



AGM 2026

BOARD CANDIDATE BIOS

***DENOTES RECOMMENDED
CANDIDATE BY THE NOMINATIONS
COMMITTEE**

Richard Clarke

Richard Clarke has been a passionate and active fan of Essex CCC for decades. He tries to attend a couple of days of every Championship game at Chelmsford and all one-day matches.

He started his career as a sports journalist and has reported for most of the major English newspapers at one time or another. He remains a columnist for the Cricket Paper and, in 2020, wrote about his love of Essex in a book called Last-Wicket Stand.

These days, Richard spends most of his time as a content, communications, social media, digital and marketing expert in the sports industry. He has unique, global experience.

He was responsible for editorial strategy across all media (digital, social, TV, print) at Arsenal FC from 2002 to 2015 before moving to Major League Soccer to run the content and communications departments for Colorado Rapids. He managed numerous PR crises in Denver and was part of a small group of key staff in the Front Office, involved in all major day-to-day decisions. He served on numerous committees, including the steering group for the MLS All-Star game in 2015.

Since returning to England, he has consulted in areas such as content, digital, CRM, digital marketing and overseas strategy for LIV Golf, ATP tennis, Premier League, Bundesliga, UEFA and USA Swimming

Richard enjoyed a two-year spell as consultant Content Director with the Indonesian Football League. He has also worked in UAE and Philippines football on content, marketing and crisis communications strategy.

Since 2017, he has led Master's degree courses in sports content, multi-media sports journalism, crisis communications, digital marketing, fan engagement and CRM at universities around Europe.

Richard believes his practical experience in the sports industry - at major teams and smaller teams, at home and abroad - can assist Essex in a challenging time for the county game.

Proposer – Daren Mootoo

Secunder – Claire Wightman

Michael Curtis

I have been a supporter of Essex for over 50 years and a member most of that time. Having just retired from my career as a finance director, I wish to join the board and work to make the club as big a success off the field as they are on it. I have lots of experience working with government and local government which I believe can help take the club forward. I have skills in negotiation, forming partnerships, finance and managing people.

Essex CCC need to continue to do what they do well such as player development, while also embracing and taking advantage of the changes and innovations that are happening in the game so that together we can thrive and bring new supporters to the game and to this Club. Working with the community in Essex is also key to this and something I am well versed in.

I have substantial board experience from my career and beyond as a trustee and non-executive and believe the combination of this with my passionate support for my home county club means I can be a very effective addition to the board and I will do all I can to help the club succeed as both an effective business and a thriving cricket team who continue to challenge for major honours.

Proposer – Tim Abbott

Secunder – Trevor Fisher

Peter Edwards

I have been a member of the club for more than 20 years, attended school locally and would hope to bring leadership and board experience from my time as a charity CEO and non-executive director (NED).

My first memories of Essex cricket go back to Graham Gooch in the 1990s. Since then I have seen highs and lows, relegation, promotion, and the county championships titles of 2017 and 2019.

I hope my leadership experience could be of use to our wonderful club. Today I run an older people's charity in London and previously led a group of almshouse charities, and served as chief executive a Christian poverty alleviation organisation. In these roles, I have worked with management to deliver organisational change, fundraising and commercial property projects.

Outside work, I sit on the board of The Almshouse Association, a national charity, and serve as a NED of Poplar Harca housing association, in East London.

I went to school at KEGS in Chelmsford, attended the universities of York and Edinburgh and later Windsor Leadership Trust; throughout this time I have retained strong links with Essex.

I am passionate about helping ECCC as it emerges from some of the extremely difficult issues of recent years. In 2026, Essex is an inclusive club and I hope to build on the good work of CEO Dan Feist and the board.

We all understand there are challenges for non-Test, non-Hundred grounds. Essex has shown it can navigate these by developing home-grown players, bringing in new supporters and identifying commercial opportunities.

Like many members, I want to see the club competing at the top of the county championship, investing in the ground and creating the conditions for women's cricket to flourish.

It would be a privilege to bring my experience to help the club we love.

Proposer – Laraine Pudney

Secunder – Rhys Owen

***Jason Gallian**

My association with Essex cricket started in 2008 when I joined from Nottinghamshire. I made 50 appearances for the club across three formats before retiring from cricket at the end of 2009 season.

Since retiring from first class cricket I have been Director of Cricket at Felsted School and I joined the club board as a co-opted director on 12 April 2023 when I assumed the position of Chair of the Cricket Committee.

I am seeking re-election to the board so that I can continue as Chair of the Club. My long association with the club, Essex cricket in the community and Felsted gives me an insight in to all cricket in the county, from the pathway through to first class cricket and women's cricket. It would be a privilege to be re-elected by members so I can continue as your Chair.

Proposer – Charles Allen

Secunder – Roslyn Marriott-Cox

Elizabeth Gildersleve

I was born in Essex and have enjoyed many an afternoon/evening at the County Ground supporting the teams over the years. After moving to Chelmsford, I became a member and would like to take my support further by making this application to the Board.

My key strengths are organising and managing administration. I have held a number of roles using these skills in Facilities-based departments across the Royal Household and the University of Westminster. I have also more recently been a Data Protection Officer for 10 years meaning I am fully versed in the current legislation and importance of GDPR and Freedom of Information requests. I am currently Department Business Manager for a large IT department at the University of Westminster supporting the leadership team managing risks and operating plans and other administrative tasks as needed.

My breadth of roles have provided me with skills and understanding in organising, budget planning and management, risk awareness and the importance of the way data should be handled.

Outside of my working life I have been the Secretary for the Royal Household Football and Social Club from 2001-2007 which provided me with opportunities to organise events and sporting activities.

I believe that I hold a large number of transferable skills that may be useful to the ECCC and have a passion for supporting my county in a sport I enjoy.

Proposer – Anthony Cobley

Secunder – John McDonagh

Janet Hargreaves

My passion for cricket started aged just 7 when I first joined my Late Father, who was a member of the MCC, attending many matches during my childhood and teens.

Unfortunately back in those days membership to the MCC was not available to females and therefore he was unable to put my name down on the waiting list! When that changed I was nominated for, and became, an Associate Member of the MCC before deciding to become more involved with my local county team.

I have lived in Chelmsford for over 40 years and have been a very active member of Essex County Cricket Club since my retirement 12 years ago, most recently as a Trustee of the Charitable Foundation. In this role I have visited many activities supported by the Foundation, including Walking Cricket and Women and Children's cricket, and gained a real appreciation of how the funds raised are used to promote and encourage involvement in Essex Cricket.

In my past role as Chair of Governors at a local primary school and Chair of a local private members club I was able to use my experience in finance to drive through a number of projects benefitting the local community.

I am a Life Member of the Club and seek to be more actively involved in the future ambitious plans and development of the Club. My over 45 year career in Finance in a range of industries including 18 years as group treasurer in a PLC give me a good understanding of the challenges ahead.

I am confident that I have the skillset to be able to participate fully in a Director role and look forward to the opportunity to do so.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Proposer – Graham Gooch

Secunder – Hilary Adler

***Jamas Hodivala KC**

I live in Chelmsford and am passionate about cricket. I played cricket for Essex County schoolboys' teams until I was 18 years old, and then club 1st XI standard most of my adult life. My son also played for Essex until he was 13 years old and loves the sport. I would now like to give something back to Essex CCC.

I qualified as an ECB Level 2 coach (now "Core coach") in order to develop younger players. I was chairman of Old Chelmsfordians CC (2006-2010) when I worked hard to modernise the club: I started and coached a successful women and girl's cricket section and my committee obtained Clubmark accreditation. I then coached the colts for a few years at Chelmsford CC. I currently play cricket in the Mid-Essex League, captaining the Old Chelmsfordians CC 2nd XI.

I believe I have valuable skills that would contribute to the board's governance and development of Essex CCC. Apart from my love of cricket, I am King's Counsel specialising in business and corporate crime, Environmental Social and Governance issues, professional discipline and regulation, and public law. I regularly advise and act for large companies to resolve complex legal, reputational and compliance issues. I am used to negotiating with regulators on behalf of my clients and I also sit as a legally-qualified chairperson on Cricket Discipline Panel hearings to decide whether professional players and clubs have breached ECB regulations.

I have commercial experience, having founded a sportswear startup company; I therefore feel comfortable dealing with boards, investors, budgets and shareholders.

I am sociable and try not to take myself too seriously. I would welcome the opportunity to continue Essex CCC's development as a very special club for its players and members.

Proposer – John McDonagh

Secunder – Eugene Ahearn

Danny Macklin

First and foremost, I want to play a constructive part in helping Essex Cricket navigate a challenging period for the county game while keeping members at the heart of decisions. I'm not promising to change the world, but promising hard-work, honesty and long-term commitment to this club and its community.

Members should feel informed, listened to and properly represented in the decisions that shape their club. I will aim to be visible at games across all formats, accessible by mobile and email, and to listen carefully so that issues, ideas and opportunities from members can be turned into positive action.

We all know the county game is under exceptional ongoing financial pressure and that there is a growing imbalance between different venues and competitions. I believe Essex can thrive if we protect what makes the club special while being smart and modern in how we operate.

I want us to treasure the club's traditions and heritage, while blending them with a forward-looking approach that gives the county game the best chance to succeed. I care passionately about cricket in Essex at every level, including women's and girls' cricket and the recreational game.

I would bring 15+ years of senior leadership experience in sport and business, including 8-years as Commercial Director at Essex Cricket and 7-years as CEO / Managing Director. I have helped organisations grow revenues, retain and increase membership value, improve supporter experience and make better long-term decisions.

I would use a modern but practical approach to marketing, technology and commercial work, and my contacts across Essex, London and beyond, to help develop profitable new revenue streams that can be reinvested into our squads, pathways and Members experience.

As one member of your board, I would ask questions where needed, support and empower the executive team to achieve sustainable, continuable success.

Proposer – James Foster

Secunder – Graham Gooch

***Daren Mootoo**

A long-standing Life Member of the club, I have been supporting Essex Cricket since the late 1970s, when I was at King Edward VI Grammar School in Chelmsford; fond memories of watching Gooch, Fletcher, Philip, Hardie et al.

As well as regularly attending matches and club functions, I have been involved in fundraising including benefit years for David Masters and Sir Alastair Cook, where I served on the committees for both players as well as for Ravi Bopara, where I was the Chairman of his benefit year committee. This all involved organising many events to support various charities, as well as arranging memorable matches, such as Essex v Ravi's All Stars which saw Chris Gayle, Kumar Sangakkara, Moeen Ali, Shahid Afridi and others tread the County Ground turf. I was at Edgbaston for that famous T20 Blast Final victory in 2019 and have travelled overseas to watch Essex play in Barbados.

I have also been heavily involved with grassroots cricket - I was Chairman at Billericay CC 2017-2022 - as well as playing for Billericay and Shenfield in my younger days. I am also a member of MCC and a Lord's Taverner, for whom I also help out with fundraising.

Professionally, I have worked as in The City for over forty years, heading up dealing rooms across London, Paris, Frankfurt and San Francisco. I have used my professional position to help younger players at Essex gain vital work experience in The Square Mile.

In my spare time, I volunteer at Brentwood-based community radio station Phoenix 98FM, where I present their cricket show and podcast "98 Not Out", where I have interviewed guests such as David Gower, "Bumble" Mike Atherton, Nasser Hussain, Shane Watson and many others.

I would bring a wealth of cricketing experience and business acumen to the club.

Proposer – Danny Macklin

Secunder – Daniel Haggard

Andy Plowman

I'm a proud Yorkshireman who's set aside his allegiances to support my adopted county. I'm a cricket fan first and foremost – I care deeply about the county game and strongly believe that contributing to the success of Essex is a contribution to strengthening the game nationwide.

Essex is my local team in the truest sense – I live in Baker Street with my wife Rachel, who's an operations manager for the Dogs Trust, and our Jack Russell, Evie. Being a near neighbour of the club I hope I can be a valuable stakeholder for local residents and I would relish the opportunity to be more involved in my local community.

I'm the product manager for global news at Green Street – a commercial real estate and infrastructure intelligence provider. I've worked in built environment journalism most of my career and hope my knowledge of the sector and ability to reach its key decision-makers would make me a useful asset for the club's redevelopment ambitions.

As a 44-year-old full-time professional I'm hoping I can add a voice to the board that is somewhat an underrepresented demographic in the county game, bringing a combination of youth (relatively speaking!) and 20+ years of industry experience.

Proposer – Paul Sharp

Secunder – Nolan Gildersleve

Piyush Somaiya

Piyush currently sits on the board and seeks re-election to continue serving the club and its members. During his tenure, Piyush has worked very closely with the Members' Committee and recently taken on role of its Chair.

Piyush is a qualified accountant as well as a project management professional. He has worked in the financial services industry for over 20 years where he has led number of transformation projects across banking and insurance companies focusing on process and cost efficiencies. His transformation skills and experience will continue to benefit the club especially when it comes to operational excellence and delivery of the masterplan.

Piyush is also a very active and popular member of the local South Asian community in Chelmsford where he organizes several community events and other initiatives. He is a popular emcee at these events.

Being born and brought up in India, Piyush follows cricket as a religion. Although he follows all formats of the game, he is a strong believer in the longer format of the game as that is the true test of the skills. He is also a big supporter of women and junior cricket. Being one of the young members of the club, Piyush brings in fresh ideas and energy into the club especially representing the youth.

Piyush is married to Nisha and has two young boys who play cricket for a local club in Chelmsford. Piyush loves travelling and exploring new places.

Proposer – Nigel Barrick

Secunder – Alex Siddell

Lesley Wagland

I am Lesley Wagland (professional name Lesley Webber) and bring over 40 years' professional experience as a solicitor specialising in planning, property, construction and valuation disputes, advising on complex and large-scale projects. I offer the Board a strong understanding of the challenges associated with major development, including planning, delivery risk and long-term sustainability.

Living near Chelmsford, I serve as an Essex County Councillor with particular responsibilities for major infrastructure projects across the county, including leading the work for the successful delivery of Beaulieu Park Station. I also contribute to regional strategy and economic development as a Board Member of Transport East and Freeport East.

My experience includes:

- Over 40 years as a solicitor specialising in planning, property, construction and valuation
- Leadership of major infrastructure delivery within Essex
- Board-level contribution to regional strategy and economic growth

I am recognised in the Legal 500 Hall of Fame, am an Honorary Member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (HonRICS), and have been awarded an OBE for services to the Government's Property Advisory Group and to planning.

I am a lifelong cricket enthusiast and long-standing supporter of Essex, and am now a recent member of Essex County Cricket Club alongside my husband. I would bring both professional expertise and personal commitment to supporting the Club's masterplan and helping to turn its vision for the County Ground into reality.

Proposer – Vicky Ford

Secunder – Keith Brown

Richard Waller

Essex CCC is in my blood thanks to my ancestor Michael Bear, a first XI regular from 1954 to 1968. My professional career was over 25 years as a management consultant in the insurance industry. I focused on helping management teams achieve their growth and transformation goals. I also held various leadership positions, including as internal non-executive director to several leadership team and as mentor to many senior colleagues. Since retiring I have one formal non-executive role. As an actuary I am equipped to help safeguard the financial soundness and risk management of the club.

Proposer – David Waller

Secunder – Joan Waller

Alan Yetts

I have been a supporter of the county for some 56 years, having attended my first match in 1970. Now, not only a life member, but for the past three years have served on the Essex Members Committee. In addition to this I also play for one of the counties over 60's side.

I feel I am well known at the ground, and attend nearly all of the championship match days at Chelmsford, in addition to some away games. This has enabled me to get to know members more and to listen to their views and highlight any concerns back to the committee, and where appropriate, to the board.

Being part of the members committee has shown me that the club does truly appreciate it's members, and with the ambitious plans the club has redevelopment-wise, the members need to be made fully aware of all that this entails. It is vital that there remains a strong link between the membership and the board. The members views need to be canvassed and where appropriate, reported back to the board for consideration. I believe I am the ideal person who could be the link with the membership, on behalf of the club's board, due to knowing and regularly conversing with so many members at every match.

Proposer – Kim Bailey

Secunder – Brian Stapylton-Smith