

# Recreational cricket set to return from July 11 after government green light

Prime Minister Boris Johnson says the grassroots sport can resume from next week and a full set of guidelines will be published in due course. The ECB are "delighted"



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- **Cricket is safe insist ECB**
- **Teas and dressing rooms blocking recreational cricket return says PM**

Recreational cricket has been given the green light to resume from July 11, Prime Minister Boris Johnson has confirmed.

The announcement came after Mr Johnson suggested teas and dressing rooms would be a major obstacle between the grassroots game returning amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

An ECB statement later clarified they were confident they had covered all possible areas of risk in their four-step plan to resume the sport.

A further update from the governing body confirmed that "positive discussions" had taken place with UK Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden.

But after appearing to suggest that the sport would remain under consideration, Mr Johnson has announced recreational cricket can return from next week, accompanied by a full set of guidelines.



"We do want to work as fast as possible to get cricket back, and we will be publishing guidelines in the next few days so that cricket can resume in time for next weekend – or cricket can resume next weekend," he said. "I think that's what we're able to say today.

Chief Medical Officer Chris Whitty added: "It is perfectly possible to have cricket where people do keep their distance and, provided that people don't do things that are clearly not sensible – ranging from hugging the bowler if they've just bowled someone for a duck through to spitting on the ball – it should be possible to make the game itself really very safe because it's an outdoor sport at a distance.

"There are, however, risks associated which we just need to think about and deal with. These are perfectly manageable, but the particular ones would be people going in afterwards in a crowded space, for example, in a pavilion to have tea or a beer."

An ECB statement read: "The ECB has today had positive discussions with @OliverDowden about the return of recreational cricket, with groups of more than six able to gather. We remain optimistic that we will have positive news to share in the not too distant future.

They later added: "We are delighted that the UK Government have given their permission for recreational cricket to return from next weekend.

"We will shortly be publishing our approved guidelines to help clubs and players prepare for cricket's return."