



## CHANGES TO NATIONAL PROGRAMMES IN 2024

Dear all,

Following our recent communication to you regarding delays to the launch of National Programmes this year, I am now able to provide you with further detail of these challenges.

The most important factor in all the work that has gone on over the last few months to try and overcome these challenges is the safety of our participants, the volunteers and the staff across the cricket family who work so tirelessly across the year.

We know that there have been unanswered questions and frustrations particularly in recent weeks and we hope that this update provides the clarity that many of you have been understandably asking for.

I want to inform you that some of the National Programmes equipment - most notably the balls, but also the Dynamos Cricket batting tee and the National Programmes PVC banners, have been identified as containing a group of chemicals widely used in plastics called phthalates and that following independent testing, the phthalates in these items were found to be at levels in excess of those permitted by relevant regulations.

### **What does this mean for centres or people with existing equipment?**

**To better understand the issue, we instructed an external expert company to conduct a risk assessment in relation to the balls which has not determined any direct risk to participants in the programmes in relation to the balls.** We are awaiting the results of further risk assessments in relation to the Dynamos Cricket batting tee and the National Programmes PVC banners, and will provide an update on the outcome of these (and any other items which require a risk assessment following independent testing) in due course.

**Both Trading Standards and the Office for Product Safety and Standards have been informed of this issue in relation to the balls, and neither has indicated a need to recall the balls already in circulation from previous years' programmes. However, out of an abundance of caution, we are advising that any individuals or clubs with the balls no longer use them. The Dynamos Cricket batting tee and PVC banners should also no longer be used.**

We are awaiting independent test results for some other items but can confirm that the bats and stumps given to All Stars participants, and the bats, stumps and cones in kit bags provided to centres delivering the programmes, have all been tested and they do not have the same issue and can therefore continue to be used.

We are very sorry that the affected products haven't met the standards we'd expect, and for any concern this may cause you.

**A full list of affected products can be found in our [FAQs](#).**

### **What does it mean for this year's programmes?**

We know how much All Stars participants value the participant packs they receive and how important club equipment is to all those who run sessions. That's why, for this year's programme we have been working with suppliers to try to find multiple solutions to provide kit and equipment with the appropriate safety assurances.

We are extremely sorry to let you know that despite all our efforts, it is now not possible to work with our existing supplier to provide complete assurance, or to work with a new supplier to provide all that is needed. We do not underestimate how disappointing the impact of this will be.

**Sadly, this means we will not be able to provide equipment to participants and clubs this year (other than new balls we hope to provide as detailed later in this letter). We have worked hard to ensure that All Stars and Dynamos participants will continue to receive t-shirts and we hope that at the very least, by providing t-shirts we can continue to provide children with a positive welcome to cricket which is such a big part of the ethos of All Stars and Dynamos. It also means that from a participant perspective, Dynamos remains unaffected.**

**We have revised the recommended price point and the contribution to clubs and centres to reflect the changes this year and to offer some financial support to clubs to help with the challenges that they will face.**

- The recommended retail price (RRP) for All Stars Cricket will be reduced to £30 for the 2024 season (a reduction of £10 from the 2023 RRP) in recognition that participants will not be getting a bag, bat and ball. The RRP for Dynamos will remain the same.
- In total, in 2024;
  - All Stars Cricket clubs and centres will receive £25 per participant
  - Dynamos Cricket clubs and centres will receive £30 per participant

This comprises:

- From the RRP, All Stars Cricket clubs and centres will receive £20 per participant. Compared to £10 in 2023 to provide additional club support.
- From the RRP, Dynamos Cricket clubs and centres will receive £25 per participant. This is the same as in 2023.
- All clubs and centres will receive an additional £5 per participant, automatically added to the payment amount above. This replaces the online shop credit offer in previous years.

We intend to send out new phthalate-free balls from a different supplier to all clubs registered to deliver All Stars and Dynamos this year to support with the delivery of activity in 2024. The timelines for this are still to be confirmed and we recommend that clubs and centres use tennis balls in the interim period.

By no means do we think that this email will answer all your questions and so we have compiled a list of FAQs for clubs which can be found [here](#), and for participants which can be found [here](#). Of course, if there is anything that is not answered within these documents please don't hesitate to contact your local cricket board or the [ECB Helpdesk](#).

We will be sharing an [update](#) with participants shortly.

We know how much families value our National Programmes, and particularly the equipment we have been able to provide through All Stars to give children their first taste of cricket. We also know how critical the equipment is for you and your volunteers who run the sessions and do not underestimate the impact that this will have, including sadly the reality that some clubs may not be able to run sessions this year.

I'm very sorry to have to write with this news, but I hope you will understand why we are taking a cautious approach. Thank you for your understanding and the relentless work of you and your teams. It is never underestimated and we are forever grateful for all that you do.

Kind Regards,

Cordelia Brown  
Head of National Programmes  
ECB



England & Wales Cricket Board, Lord's Cricket Ground, London, NW8 8QZ