

## ECB Chief Executive Officer Tom Harrison says the last 12 months has seen solid foundations laid to support cricket's future growth.

**Cricket has always shown its ability to adapt and confront new challenges without ever compromising its core values.** Sometimes it has taken time, but the game has consistently shown it has capacity to evolve, embrace the future and be relevant to another generation.

There are big challenges to be faced, including competition from other sports and forms of entertainment, driving participation, changing viewing habits, different working patterns and financial sustainability.

However, in 2016 and 2017 we came a long way within the game to addressing these challenges and laying the foundations for a more accessible, representative and diverse game; one with a very healthy future.

There has been great progress on a number of fronts; a new professional women's Kia Super League, a new shape to the 2017 County season, dynamic, successful and engaging England teams, new commercial partners at all levels, increased revenue, more funding to the Counties and a vital new entry-level participation programme in All Stars Cricket.

Just as important, we have been talking constructively within the game and been prepared to have the tough conversations. Our structure of togetherness is a huge asset. We know where we are heading and have a bold plan which will ensure cricket is flourishing for the next generation and beyond.

We are making progress through debate, discussion and building consensus, within our shared framework of Cricket Unleashed. Through this, the game has created for itself a fantastic opportunity to build a positive future for the whole game and all communities.

There is a buzz about our game, excitement about our matches, an understanding of what cricket can do for people and society and a desire to work with us. We can see a healthy future, from grassroots to the international game, with 18 thriving First Class Counties at its heart.

**Tom Harrison**  
Chief Executive Officer



## ECB Chairman Colin Graves reflects on a year which saw cricket continue to develop and evolve at every level across England and Wales.

**This is an exciting time for the sport we all know and love.** Cricket is changing fast. New ways to play, watch or support cricket are emerging all the time – whether it's by consuming bite-sized highlights on your mobile phone or watching Test cricket under floodlights.

As the National Governing body for the sport, ECB is leading the process of change and putting in place solid foundations for future growth. This year's Annual Review illustrates the changes we are making to grow the sport at every level – meeting the goals we first set out last year in our new strategic framework Cricket Unleashed.

It has become very clear to me over the last year that cricket is continuing to evolve as a sport – reaching out to new audiences, connecting with a broader mix of fans and promoting ways to play the grassroots game which help us retain and recruit players and volunteers.

In the coming year, we will develop our plans for future growth still further. We need to ensure the game is based around a robust, sustainable financial model – one which serves the needs of all our stakeholders. We must engage more closely with the South Asian communities who form such an important part of our existing and potential fan and playing base. It is also vital we capitalise fully on our hosting of three different ICC global events between now and 2019: this summer's ICC Champions Trophy and ICC Women's World Cup, and, in two years' time, the ICC Cricket World Cup.

All these challenges are exciting opportunities too. We must seize them if we are to make our game even bigger and better in the future – and fully harness the passion and enthusiasm for cricket which exists in so many different communities across England and Wales.

**Colin Graves**  
Chairman