

**GET
THE
GAME
ON**



BEING A GAME CHANGER

A guide to helping leagues
get change to happen

Making change happen can be difficult and challenging; this guide is intended to help cricket leagues and clubs, introduce changes to the game locally so that players enjoy their game day more, and will help keep teams thriving.

People generally worry about change for two main reasons; firstly that it won't work and secondly that it will! This guide will help you ensure that the changes you make will improve the game.

There are some simple steps that will help to make change happen across your league, they are...

This probably all feels a bit like reading a management book so far; don't worry! Here comes some practical advice and examples of what other cricket leagues have done to help your league get change to happen.



#getthegameon

This is the important first step — unless everyone understands the problem in the same way then it's really hard to change things.

- It may be that the number of teams in the league has been reducing over a period of time, or more games being conceded as a team can't field a side, or that too many games are happening with fewer than 22 players.
- If this is the case then it's really important you explain this to clubs and players, they might not know this particularly if their club / team is doing fine.
- One source of information is the National Cricket Playing Survey. This data shows that people love playing cricket and that some aspects of the game frustrate them and could be improved. It also contains data that shows how players would like the game to be.
- Play-Cricket shows how many games are conceded and how many are played with fewer than 22 players.
- Your local County Cricket Board has full access to the data and they are there to help you understand what it is saying.

TOP TIP

Take time to show people the data and share the issue

Data is incredibly useful and so are stories about how people feel about cricket. Have a look at some comments we have had in response to our surveys.

DISSATISFACTION WITH THE START TIME OF GAMES

Start times are too late which means we get home at 10pm after longer away trips.

Regular Player, Kent

Earlier start times needed. Please make the changes — we have lost enough 30+ year old cricketers already.

Regular Player, Sussex

The whole format is living in the past ... starting at around midday would enable people to get the best out of the WHOLE day and encourage new players.

Regular Player, Surrey

#getthegameon

1. BE CLEAR WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED CONT...

HERE'S AN EXAMPLE OF WHY CHANGE IS NEEDED:

Late finishes aren't popular with Occasional players

TOP TIP

Use real examples from real people to illustrate what it means to them

END TIME PREFERENCES:

Matches finish late and disrupt my social activities.

Occasional player, Yorkshire, Age 23

We need to finish earlier so that players can still arrange to do family things on Saturday evenings.

Cameo player, Somerset

Would like to finish earlier to return home for my children's bedtime – some games we don't get home 'til gone 8.30pm

Occasional player, Sussex

POSITIVE EVIDENCE OF REFORM: WHAT PLAYERS SAID...

Earlier starts = better availability as players can have a Saturday night.

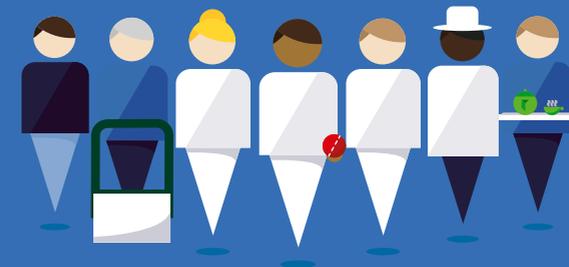
Occasional player, Cheshire

The reduction in overs and start times has worked a treat for our club – we have had a lot more players returning to the game.

Regular player, Yorkshire

The change to 40 overs starting at 1pm has been a positive change and games are now finishing at a more practical time

Occasional player, Wales



#getthegameon

2. SHOW THE BENEFITS OF CHANGE

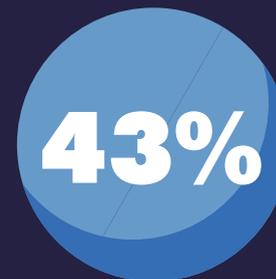
It's really important that people see that change will improve things. Many leagues have examples of this particularly regarding the format of the game.

Leagues and ECB are finding that changes are being well received so be confident in what you are doing. Here are some examples of what players have told us after change has been made.



41% OF PLAYERS IN THE LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND CRICKET LEAGUE SAID EARLIER START TIMES HAD MADE THINGS BETTER, ONLY 16% WORSE.

69% OF PLAYERS IN THE HERTFORDSHIRE SARACENS LEAGUE SAID THE MOVE TO WIN /LOSE CRICKET HAD IMPROVED THE GAME, 15% SAID IT WAS WORSE.



43% OF PLAYERS IN THE WARWICKSHIRE CRICKET LEAGUE SAID NEW REGULATIONS TO INCREASE THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF BOWLERS HAD MADE THEIR EXPERIENCE BETTER, ONLY 17% WORSE.

53% OF PLAYERS WERE HAPPY WITH THE NEW RAIN REGULATIONS THE NORFOLK CRICKET LEAGUE INTRODUCED, ONLY 6% WERE NOT.



Restrictions to 10 overs per bowler give much more opportunity to developing players.

Occasional player, Hertfordshire

3. COLLECT EVIDENCE CHANGE IS WANTED LOCALLY

People may want to see evidence that local players want change. Collecting this evidence is a key step. We can be really good at asking what players don't like, what is really helpful is asking players what they would like or their preferred alternative.

Derbyshire County League



54% OF PLAYERS WOULD BE HAPPY WITH THE CHANGE IF MAXIMUM POINTS WERE AVAILABLE IN RAIN REDUCED GAMES, ONLY 12% WOULD BE UNHAPPY.

Worcestershire Cricket League



69% OF PLAYERS WOULD BE HAPPY WITH RESTRUCTURING TO REDUCE TRAVEL, ONLY 6% WOULD BE UNHAPPY.

TOP TIP

Ask players about the specific change you want to introduce

4. INFLUENCE THE KEY PEOPLE LOCALLY

This is vital. You will know the influential people in your league or club and it's important they support you.

- Often the people who work really hard making clubs function are no longer playing and may not appreciate that players may want their cricket to be different.
- It's particularly important that the people who take the time to attend league AGMs and other meetings where decisions are made understand and reflect the views of players. Think about who actually will be voting on proposals and make sure they understand what is being proposed and why.
- Players need to play their part. Communicate directly to players about the proposals and get them to influence their club committee and league representative.



You have done all the right things but sometimes change fails at the final hurdle, the vote. We have all seen this happen. Take a look at some of the most common scenarios and ideas on how you can avoid them.

→ No one will propose the change that you want to implement

*Make sure that your **League Management Committee** has the power to put forward proposals as the Bristol and District LMC have done.*

→ People don't understand what is being proposed and why

This is where spending time on the first four steps is critical.

→ People who are voting are those who were just able to come to the meeting

Make voting a specific responsibility of a certain member of the club committee e.g. Club Chair or a captain, just like the North Staffs and South Cheshire League.

→ People voting haven't asked their players

This is where making voting someone's specific responsibility can really help and tell the players who is voting on their behalf, they probably don't know.

→ The vote is derailed by particularly vocal people at the AGM

At the AGM don't have a debate about the merits of the proposal just check everyone understands the proposal. It is important that time has previously been spent on explaining the benefits of change.

→ Peer pressure on the night influences how people vote

*The Gloucestershire County Cricket League now have an **online** vote prior to the AGM and just announce the result on the night.*

→ There are just too many proposals on the night and it takes too long

*The Cornwall Cricket League have an **online** prevote by clubs to work out which proposals stand a good chance of being adopted – you can then spend time influencing people on these.*

→ People vote against changes even though they are not affected

*The Northamptonshire Cricket League allow **only those divisions** affected by any proposal to vote on change.*

There are also some further steps you can take to make change more likely on the following pages — some of these can feel challenging, don't worry some leagues have done these.

5. MAKING IT HAPPEN CONT...

- Allow the **League Management Committee** to determine the playing conditions leaving the constitutional issues determined by all members

South Yorkshire Senior Cricket League

The members of the League Management Committee (LMC) are elected to manage the league and have executive authority to make all decisions on behalf of member clubs including changes to the rules. This allows for decisions to be taken more easily in response to player insight as there is no requirement to win club votes on individual proposals. The LMC is accountable to clubs and all members of the LMC must stand for election annually at the AGM. The LMC meets monthly all year round and can co-opt members and set up sub-committees to manage areas of business.

- Move to a system whereby proposed changes that are supported by the League Management Committee will happen unless clubs vote against

Shepherd Neame Essex League

At the last AGM of the Shepherd Neame Essex League clubs voted to allow the committee, by using a small working group including members from clubs, to make changes to playing formats and regulations. Changes would be binding for the following season but then would need to be officially voted in or out.

- Ensure that changes to playing conditions only require a **simple majority** — many leagues have higher thresholds which prevents change

Shrubbery Somerset Cricket League

The Shrubbery Somerset Cricket League held an EGM in April 2016 to vote to replace the need for a 2/3rds majority needed for changes to be implemented to a simple majority. As a result changes to reduce numbers of overs in the game and to increase the minimum number of bowlers needed were agreed; previously this had not happened as, while a majority were in favour, the 2/3rds threshold was not achieved. Furthermore the changes were implemented immediately for the 2016 season.

6. SHOW THE CHANGE WORKS

Finally, this is the step we all forget as we want to move on to the next urgent issue people are chasing us about. It's really important we get feedback as to how well the change has worked.

Ask for feedback from players mid-season – use your league Facebook page or Twitter to get the conversation started and see if the changes are working for players.

Then follow up with a review at the end of the season.

#getthegameon

GETTHEGAMEON.CO.UK
#GETTHEGAMEON