



David Collier

Chief Executive's Report

It is now two years since *Building Partnerships - The Strategic Plan* for Cricket through 2009 was launched setting clear and measurable goals for the game and I am pleased to report that there has been substantial progress in many areas of that plan. Indeed at the midway point for *Building Partnerships* some of the goals set two years ago have already been achieved. As a result we shall be taking the opportunity in 2007 of providing additional impetus to the four key areas of activity:

Effective Leadership and Governance

Vibrant Domestic Game

Enthusiating Participation and a Following for Cricket

Successful England Teams

Effective Leadership and Governance

Last year I detailed in our Annual Report plans to implement a number of key initiatives:

- Bids for Global Events
- Strengthening Relations with Government and Funding Partners
- Establishing an Ethics Programme
- The Major Match Group
- Greater Financial Certainty

We have enjoyed considerable success in all these areas during 2006.

The ECB has been awarded the 2009 ICC Twenty20 World Championship and the 2019 ICC Cricket World Cup. The ECB was one of the first sports to benefit from the new National Sports Foundation and has signed a Whole Sport Plan funding arrangement with Sport England to cover a three year period. In partnership with the PCA an education programme has been delivered to our county players throughout England and Wales concerning anti-doping measures which is recognised as a world leader.

The Minister for Sport Rt Hon Richard Caborn MP has been a great supporter of cricket attending many ECB events including NatWest CricketForce and *Chance to shine*. During the year the Minister succeeded the late Dennis Howell as the longest serving Sports Minister and we extend our congratulations and thanks to the Minister for his support of cricket. The Board also welcomed the close interest in cricket provided by the Shadow Minister

Hugh Robertson MP. Hugh attended many cricket events in 2006 as part of a Parliamentary Sports Fellowship programme which was of significant mutual benefit.

Under the Chairmanship of Lord Morris the Major Match Group has succeeded in greatly enhancing returns from Major Matches and has been very active in recommending five new Staging Agreements during 2006 and the recommendation of Provisional Category A Venue status to the Rose Bowl and Sophia Gardens.

Within *Building Partnerships* the goal was set for ECB to deliver £10 million of reserves by 2009. In fact that goal had been reached in 2006 and those reserves are now being used to assist community clubs throughout England and Wales with interest free loans.

During 2007 we shall be exploring options to extend loan facilities to a broader range of our Stakeholders and to increase the fee payments to our County Boards, First Class Counties and the Minor Counties.

Vibrant domestic game

Following a very successful partnership we said farewell to Cheltenham and Gloucester as one of our major domestic sponsors and for the 2007 season we welcome Friends Provident as the new sponsor of our 50-over domestic competition. This competition will also see the trial of the Umpire Referral System. ECB believes that we have the best umpires in world cricket and the referral system is aimed at providing our umpires with the benefits of technology to further enhance decision making. It must be emphasised that this is a trial as there are polarised views on using technology and both ECB and ICC will monitor the trial with great interest.





PICTURES

- 1 Rt Hon Richard Caborn MP and David Collier present Shiregreen Cricket Club with a signed Ashes picture during NatWest CricketForce 2006.
- 2 England Coach Duncan Fletcher and captain Andrew Flintoff with the trophy after England won the third Test against India in Mumbai and drew the series.
- 3 Children being coached in the Indoor School at Lord's as part of *Chance to shine*.
- 4 Kevin Pietersen launches HOWZART, part of npower's Urban Cricket initiative.

npower has been an outstanding partner of cricket for many years and we are delighted that they have extended their support of Test cricket and of the Urban Cricket programme. In respect of players equipment we have also announced a new partnership with adidas and we look forward to a partnership with one of the top sports brands in the world.

There has been significant debate about the registration of 'Kolpak' players in 2006 and 2007. The Board is unhappy about the volume of registrations utilising Freedom of Movement legislation in the EU. The Board is providing feedback to the European Independent Sports Review being produced for the EU as we believe that the engagement of players under this legislation does great harm to the game in England and Wales.

ECB is grateful to MCC for their continued support of the University Centres of Excellence programme. In addition the County Academies are providing a flow of talented young cricketers and we are pleased to report a substantial increase in the number of qualified coaches in 2006.

Enthusing Participation and a Following for Cricket

The introduction of interest free loans for community clubs through the England and Wales Cricket Trust is one of many new initiatives in this area.

The Cricket Foundation is to be congratulated on a very successful first year of operation for the *Chance to shine* project. This programme seeks to reintroduce cricket into state schools and has captured the imagination in schools and clubs throughout England and Wales. It was pleasing to note the award of a National Sports Foundation award to *Chance to shine* and we thank the NSF for their support of this project.

NatWest CricketForce continues to go from strength to strength. In 2006 more than 1000 clubs participated, creating a value in excess of £25 million of new and renovated facilities throughout England and Wales. This award-winning scheme is expected to attract a further increase in participants in 2007 and for many clubs marks the start of the new cricket season.

Another partner of ECB the Lords Taverners delivers great support within community projects. Such was the demand for Kwik Cricket sets in 2006 that the England Wales Cricket Trust provided an incremental award for more kit bags at the Taverners Spring Lunch and this donation was matched by the National Sports Foundation.





PICTURES

- 1 The England Women's squad with VIPs and young cricketers at the launch of Taunton as the Home of Women's Cricket.
- 2 Elizabeth Hewitt accepts the Lifetime Achiever Award on behalf of Alan Vollans of Yorkshire from Charlotte Edwards of England during the NatWest Outstanding Service to Cricket Awards (OSCAs) at Lord's Cricket Ground.
- 3 Paul Collingwood celebrates scoring the winning run to give England victory during the Commonwealth Bank One Day International Series in Melbourne.

Volunteers are the heart of cricket and it is always a pleasure to attend the OSCAs ceremony each year and to make awards to the unsung heroes of our game. This year's awards demonstrated the extraordinary dedication of many of these supporters of the game and on behalf of everyone at ECB we do thank each and every volunteer.

2007 sees a major opportunity for our County Boards. ECB has, as a result of our improved financial position, increased funding for our County Boards by 30%. In addition to this revenue funding the National Sports Foundation and CCDP programmes provide grant opportunities to enhance club facilities and the ECB has produced a booklet to provide guidance to clubs and County Boards of how to access these funds.

Successful England Teams

At the conclusion of the Cricket World Cup Duncan Fletcher resigned as Head Coach to the England Team and Peter Moores has been appointed in succession to

Duncan. During his period as Head Coach Duncan enjoyed one of the best records, based on the percentage of Test match victories, of any Head Coach of the England Team. On behalf of everyone at ECB we wish to extend our thanks to Duncan and to his backroom team for their outstanding contributions to the National Team and we wish Peter every success in his new role.

During 2006 we extended the number of players in the England Development Squad to 30 and we enhanced the ECB medical team and programme led by Dr Simon Timson.

Although we have risen to number two in the Test match table there can be no hiding our disappointment with the results during the Ashes Series. The Ashes and the Cricket World Cup in 2007 mark the end of a four year cycle for England Cricket and we have asked a team, chaired by Ken Schofield and assisted by Nasser Hussain, Angus Fraser, Brian Rose, Mickey Stewart, Nick Knight and Hugh Morris to produce a review for the Board as to how we can enhance the success of the England Team in both Test and one-day international cricket. That review will be completed shortly after the Cricket World Cup.

We extend our congratulations to Mark Benson who was appointed to the ICC Elite Umpires Panel in 2006 and to Mark and Ian Gould who were selected to officiate in the 2007 World Cup.

Our Women's Team enjoyed a major boost in 2006 when Taunton was announced as the Home of England Women's Cricket. We are indebted to Somerset County Cricket Club and their local authority partners for the vision to deliver this development.

ESCA and the Bunburys, led by David English, continue to be great supporters in developing the next generation of England cricketers. The Bunbury/ESCA festival is an established part of the cricketing calendar and in their 21st Birthday year I would urge cricket supporters to attend the Festival as it produces top quality cricket.

In conclusion whilst the Ashes in 2006 was a major disappointment there are many positives to be taken from the success in delivering key aspects of our strategic plan *Building Partnerships*. The ECB is determined to be a world leader on and off the field and we shall continue to work with all Stakeholders to deliver a partnership for success.



