

A NEW DAWN

FOR THE HUDDERSFIELD CRICKET LEAGUE



BACK STORY

PART ONE



HUDDERSFIELD

ECB CRICKET LEAGUE



A NEW DAWN. AN ECB DAWN.

As a cricketing community, we have approached a fork in the road. A journey that has been evolving for over 125 years. Changing developments in cricket mean we are now looking again at two options; whether to become an ECB Premier League or continue as an independent league.

The league, a committee containing members from at least seven clubs, has assessed both options deeply. The unanimous opinion is that to develop and improve continually, the best way possible is by becoming an ECB Premier League and this document will set out why.

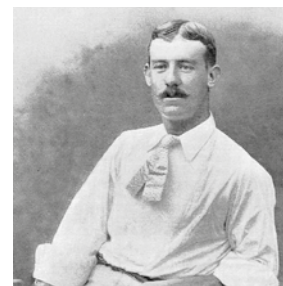
We know that to go forward with our application requires the blessing of our member clubs, many of whom have work ahead of them to fulfil the required criteria. This document provides an insight to what lies in the road ahead in a new, exciting dawn for Huddersfield Cricket.

OUR REPUTATION

Founded in March 1891, our League has done a great deal for Yorkshire cricket over the years. We can delve into the annals of history to reel off an impressive list of players who all started their careers with Huddersfield League clubs before going on to play for England.

Percy Holmes (Paddock)
Ken Taylor (Primrose Hill)
Chris Balderstone (Paddock)
Billy Bates (Lascelles Hall)
Willie Watson (Paddock)
Richard Blakey (Elland)
George H Hirst (Kirkheaton)
Wilfred Rhodes (Kirkheaton)
Schofield Haigh (Armitage Bridge)
Alec Coxon (Dalton)
Eddie Leadbeater (Almondbury)
Ryan Sidebottom (Meltham).

Add to this the even bigger list of exciting Huddersfield League cricketers who went on to forge brilliant County careers including some currently in Will Fraine (Yorkshire), Arron Lilley (Leicestershire) and James Wharton (Yorkshire).





30 FOR 0 WICKETS
OVERS 35

TIMELINE

The roots of the ECB Premier League concept started with a blueprint in 1997 and in the last decade has formed how we look at Club cricket in Yorkshire today. The timeline below shows the evolution and journey which have led us to this point.

ECB CREATE BLUEPRINT

The ECB publish “Raising the Standard”, a blueprint for the future playing structure of club cricket. This introduced the concept of ECB Premier Leagues, designed to raise the playing standard of the top tier of club cricket and to bridge the gap between recreational cricket and the First Class game.

1997

BIG PLANS FOR THE YCB

The YCB, under instructions from Lords, start to plan for four ECB Premier Leagues within the county based upon geography. The HCL are involved in several meetings at Headingley but decline to adopt the concept. The alternative was to dissolve and feed into the Bradford League so we decide instead to remain an independent league.

2014

MORE LEAGUES JOIN

With the addition of several more clubs, The Yorkshire County League splits in two to become Yorkshire ECB County Premier League North and South. The Bradford League also become an ECB Premier League and consequently the Yorkshire Central League is dissolved to feed into it.

2016

THE NEW ERA?

With clubs approval, the first season as the Huddersfield ECB Premier Cricket League could begin as soon as 2024.

2024

1998

2015

2022

THE NATIONAL NETWORK

A national network of Premier Leagues was established, with funding from the ECB. The Leagues have to meet the published ECB assessment criteria and they receive accreditation on an annual basis. Birmingham & District became the first ECB Premier League.

YORKSHIRE ECB LEAGUE

The Yorkshire County League becomes the first ECB Premier League in the county, beginning life with 14 clubs spread from York in the north down to Sheffield in the south.

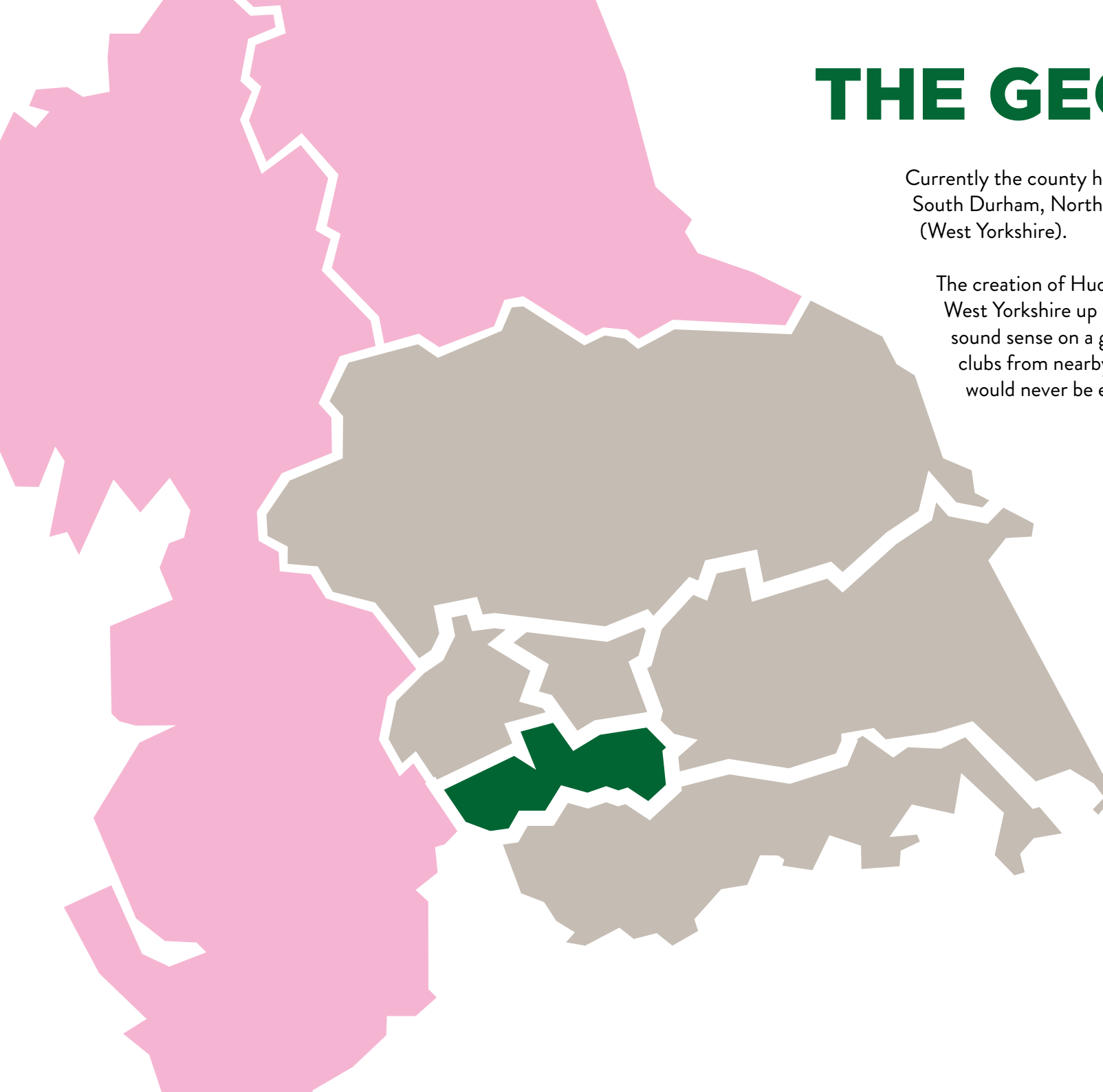
BACK ON THE TABLE

Following Covid, changes by the Home Office regarding player visas and a desire to further improve the Huddersfield Cricket League, the committee decide to revisit the concept again. The YCB and Bradford League are encouraging towards the idea when consulted.

THE GEOGRAPHY

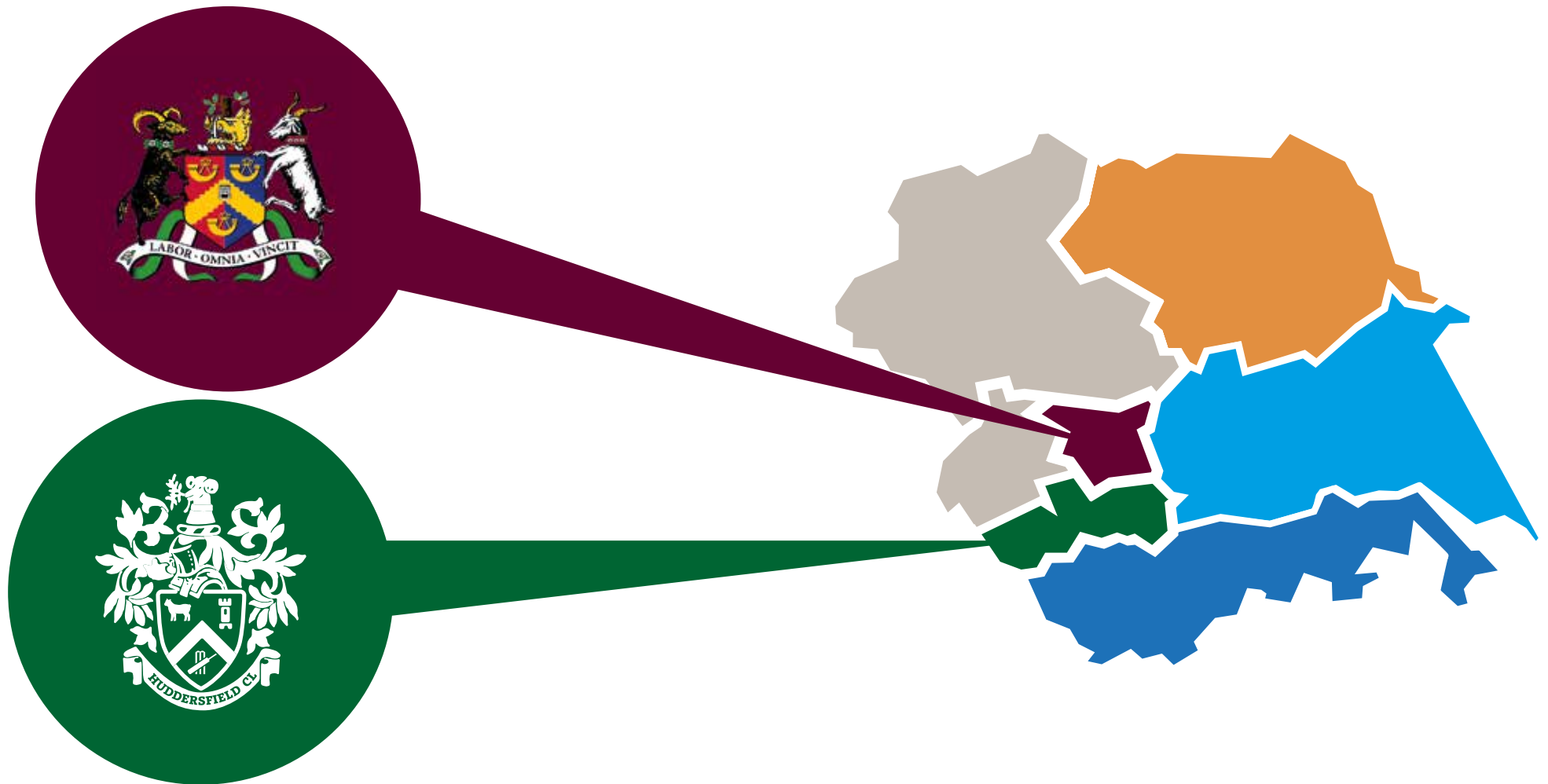
Currently the county has four Premier Leagues in North Yorkshire/ South Durham, North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and Bradford (West Yorkshire).

The creation of Huddersfield as an ECB Premier League splits West Yorkshire up into two fairly even sections and makes sound sense on a geographical level. It would ensure even if clubs from nearby leagues fed into the HCL, the travel time would never be excessive.



THE PATH IS PAVED

West Yorkshire is a very large and heavily populated area. The Bradford League, to their own admission, would find it difficult to run a true pyramid system due to travelling difficulties in built-up areas. However both they and YCB can see the advantages of our league being responsible for the western corridor and themselves for the east.



THE ADVANTAGES

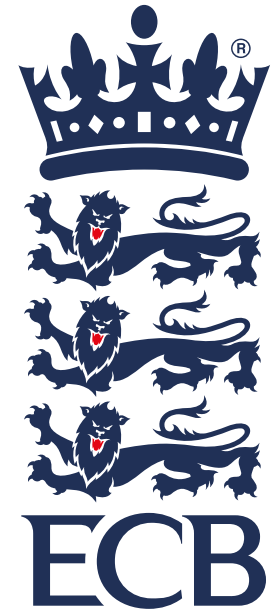
PART TWO



HUDDERSFIELD
ECB CRICKET LEAGUE

THE ECB AND THE WIDER CRICKETING COMMUNITY

The ECB will work closely with Premier Leagues to bring about overall improvements to facilities and playing conditions. They instantly recognise an ECB Premier League and far less so for an independent league that is out of their sphere. It makes sense a league our size has the best possible working and communication channels with the ECB and benefit from what that relationship brings.



THE PLAYERS

Players will have a clear pathway to progress in line with their talents. Young cricketers in County academy setups shouldn't feel the need to prematurely leave their club to pursue perceived higher-level cricket in another ECB Premier League to further their game. They'll have it in Huddersfield amongst players they already know!

A newly adopted fair play marking system between captains and umpires will help to ensure that a game of cricket is a happy experience for everyone and trends, areas for improvement or sportsmanship are easily actioned or explored further.



OVERSEAS PLAYERS

For years, the league has attracted the finest in international talent due to the Huddersfield League being one of the toughest environments for 'hard club cricket'. In recent times, a global shift in recognising strong leagues as ECB Premier Leagues places our league back in the focal point of international players.

The Home Office change to granting visas mean an ECB Premier League club can fast track this process whereas an independent league club often are forced to resort to tourist visas, lowering the quality of player they can bring in as an overseas player. The process time for these visas, affected by global events, is often far less streamlined.





UMPIRING

A marking system for Umpires helps to create self improvement and offers a clear pathway to national cricket. An independent league unavoidably creates its own natural ceiling which has seen ambitious umpires leave early for opportunities elsewhere. An ECB League forms more of a transparent structure which promotes high performing umpires up the ladder.



CLUBS AND FACILITIES

Facilities will be constantly improving due to improved funding and easier access to grants via ECB channels. Ground standards in the top two divisions will need to reach a specified criteria, however the means to achieve this and enjoy facilities to be proud of is certainly within reach of most clubs.



CLUB REQUIREMENTS

PART THREE



HUDDERSFIELD
ECB CRICKET LEAGUE



CLUBMARK ACCREDITATION

Most clubs will be already aware of Club Mark; the ECB's standard set out for clubs. Becoming an ECB Premier League will mean all clubs with a team in the top two tiers would have to be Club Mark Accredited. The earlier incarnation of Club Mark required a heavy amount of work and criteria to fulfil however thankfully the once seven page document has now been distilled into two pages, most of which our clubs fulfil. A last push for a greater good.



SAFE HANDS SYSTEM

A large focal point of ECB Premier league is junior cricket and ensuring your club is a safe environment for children to enjoy and play cricket. All clubs will need to hold Safe Hands Accreditation, ensuring standards are met in maintaining a perfect environment for youths, vulnerable people to blossom.



JUNIOR TEAMS

The conveyor belt of players is essential to the game which is why all clubs in the top two tiers are required to field a minimum of three junior teams up to and including U15. Each coach must be at level xx (TBC) to ensure their mentoring, guidance and coaching is at an appropriate level.





PLAYERS REQUIREMENTS

A better understanding of the type of injuries and potential risks of cricket participation at all levels is driven by the Injury Surveillance Scheme. Any injury or incident at your club that requires attention senior or junior, medical or otherwise is to be recorded in a short online form which can be monitored by the league making clubs an even safer place to enjoy cricket.

LEAGUE REQUIREMENTS

PART FOUR



HUDDERSFIELD
ECB CRICKET LEAGUE

THE COMMITTEE, BROADENED

The league has to include a Compliance Officer to oversee adherence to policies of diversity who can provide assistance to clubs in compliance to Club Mark, Safe Hands and other policies. The League has already identified a candidate who has agreed to come on board.



ADHERENCE TO POLICIES

The league will publish an Anti-discrimination Code, General Conduct Regulations and an Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Plan to ensure it is fulfilling its obligations as a top-level Premier League.



COUNTY PARTNERSHIPS

The County Partnership Agreement (CPA) which is already in place offers funding to ECB Premier Leagues (£450m across the network for a five year period from 2017). The funding can be used to continually improve cricketing infrastructure across the league. A more effective partnership from the First Class Counties, through the National Counties to the top level of recreational cricket.

We would need to deliver our arm of the Inspiring Generations Strategy; an initiative which connects communities and inspires people to discover and share their passion for cricket.



UMPIRE RECRUITMENT

The work already being done on recruiting Umpires has been tireless and, although some success has come from it, the churn of new candidates is still far inferior to those stepping down. This is clearly a focus point for the league to develop a new strategy as part of an ECB directive which will be designed to radically improve Umpire numbers.

