



ASHFORD CRICKET CLUB

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Dear Member and Guest,

The playing season fast approaches. 2019 will be an extra special year for the game with World Cups, The Ashes and new competitions on the horizon. One thing that remains constant is that during every post season a lot of work goes on behind the scenes on behalf of the club and its members. As the club then prepares for the new season many individuals direct their focus on completing essential tasks that ensure that the club is ready for the next six months.

Recent investment

From the 2018 post season to today there have been a number of positives. A(SL)S has made a generous contribution of £500 to club funds to finance an initiative which will benefit both playing members and the club as a whole. The club has taken the opportunity to upgrade the boundary ropes on both pitches.

Members will also notice the acquisition of new covers which were secured following the sourcing and subsequent approval of a grant.

Changes to your club committee

The AGM was well attended. There have been several changes at committee level which will benefit the club as a whole. After long service as our president Jasdev Rehncy has stepped down from the role but will remain an active contributor to the club as an occasional umpire. Kevin Lambert is welcomed as the new club President. Kevin has been associated with the club as a player and coach for many years and will be a huge asset to the club. Saad Choudhary will now focus solely on club finances in his role as Treasurer. We welcome Bobby Evans to the role of Club Captain. He has already set out a comprehensive vision of where he sees the club moving forward with a special emphasis on the development of our young players and ensuring their subsequent smooth transition to the club's senior teams. Your support and commitment will be integral to any success. On this note the club again thanks the coaches and managers for all their efforts. It is already pleasing to report that Prathan Dixit has been selected for the Hounslow Borough U10's squad and Uday Jolly and Satyam Patel have been selected for Surrey Performance training.

The club hosted a very successful Annual Club dinner back in October. Many thanks to the members who organized such an outstanding event. Plans are already in place for 2019. The intention will be to again run "the squares offer" and this year there will be a chance to stage payments which may help those who have a number of attendees. More details will appear in the club as the season gets underway. Post season also saw a very successful junior presentation evening. It was specifically noted by attendees that the 1st team players that attended and handed out awards had greatly enhanced the evening.

Will is back, and look out for our T20 Angels

The club has worked hard to secure the services of William Elliott as our overseas player for the year. We welcome him back following his fine performances for the club last year and wish him and the 1st team every success.

Other news includes success for the Ladies who finished runners up in the indoor winter league. Ladies T20 is also set to take flight this summer with the Ashford Angels joining the Ashford Jets as the clubs T20 Surrey Slam representative sides. Please watch out for their fixtures and support them whenever possible. The Ladies have also secured a grant to host a Spelthorne MultiSports day on Sunday 2nd June. This could be a potentially busy day and any volunteer support would be appreciated. Please contact Alison McCreedy if you are able to assist (alimac93@yahoo.co.uk) Also watch

out for forthcoming fixtures and spread the word to potential lady cricketers you may know.

Committee members have continued to attend meetings on the club's behalf. These have included Active Surrey workshops, junior planning evenings and numerous county functions. Spelthorne Kwik cricket competitions have already been arranged for 23rd May and 26th June with Ashford being the host club.

The club continues to focus its efforts on the “nets project”. £12k is currently set aside which is an excellent base from which to progress. The major grant that is required has not been forthcoming as yet. Competition for the funds available is intense and in the current climate, with its economic uncertainty, sponsorship remains elusive. If you have any ideas or contacts please speak to Saad, Jim or Chris. Those involved in the project have also been looking at alternative sites for the new facility. This would decrease the costs and hopefully contribute to moving the whole project forward.

The club will again host the All Stars programme in 2019. Now in its third year, the programme has grown from 12 youngsters in year 1 to catering for 30 children on Sunday mornings in year 2. Last year Ashford's programme received a “5-star” rating, which is an excellent achievement. There is no doubt that Jim will need support next year but more about that later.

“Clubmark” is not very far from the minds of many people within the club. The club also has a detailed Development Plan which has been updated this year. Everything is linked, in that without the Development plan we will struggle to maintain “Clubmark”. Without “Clubmark” we will struggle to secure the major grants needed for whole club development. To secure the hotly contested grants invariably the club has to show that it goes the extra mile within the local community and that it cares passionately for the sport of cricket.

Cricket already started for some...

Already this year club coaches have agreed to coach three French groups totaling 200 youngsters and their teachers. Their reasoning for coming to the club was to experience things that are “quintessentially English” and to give their youngsters an experience of something associated with a different culture. In their wisdom they chose cricket.

On 15th April club coaches will be attending Heathrow Immigration Removal Centre having accepted an invitation to coach the men in that facility. Although we are not expected to pick up extra players for obvious reasons, the benefits to the club as it enhances its reputation within the local community are potentially huge.

We should not forget that the “culture” of ACC is very important to everything that we do. Without going into too much detail the basics are that a “turn up, play and go straight home” culture is not a foundation on which a club can flourish. In order to foster a culture within the club its members need to make a commitment and whenever possible a contribution to the running of the life of the club. Some people believe that the club being the centre of peoples' lives is an unattainable dated thing of the past. Without debating the issue in detail here the conundrum of how true that is can be left with individual members to think about.

If commitment, loyalty and making a contribution to this cricket club is your preferred viewpoint you're probably still reading this! There are a number of ways that people could help the club this season. As discussed Jim will need assistance with his All Stars group on a Sunday morning. If you can catch or hold a bat correctly you qualify so about 90% of the membership is eligible! Please speak to Jim directly. Note that inline with the programme and Clubmark we will need to complete an ECB DBS check for any new volunteers. We can now do this straightforward check online and relatively quickly.

First junior training and sign-on – Friday 12th April

The Club Captain is arranging an evening get-together on 12th April when all members are invited to sign-on for the new season. Remember to bring your membership card issued last season to validated for 2019. This is also the same night as the junior signing-on evening. Please try and support the function. Bobby has agreed to answer any Brexit questions! There will be a raffle throughout the evening with three money-off voucher prizes provided by our club kit suppliers, Mr Cricket. A quick reminder too that members can consistently assist the club whenever they shop at Amazon Prime, M&S and John Lewis among other retailers through our easyfundraising link

(www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ashfordcc). A donation equivalent to 1% (or more in some cases) of your total spent is automatically made available to the club for free.

Work party to prep the ground – weekend of 6th/7th Apri

Each year a weekend is set aside prior to the first competitive fixture where each club makes final preparations for the season. At Ashford these smaller tasks include arranging benches out of storage, relocating the covers from the nets area, checking nets and cages etc. This year the 6th and 7th April has been set aside for what is known as the NatWest Cricket Force weekend. If members can spare an hour over the two days it would be appreciated. If you intend to come and help, it would be good to give Chris Evans or Jim a call in advance of the day.

A reminder about the 200 club. For a small outlay each month (by direct debit) members are included in a draw with cash prizes. For more information please speak to Craig Turner or Saad. If you know of people that would be interested please try to encourage them.

The club is entitled to priority evenings where we are guaranteed sole use of the function room. If anyone has any ideas for a whole club function please speak to any committee member who will be happy to take your idea forward for initial discussion.

Can you help?

We currently need a Junior Section Coordinator and also short of a team manager for the Under-9s, who for the first time we have arranged a series of soft ball matches based on feedback from the children and parents. These are priority and crucial roles within the club. A number of clubs have already indicated that they either have or intend to dramatically reduce the number of junior teams in their clubs. With the talent in our junior section it is imperative that these roles are filled as soon as possible. If anyone is interested and wishes to become involved please speak to Mark Doggett or Jim.

The cricket club is represented on Ashford (Short Lane) Sports. This is a group that oversees the whole site. We are currently one person short of our allotted number. You will need to be a problem solving individual. Please speak to Chris if you are interested.

If you're already involved in any aspect of coaching please keep your DBS check up to date. This is a crucial aspect of both "Clubmark" and our safeguarding procedures. If you believe that yours may have lapsed please speak to Chris or Alison who will be able to help further. A reminder to players: it is club policy that mobiles with camera devices are not used in changing rooms where a team is represented by an U18 player. To put this simple request into context: an unannounced check on our safeguarding procedures and viability for continued "Clubmark" could potentially be decided on whether transgressing this simple rule was observed.

The Annual Tour to Devon has been confirmed. Headquarters will again be at Padbrook Park with the dates set between Sunday 26th May and Friday 31st May. Room rates remain the same with special offer rates for early bird booking and U25 tourists. For those that are considering attending please see the feature on the website and make contact with Paul Frost who will again be coordinating the week.

Membership subs are now due

For those that did not attend the AGM or have not read the minutes of the meeting I have been asked to reiterate the following which was voted in and became club policy on 22nd November 2018:

"Any player who has not paid his or her subscription in one season will not be selected the following season until arrears are paid in full".

Anyone who is suffering financial hardship at any time should in the first instance speak to the Treasurer. Confidentiality is guaranteed. Any final decision around payments will be made following consideration by the Treasurer and Chairman only.

Membership reminders will be sent electronically in the near future. Payments can be made from early April. The Treasurer will not now accept subscription payment in cash instalments. There is an easy to use facility available on the Club's Pitchero website that allows anyone to pay their subs in six equal monthly instalments.

£s off your Annual Dinner ticket for pulling a few pints...

A quick reminder that ACC now takes over responsibility for managing the bar on a Monday and Tuesday night. There have been numerous discussions over the years about how the "bar rota" should function. Paying outside independent staff is not the club's preferred approach. It will mean a considerable increase in subscriptions for playing members. The original notion was that members would staff the bar voluntarily and occasionally during the season. On those particular evenings volunteers would be joined by friends hence making the evening more of a social event. It is hoped that we can get back to or as near to this as possible. For those that can assist on two occasions throughout the 6-month period (April – September) the club will donate £5 towards that member's costs of an annual dinner ticket.

Finally the club wishes all of its playing membership good luck for the season. Represent your club well and please no "mankads" or at least not without at least one warning – uphold the Spirit of Cricket! For those unable to don the whites or coloured clothing anymore please remember that the bar is open on match days and that you are very welcome.

Kind regards,

Mick Tilt

On behalf of ACC committee