

Poole Town Cricket Club

Chairman's Report 23 January 2026

In 2026 the Club is going to have more sides playing at a higher standard of cricket than we have ever had, with the 2nds playing in Prem 2 and the 3rds having been promoted to County 2. Whilst at times this may be challenging, this will give plenty of opportunity for our talented youngsters to develop their skills but it is also important that we recruit new players and encourage some of our existing players who have pressed the pause button on their careers to return to the fold. We all have a part to play in this.

Our ladies section had a very enjoyable 2025 finishing 2nd in both leagues. We have lost some players – several 1st team players are currently abroad – so we could do with reinforcements. Now is a very good time for anybody who is interested to get involved in the build up to the summer season.

The junior section continues to thrive thanks to the hard work of Matt Keech and his team of managers and coaches. One-third of our members are now girls which is the highest it has ever been. We continue to successfully transition our youngsters into adult cricket in a way that some other clubs are unable to achieve. All Stars and Dynamos on a Friday evening in Poole Park continues to be very popular.

With Local Government funding as stretched as it is, potentially the biggest challenge facing the Club currently is to ensure that we can offer appropriate facilities (playing, changing and social) for the standards of cricket which we are playing. This is particularly the case in Poole Park. Our use of Hamworthy Recreation's ground for some home matches in 2025 has unfortunately not resulted in a longer term relationship (although I have not given up hope that one day the position may change) and therefore it is imperative that we improve facilities in Poole Park. We have secured grant funding there to repair the pavilion roof and instal a new artificial wicket – we are just waiting for the work to be undertaken. We have acquired some covers. We have plans to make some changes to the main room in the pavilion to make it more homely. And we are working towards solutions so that we do not have to build and move the sightscreens before and after games and so that the metal fence at the front of the pavilion can be permanently removed.

I cannot deny that I am frustrated by the difficulty we are currently experiencing getting payments out of some of our players. Across the mens and ladies sections we are still owed over £3,000 for last season and there are significant amounts owed for earlier seasons as well. It is causing us some difficulty in paying bills on a timely basis and making decisions about investment in facilities more difficult than they should be.

I have found myself as an intermediary in several disputes in the last year which frankly makes me sad. We are a very large cricket club and it is inevitable that not everybody is going to see eye to eye, but I would hope that at a minimum we can all treat each other with respect and in a way which we would expect to be treated if the boot was on the other foot. I very much hope that 2026 is a quieter year on this front.

I would like to take this opportunity to register my sincere thanks to those who are standing down from positions at this AGM for all of the hard work that they have put in over many years (Andy Milner, Caroline Boyd, Jess Boyd, Michelle Milner, Jordy Betts, Dave Miller, Matt Reed and possibly Ben Rayner). Just as importantly I wish to express my gratitude to those who are continuing to fulfil their roles in the mens, ladies and junior sections of the Club. We could not achieve what we achieve

without you. Whilst we have a very large number of volunteers we remain very reliant on a small number who are carrying out a number of roles or simply find it difficult at times to balance their responsibilities with the cricket club with their responsibilities to their family and at work. It is therefore crucially important that we expand our volunteer numbers – if you can spare some time please let one of the committee know.