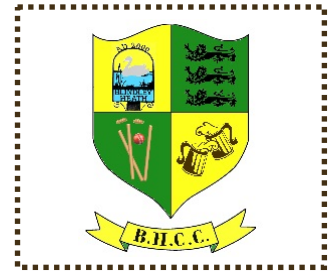


## Blindley Heath Cricket Club Annual Report 2023



BHCC have continued to struggle with attracting new players to the club, particularly from the local community. However, we are still running both a Saturday and Sunday side playing friendly cricket and we are now being more proactive than ever in improving and making the club more attractive to new players, members, and volunteers.

Over the past 12 months the club have sought the assistance/guidance of the Surrey Cricket Foundation and have drawn up a 5-Year Plan with a view to securing the clubs future. A representative of the Surrey Cricket Foundation and two BHCC members attended a GPC meeting last year to give an update on the then status of the club and floated some ideas on which direction the club would like to go, which was warmly received, and councillors advised they would help the club in any way they could.

Since then, we have had 4 of our members qualify as ECB Foundation One Level 1 coaches, we have become an ECB All Stars Centre providing an 8-week programme of cricket orientated fun and games for children aged 5-8 years old (commencing on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May), we have elected a trained Club Welfare/Safeguarding Officer to ensure the club adheres to ECB safeguarding policies, we have entered the T20 Surrey Slam competition and have been granted a Club Premises Certificate by Tandridge Council to be able to sell alcohol and refreshments to members and guests. The terms of this licence will be strictly adhered to, and a plan in place to ensure no empty bottles/cans/etc associated with the club will be left on the ground and/or common.

Part of our 5-Year Plan is to try and make BHCC more of a part of the local community. This is hoped to be achieved by offering improved facilities, a better variety of cricket for a diverse range of individuals, cricket coaching, and social events to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment. We also hope to continue to improve our relationship with GPC, and part of this is to make every effort to send club representatives to attend committee meetings and AGM's when able to do so. Furthermore, we have recently taken receipt of a defibrillator through the Community Heartbeat Charity which will be stored internally at the cricket pavilion, however there is an option for it to be stored externally at an extra cost, and therefore made available to the local community 24/7 if GPC would like to support this in future.

Our intention is to improve the aesthetics of the club both internally and externally, and we have almost completed replacing all the posts surrounding the boundary. We are grateful for GPC's continued efforts to improve the car parking facilities at Blindley Heath and look forward to these works being completed. We also hope to work with GPC in the replacement/repair of some of the benches located around the boundary, and hope to improve the lighting at the pavilion, particularly given the recent grant of a Club Premises Certificate and our intention to attract junior cricket.

Despite national struggles at village cricket level, we are optimistic about our future and hope to work more closely with GPC to ensure cricket continues to be played in the parish, particularly given the demise of Godstone CC. We have recently established through a local historian that Blindley Heath Cricket Club has been in existence since at least 1866, much earlier than previously thought, and so it would be a disaster for us to go the same way as Godstone. Any assistance with advertising and promoting the club would be gratefully received, and any ideas or suggestions for how we can collaborate in future would be much appreciated.