

# Media Release

4 September 2025

## **Cockburn ARC Evolution complete as community embraces a healthy lifestyle and the AFL and AFLW seasons**

The next phase of the Cockburn ARC Evolution is complete, providing significantly enhanced assets for the whole community.

The ARC Evolution, announced 18 months ago in a partnership between the City of Cockburn and Fremantle Football Club, has delivered improvements to both the ARC Health Club and Fremantle Dockers facilities.

The milestone was marked at a ribbon-cutting event held on 4 September at ARCs Victor George Kailis Oval as the men's AFL team held a training session to prepare for their elimination final match.

The new facilities include:

- AFLW changerooms
- Changerooms to support community sporting programs
- An undercover 250-seat spectator terrace
- A multipurpose space to support education and community programs.

This was completed at a project cost of \$7.4m split between Fremantle Football Club (\$4.3m), the State Government (\$2.5m), WA Football Commission (\$350,000) and the AFL (\$300,000).

The new Fremantle Football Club AFLW and Community Changeroom Expansion Project facilities complement the City of Cockburn's revamped ARC Health Club experience, with a construction cost of \$9.6m.

The Health Club includes:

- Increased gym floor space to 1,500m<sup>2</sup>
- Increased Mind and Body Studio to 250m<sup>2</sup>
- Relocated and upgraded Group Fitness and Indoor Cycle Studios
- Conversion of administrative spaces to expand the gym.

City of Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett said the project was significant for the whole community, particularly due to the benefits of increased inclusive access to the facility for women's sports.

"Not only are we enabling more people to enjoy the new and enhanced facilities at

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Cockburn ARC we are proudly supporting the further enhancement of women's sport," Mayor Howlett said.

"The new AFLW changerooms, community changerooms, a multipurpose community room and space for spectators is another step towards the facility becoming a match venue to suit various levels of football.

"The achievement of this ambitious project for our community is testament to the successful partnership between the City and the Fremantle Dockers.

"ARC's health club improvements were completed in July and have been monumental for members.

"The feedback we have received so far has been incredibly positive as we make it easier for more people to embrace healthy lifestyle choices here in Cockburn."

The project was approved by Cockburn Council at its ordinary meeting on 9 November 2023, when it endorsed a tender from Shelford Constructions Pty Ltd.

**Comments attributed to Sport and Recreation Minister Rita Saffioti:**

"The upgraded changerooms at Cockburn ARC are a fantastic example of how the WA Government is delivering female-friendly infrastructure through PlayOn WA – ensuring communities have the spaces they need to thrive.

"This is a great outcome for the Fremantle Dockers and their AFLW program – purpose-built, inclusive facilities like these ensure our elite women's teams have the support they need to train, recover and perform at their best.

"We want to see more women and girls playing sport, coaching, umpiring and leading – and that starts with the right facilities. This is about building safe, inclusive spaces that support everyone's participation.

"We're levelling the playing field – giving women and girls the opportunity to take part in sport with the same quality facilities as everyone else."

**Comments attributed to Fremantle Football Club Chief Executive Officer Simon Garlick:**

"This redevelopment is a strategic investment in the future of our Club and the communities we serve.

"The upgraded facilities at Cockburn ARC will significantly enhance our high-performance environment for both AFL and AFLW programs, ensuring our athletes

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have access to the best possible resources to thrive.

“Importantly, this project also strengthens our connection to the broader community, providing inclusive, modern spaces that support grassroots participation, community sport, and wellbeing initiatives.

“It’s a powerful example of what can be achieved through collaboration, and we are incredibly proud to partner with the City of Cockburn, the WA State Government, AFL and West Australian Football to deliver a facility that benefits not just our Club, but the wider public.”

**Comments attributed to Fremantle AFLW Senior Coach Lisa Webb:**

“This investment is a game-changer for our AFLW program and a huge step forward for women’s sport in WA.

“The new changerooms and expanded facilities will provide our players with the professional environment they deserve, helping us prepare, perform, and recover at the highest level.

“But it’s more than that, it’s about creating a space that inspires the next generation of female athletes and welcomes the community in.

“Whether it’s a young girl dreaming of pulling on the purple jumper or a local team using the space for their own development, this project will have a lasting impact far beyond the four walls of the Club.”

**Comments attributed to WA Football Commission CEO Michael Roberts:**

“WA Football is proud to play a part in helping these high-quality and inclusive facilities at Fremantle Football Club come to life.

“Female football is our fastest-growing area, with more than 16,000 females participating in community club football across our State, including a massive increase of nearly 46 per cent in the Perth metro area since 2019.

“These important upgrades are a fantastic result for the Fremantle Football Club and broader WA football community who will have access to a well-equipped facility for the future as we continue to see the rapid growth of female football.”

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