity	Hazards	Who is at risk	Control Measure	Likelihood	Severity	Risk Rating
1	Venue	Venue unsuitable for event.	All persons	(i) CCB staff have discussed requirements with venue in run up to event. (ii) Staff/supervisors to arrive prior to volunteers and young people to familiarise themselves with venue / surroundings and meet with venue staff. (iii) Any concerns to be reported to venue staff on site immediately.	1 = Unlikely	5 = Serious	1-5 = Low priority (minimal or no action required)
2	Arrival at venue.	Parking and walk from car park to venue location.	All persons	(i) Appropriate signage visible. (ii) Staff/supervisors on site to meet participants and direct to location.	1 = Unlikely	5 = Serious	1-5 = Low priority (minimal or no action required)
3	Fire	Participants unsure what to do in case of fire / fire alarm sounding	All persons	(i) Fixed fire alarms and smoke detectors are situated around buildings. Fire extinguishers are present throughout venue. (ii) As part of the venue check fire exits and evacuation meeting point identified and opening and closing mechanisms checked to see if in full working order. (iii) Any planned fire alarm tests during event to be advised.	1 = Unlikely	5 = Serious	1-5 = Low priority (minimal or no action required)

## Appendix 8 - Ground considerations for NCCA fixtures (footnotes 19,27)

Criteria	Explanatory Note
Geography	Traditionally look to play games across the county and consider travel for opponents eg Cheshire v Staffs at Nantwich (bigger attendance)
Match Type	T20 v 50 over v 3 day
External events	other big games in the area, town events etc.
Ground rankings	Cheshire County League annual pitch markings
Facilities (off-pitch)	Quality of changing rooms, scoreboard, car parking, practice nets, spectator facilities (catering, toilets etc.).
Facilities (pitch)	Quality of wicket and outfield, covers, sightscreens (black and white), availability of ground staff
Media	Wi-fi availability and quality
Feedback: formal & informal	Player/member/spectators/officials
Club attitude	Desire to host Cheshire matches
Track record	how clubs have fared in hosting e.g. some have limited personnel, others exceptional
Accessibility/attendance	Access for members, supporters etc.



## Appendix 9 – CCB Indoor Risk Assessment (footnote 21)

		<h3 style="color: yellow; background-color: purple; padding: 10px; margin: 0;">Cheshire Cricket Board Risk Assessment- Indoor</h3>			
<b>Course: Advanced Coaching</b> <b>Risk Assessment Completed by: Tom Birch</b>			<b>Venue: Birkenhead School</b> <b>Start Date: 26<sup>th</sup> <u>October</u></b>		
	ACTION	YES	NO	Comments/ <span style="color: red;">Actions if not compliant</span>	
	People Management Preparing the session				
1.1	Do all staff have up to date DBS checks, first aid and safeguarding qualifications. Does the number of staff delivering sessions meets ECB guidelines for coach & player ratio relating to softball, hardball and net practises?	Y			
1.2	Have emergency procedures for the venue been identified including nearest defibrillator, first aid equipment and nearest hospital? <i>Coaches to carry fully stocked first aid kits and phones (and/or identify nearest).</i>	Y		Arrowe Park Hospital	
1.3	Is a record of parent emergency contact details and player information including any injury or <u>illness known</u> and accessible to coaches for the session?	Y			
1.4	Is the facility and any venue equipment safe for use? <i>I.E nets, matting and wickets are checked and are safe for use. Lighting is adequate for play particularly during hardball net practises.</i>	Y			
1.5	Has a clear drop off and collection point at the start end of session has been identified and communicated to parents?	Y			

## Appendix 10 - CCB Travel Distance Matrix (footnote 21)

Number of clubs within xx miles of venue	<=10 mile	11-20 miles	21-30 miles	30+ miles
Birkenhead School	16	4	9	79
Blessed Thomas Holford	25	38	22	23
Bridgewater High School	10	32	51	15
Brine Leas School	9	20	15	63
The Grange School	14	39	38	17
King's Chester	7	19	24	58
King's Macclesfield	21	41	14	32
West Hill School	15	26	14	53
Wilmslow HS	35	32	12	29

## Appendix 11 - CCB Indoor Facility Audit example (footnote 22)

Feature	Comment	Score
Car parking on site	Yes	3
Suitable drop off area	Yes	3
Separate Lobby / waiting area	Yes	3
Viewing Area for parents	No	1
Refreshments available on site?	Not available	1
Drinking water available?	Not available	1
Defibrillator on site?	Yes	4
Male Toilets	Unisex	3
Female Toilets	Unisex	3
Disabled Toilets	Unisex	3
Suitable size of Sports Hall	small	3
Nets (State number and design)	1 double lane	2
Quality of nets (Meet ECB Regs?)	Unsure	3
Lighting (Meet ECB Regs?)	Unsure	3
Flooring Type	Mats - Facility	3
Flooring (Suitable for hard ball?)	Yes	3
Changing area / kit storage	Yes	4
Bowling machine	No	1
Other equipment – crash mats, benches etc	Yes	4
Classroom	No	1
Gym	No	1
Second Hall	No	1
Access to outdoor space	No	1

Key	1 – None available	2 – Poor / not suitable
	3 – Satisfactory	4 – Good

## Appendix 12 – Super 1s and Champion Clubs Venues (footnote 24)

# Super 1s

All disabilities welcome  
Ages 12-25

www.lordstaverners.org/super1s



**Free inclusive cricket sessions in 2023!**

**MONDAYS:**  
Birkenhead Hub | 8pm - 9pm  
The Hive Youth Zone, Bright St,  
Birkenhead CH41 4EA

**TUESDAYS:**  
Sole Hub | 4pm - 5pm  
Manor Academy, Manor Ave,  
Sale M33 5JX

**THURSDAYS:**  
Warrington Hub | 6pm - 7pm  
Woolston Learning Village, Holes Ln,  
Warrington WA1 4LS

**FRIDAYS:**  
Winsford Hub | 5pm - 6pm  
Winsford Academy, Grange Ln,  
Winsford CW7 2BT

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
Owen Williamson | 07984 196148  
owen.williamson@cheshirecricketboard.co.uk



LORD'S TAVERNERS  
Empowering young people through cricket  
Registered Charity No. 398554 | OSCR No. SC046238






Champion Club	Website link
Bowdon Vale	<a href="https://www.bowdonvalecc.org.uk/">https://www.bowdonvalecc.org.uk/</a>
Caldy	<a href="https://caldy.play-cricket.com/home">https://caldy.play-cricket.com/home</a>
Macclesfield	<a href="https://macclesfield.play-cricket.com/home">https://macclesfield.play-cricket.com/home</a>
Maritime	<a href="https://maritime.play-cricket.com/home">https://maritime.play-cricket.com/home</a>
Stockport Georgians	<a href="https://www.georgianscricket.co.uk/">https://www.georgianscricket.co.uk/</a>
Winsford	<a href="https://www.winsfordcc.co.uk/">https://www.winsfordcc.co.uk/</a>


## Appendix 13 - ECB Technical Specifications (footnote 28)

ECB Specification	Website link
Pitch and Outfield Preparation and Maintenance	<a href="#">Pitch and Outfield Preparation and Maintenance</a>
Indoor Cricket Venues	<a href="#">Indoor Cricket Venues</a>
Project Development	<a href="#">Project Development</a>


## Appendix 14 Climate Action Plans for Local Authorities in Cheshire (Footnote 33)

Local Authority	Links	Report date and refresh.
Stockport	<a href="#">Climate Plan</a>	2020
Wirral	<a href="#">Climate Plan</a>	2019
Cheshire West and Chester	<a href="#">Climate Plan - Carbon Plan</a>	2022
Cheshire East	<a href="#">Environment Plan - Carbon Plan</a>	2020-2024, 2020-2025
Tameside	<a href="#">Climate Plan</a>	2021-2026
Trafford	<a href="#">GM Climate Plan - Carbon Plan</a>	2019, 2020
Warrington	<a href="#">Climate Plan</a>	2019
Halton	<a href="#">Climate Plan</a>	2022 - 2027

## Appendix 15 – CCB Grounds Development Plan (Footnote 47)



### Cheshire Cricket Grounds' Development Plan (2023-2027)



This Development Plan has been produced on behalf of 'Cheshire Cricket' following consultation with, and contributions from, key stakeholders throughout the county. The document sets out Cheshire's vision to become a **Leading County for Grounds Development**, underlining our key objectives and aspirations for the next 5 years.

The Plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis (or more frequently as required) to reflect the evolving needs of grounds (and ground volunteers) throughout Cheshire. The information will be used to inform and underpin the wider Cheshire Cricket Board County Facility strategy, which is scheduled to be published by March 2023.

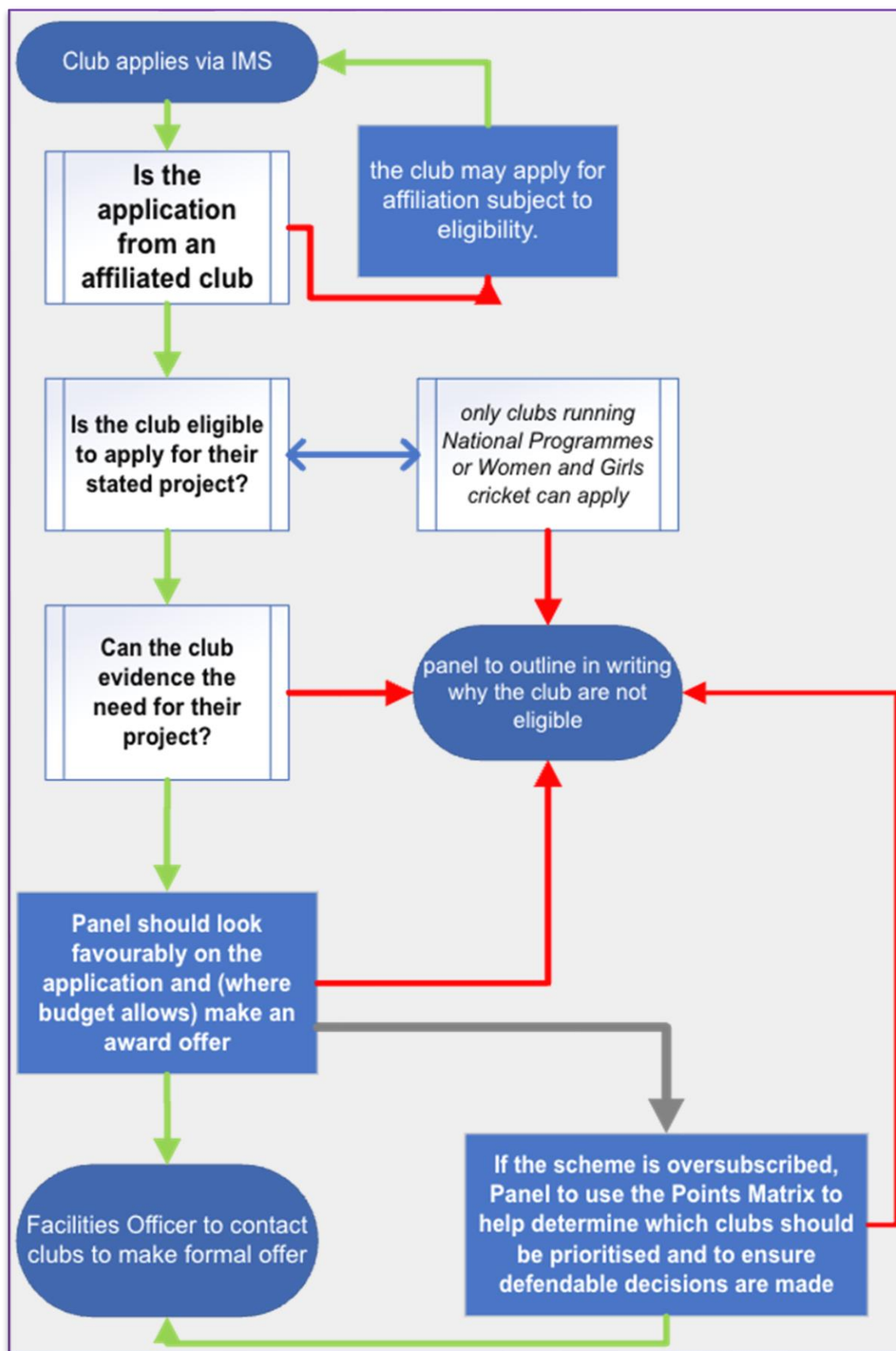
**Appendix 1** introduces the key stakeholders and co-authors of this plan, outlining their roles and responsibilities relating to [grounds](#) management in the county. Each stakeholder forms part of the **Strategy Group** charged with the oversight and delivery of this plan, which is divided into five priority areas as set out below:

Priority Area	Key objective
1. Recruitment and Training	To inspire and upskill a new generation of grounds volunteers and officials
2. Reporting and Recording	To encourage timely and accurate collection of data to support facility development aims
3. Supporting the Network	To enable easy access for clubs to the County Pitch Advisors and Pitch Advisory Service
4. Marketing and Promotion	To make grounds management more visible and relevant throughout the County
5. Reward and Recognition	To champion the roles of grounds volunteers and officials through Award schemes and other initiatives

Last Updated – January 2023



Appendix 16 - County Grant Fund Panel Processes (footnote 50)



## Appendix 17 - County Grant Fund Panel Processes (footnote 51)

Category	Criteria	Points	Comments
Affiliation Agreement and return of Club Audits	All Clubs to sign Affiliation Agreement and pay affiliation fee to CCCC	N/A	From Autumn 2021, Clubs will be asked to sign a new Affiliation Agreement which includes reference to the Safe Hands Management System, Anti-Discrimination code and other relevant ECB policies .
Safe Hands Management System (SHMS)	When enrolled on SHMS, all club officials and volunteers must show as 'compliant' to be eligible for grant funding.	N/A	Clubs must be able to demonstrate minimum safeguarding standards. For clubs not enrolled on SHMS, evidence of relevant safeguarding and DBS checks must be submitted.
Development Planning	Active (within last 5 years) Club Development Plan and/or member survey via ECB Creating Welcoming Environments documentation	25	Clubs should be able to demonstrate the project they are applying for is part of their wider club plans
Clubmark Accreditation <i>Currently Suspended</i>	Accredited clubs Non-Clubmark clubs	50 0	Clubs have successfully completed the accreditation (including planning and delivery) within the deadline
Women and Girls	Women <b>and</b> Girls teams Women or Girls teams	100 50	Clubs must have a recognised Women and / or girls section, which includes fielding teams in soft or hard all fixtures
ECB National Programmes	All Stars centre Dynamos centre All Stars Activators (18plus) All Stars Junior Activators (13plus)	50 50 5 points per Activator 2 points per Activator	There are no points allocated for number of participants as some clubs have a much bigger catchment area.

Disability Cricket	ECB Champion Club Club providing other recognised disability activity (link to Super 1s etc)	100 50	Application should be able to evidence how 'all' members of the club can benefit. Projects should be 'inclusive' and those able to demonstrate a positive impact on disability cricket will receive a higher score.
Urban / Non-traditional	Projects that support the County Wide Plan and align to Inspiring Generations will be considered on merit	TBC	CCB to work in partnership with other funders (local authority, sport England etc) to support projects where feasible or align to revenue streams like Funds4Runs
Active Coaches (minimum qualification ECB Foundation 1)	1 coach per 8 children 1 coach per 16 children 1 coach per 24 children	50 25 10	Higher the ratio of coaches to players, the higher the score. Excludes All Stars and Dynamos numbers who do not require a qualified coach to lead sessions
Volunteers and officials in non-coaching roles  *To be added from 2021	26+ 16-25 10-15	15 10 5	Information to be taken from SHMS or club audit for those not yet enrolled. Any 'compliant' non-coaching role will count towards the score
Junior teams	Number of Junior teams playing competitively	10 points each	Teams must play a minimum of one fixture to qualify – can be in a league, cup, festival or part of Cheshire's Get the Game On structure
Senior teams	Number of Senior teams playing competitively	10 points each	Teams must play a minimum of one fixture to qualify – can be in a league, cup, festival or part of Cheshire's Get the Game On structure. Includes midweek and Over 40s teams, plus U19s.