



## Inner-city children reap benefits of 'Street' cricket

*New report highlights positive impact of cricket scheme on London's youth*

Cricket is helping young people in inner-city areas of London to become more disciplined, more engaged and more tolerant towards one another, according to new research published today (Tuesday 18 August).

An independent evaluation report by Loughborough University, commissioned by partners of StreetChance supported by Barclays Spaces for Sports, also highlights how the inclusive nature of cricket is helping to re-connect previously marginalised school pupils. Teachers are also using cricket to overcome language barriers in schools where English is often a second language for pupils.

StreetChance is a three-year project being delivered initially across 10 London boroughs<sup>[1]</sup>. The initiative, launched in July 2008, uses cricket to engage young people from a range of backgrounds in areas affected by youth crime and anti-social behaviour. It is delivered in school as well as out of school through regular community sessions.

In its first year StreetChance aimed to reach 5,000 young people in state schools and local communities across London through "Street 20", a fast-paced, more accessible version of cricket that uses a tennis ball bound with electrical tape, with games lasting just 20 minutes.

End of year figures announced today show that the initiative actually reached 7,000 youngsters in total - 40% were girls, 67% were from black and minority ethnic communities and 4% had special educational needs.

Co-author of the Loughborough University report, Ruth Jeanes, said: "StreetChance is having a number of positive benefits on the young people it is currently engaging. The inclusive sessions have motivated young people and enabled pupils with behavioural and learning difficulties to gain confidence."

The report also found that the community cricket sessions provided a diversionary activity

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<sup>[1]</sup> Brent, Croydon, Ealing, Hackney, Kensington & Chelsea, Lewisham, Newham, Southwark, Tower Hamlets and Wandsworth

for youngsters and prevented them from 'hanging about' the streets or getting bored at home. In Southwark the initiative has even initiated contact between communities from 'rival' estates and encouraged them to work together at the weekly *StreetChance* sessions.

Mark Johnson, Partnership Inspector at Southwark Police, said: "The *StreetChance* programme has enabled us to deliver fun, diversionary activities through sport, providing positive role models for young people and helping to break down barriers between diverse communities which have historically never integrated. The project has successfully used cricket to allow us to engage positively with young people, and the local community say there are fewer instances of anti-social behaviour while the sessions are running."

Commissioner for the Metropolitan Police Service, Sir Paul Stephenson, added: "As one element of our youth strategy across London, the life skills that *StreetChance* promotes, such as teamwork and leadership, are key to a young person's all round development. The Met is committed to understanding how it can best hear the concerns of young Londoners. *StreetChance* has helped to promote this engagement between police and young people."

England cricketer and *StreetChance* ambassador Ravi Bopara said: "The *StreetChance* project gives kids something to do in the evening rather than just hanging out... It can definitely be a bit of a disadvantage coming from the inner city because, unlike other parts of the country, there just aren't the facilities." Bopara's old school, Brampton Manor in Newham, is one of the 60 London schools involved in the scheme.

In the report teachers stressed the importance of cricket for teaching pupils to cope with both success and failure, while pupils acknowledged the team-work skills they had learned through the cricket sessions.

One teacher from Tower Bridge Primary School in Southwark describes how pupils 'were not able to work together before, they were barely able to work in pairs at the beginning of the year, so to see them working as a class is a beautiful thing'.

A year 8 female pupil from a participating school explains: "It's like you have to learn to get on with one another, even if you might not like that person so much, you have to get on with it so that you can play the game well."

Several teachers and coaches described the value of cricket for boosting pupils' self-esteem and teaching discipline. Tony Joseph, one of the *StreetChance* community coaches, said: "One specific lad I remember was terribly behaved...it was only after I gave him responsibility and I said to him 'you're the captain today, you're looking after the team' and he basically turned into a different person during my cricket lesson, he behaved, he was involved, he wanted to take part in things."

*StreetChance* is a partnership between *Chance to shine*, Barclays Spaces for Sports, Cricket for Change, the Metropolitan Police Service and Positive Futures. For more details on *StreetChance* and to read the full Institute of Youth Sport report visit [streetchance.co.uk](http://streetchance.co.uk)

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## **Notes to editor**

### **About StreetChance partners**

#### ***Chance to Shine***

*Chance to Shine* is the Cricket Foundation's campaign to regenerate competitive cricket in state schools. A 10-year programme, it is the single biggest sports development programme ever seen in this country. It aims to educate state school children through cricket by establishing high-quality, sustainable cricket-led educational programmes in a third of all UK state schools by 2015. *StreetChance* is an extension of the *Chance to shine* model for inner-city areas, providing 25 hours of professional cricket coaching and competition during the summer term.

#### **Barclays Spaces for Sports**

Launched in 2004, Barclays Spaces for Sports is an award-winning community sponsorship scheme and the single biggest investment in grassroots sport ever by a private company in the UK. The programme delivers sustainable sports sites and projects to communities across the UK and overseas. It has already created 200 sustainable sports sites covering a range of sports including cricket, giving more than half a million disadvantaged people the opportunity to benefit. Barclays Spaces for Sports is part of Barclays global community programme which invested £52.4m across 52 countries in 2007.

#### **Cricket for Change**

Cricket for Change has delivered Street 20 cricket over the past three years in projects in Jamaica, Sri Lanka, South Africa and London. Street 20 is a version of cricket developed by Cricket for Change. It has its roots in Pakistan where it is called tape-ball Cricket. The significant features of Street 20 are its speed, its ability to be played almost anywhere with very limited equipment, and its use of a tennis ball bound with tape. Cricket for Change has recently changed its name from the LCCA, which has over 25 years experience of using cricket to help disadvantaged young people. Targeting housing estates in deprived areas in London, Street 20 has been supported by Metropolitan Police units, including the Tactical Support Group (TSG) and Hackney Police.

#### **Positive Futures**

Positive Futures is a Home Office-funded national sports and activity-based social inclusion programme, managed by young people's charity Catch22. The programme has 118 projects across the UK and works in some of the country's most deprived neighbourhoods.

#### **The Metropolitan Police Service**

The Metropolitan Police Service is committed to working with young people to make London safer. This project follows MPS involvement with other sports initiatives such as Kickz and Met-track which provide an added opportunity for police officers to meet with young people regularly and talk to them about crime and safety issues. Through investment in such projects the MPS aims to further develop confidence and trust between police and young people.

