

Npower opens new Urban Cricket facility

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The new npower Urban Cricket facility in King Edward Park, Nottingham, has opened with a huge six from England cricket international Stuart Broad marking the opening.

The new facility, which has transformed a disused area of the park, is the fourth of five purpose-built cricket facilities to be opened across the country as part of the Urban Cricket (http://cricket.npower.com/Urban_cricket/index.htm) initiative. It provides a permanent space for children in Nottingham to learn and practice their cricket skills, turning them into possible stars of the future.

In addition to the facility, five school playgrounds in the Nottingham area have also been redeveloped into Urban Cricket Zones. These zones will help children with an interest in cricket to practice and develop their skills.

Working in partnership with Nottingham City Council and the Nottinghamshire County Cricket Board, the development of the facility and its five supporting zones, creates a tiered community development programme with a clear route for children to follow, from learning basic skills all the way up to playing club cricket.

Stuart Broad said: "It's fantastic to see initiatives such as npower (http://www.npower.com/web/At_home/index.htm) Urban Cricket giving youngsters the chance to get out there and play the game. It's going to make a real difference to the local community and will hopefully produce plenty more first class cricketers for Notts."

Chris Broad, Stuart's father and an ex-Nottinghamshire and England cricketer himself, who also attended the opening, commented: "The npower Urban Cricket facilities are a great way of developing a legacy for the game and allowing children in the area to practice their skills."

Councillor Dave Trimble, Portfolio Holder for Communities, Leisure and Culture said: "We're thrilled to be a part of this fantastic cricket initiative and can't wait to see local young people making the most of the facilities and developing their game. Nottingham has a great tradition for cricket with Trent Bridge central to our sporting landscape. Let's hope this will ensure some more home grown talent playing for Notts soon."

npower Urban Cricket (http://cricket.npower.com/ashes_2009/index.htm), a grassroots project run in conjunction with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), was launched in 2006 with one clear goal - to get more children playing cricket. Since its launch, npower and the ECB have distributed over 60,000 Urban Cricket kits to children in the UK. The scheme plans to distribute a further 10,000 kits in the summer of 2009.

More recently the focus for Urban Cricket has shifted to the development of five facilities with five Urban Cricket zones in school playgrounds surrounding each of the facilities. The first facility was opened by Monty Panesar in South London in August 2007. The second, in Sheffield, was opened by Ryan

Sidebottom in April 2008 and the third, in Birmingham, by Ian Bell in August 2008. The fifth and final facility in Manchester will be opened by James Anderson later this month.

About npower:

npower is one of Britain's largest electricity supplier (http://www.npower.com/web/At_home/electricity_and_gas/Products/index.htm) and supplies gas, electricity and related services to 6.6 million customers across the UK. npower is a market leader in renewable energy and sources the green energy (<http://www.npower.com/web/Green/index.htm>) for juice directly from renewable sources, at no extra cost.

npower sponsors the Test Match Series in England, Women's Test Series, the Twenty20 Cup and the Village Cup organised by the Wisden Cricketer.

RWE npower has been awarded the prestigious CommunityMark from Business in the Community (BITC). npower is the only utility business, amongst 21 other companies in the UK, to receive this accolade. The CommunityMark is a new BITC standard which has been created to recognise companies that are good investors in local communities and who have brought about real and positive changes.

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