

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2025

2025 was my fifth year as Chairman & it is a pleasure to continue to serve this wonderful Club.

It was a disappointing Hythe & Dibden CC season with more lows than highs on & off the field. Sadly the league restructuring which we voted against is still being felt as the leagues adapt to the ten team format. The loss of quality players & the overseas packing his bags after three games contributed to the 1s being relegated to County 3 finishing bottom of their league despite five wins! All the players put in a great effort but there just wasn't enough runs in the side to make the difference. TJ was still learning how to Captain at this level & a bit of naivety led to five huge defeats which crashed their average. In my opinion it just goes to show that traditional cricket rather than T20 style cricket will bring you points & results. The 2s finished third bottom of their league & stayed up on the last day. The 2s were led by Jonjo & despite awful availability they did what was required & remained in the division. They had a lot of close games where they couldn't quite get over the line. The 3s were run by no nonsense Aussie Pete Miller. The 3s had some good & bad results but managed to hold their own in their division & were very competitive when they could field their strongest side which unfortunately wasn't often. Fletch again made do with what was left which wasn't much & they did exceptionally well to get through the season with only having to call off four games due to lack of numbers. Thanks also to Andy Grave who managed to get numerous colts into the side to help out some of whom look like they could be future stars. Fraser captained the Sunday side & Chiv managed to find a full fixture list. They used a lot of players but played competitive cricket. The Sunday cricket environment has again proved very effective in bringing Colts into Adult cricket. In Cup cricket we drew Lymington in the Presidents Cup. Sadly we were unable to field a team so withdrew. We again competed in the Hampshire Slam & unfortunately we didn't make it out of the group stage. The Slam is a decent competition & one we can do well in. After initial teething problems the organizers seem to have got a handle on the later rounds. However i think a lot of people need to realise it's the Hampshire Slam not the ten miles from Hythe Slam. We exited the Stone Cup at the first hurdle. This & the Slam are competitions we can do well in & possibly get to the later stages if we take them seriously. Next season we have entered the Slam, the new Ann Craft Cup (Fletcher Cup) & the Stone Cup. These Competitions deserve our respect & we can be competitive if people put in the comitment. The club needs to find that winning formula again & maybe through the Cups we can find it.

### **COLTS**

The Club again ran All Stars, Dynamoos, U9s,U11s,U13s & U15s. All Stars in particular has given numbers a huge boost & most of our younger colts have come from All Stars. Thanks to Dawn & her team for their efforts with All Stars. Andy Grave & his team continued to run the colts section & have created a nice atmosphere & a professionally run section that is enjoyed by parents & colts alike. We give all our colts a chance & a game rather than

concentrating on & letting the best players dominate. We restarted an U17 side that was run by Dave Parry unfortunately due to time commitments Dave has stepped down & Dave Capstick has taken over for this season. My thanks to all the Managers & Coaches.

## **FINANCIAL**

The finances continue to be run by Jonjo Stovell. The Club continues to operate within its means. After a good summer but poor winter we are in a 'reasonable' financial position with enough in the bank to cover running costs but with lots of money to be paid out for the outfield renovations, insurance, league fees, balls, kit & also money owed to individuals. Pre-Covid we worked out that we need approx £26000 to keep the club afloat these costs have certainly risen since then & continue to rise. Thanks to the Darts teams & Aztecs for their help over the winter keeping the club ticking over. The club's main earners are the Fete which has been hugely successful over the years. The Fete isn't a given if the weather doesn't play ball we will lose one of our main fundraisers. The other major earners are Hythe & Dibden Youth Football Presentation which Andy Grave has put out our way again not a given as Andy is stepping away from Youth Football. We were able to do food at the Community Firework Display which helped with increasing revenue. Jones Lane also hosted Rock The Pier which was fantastic for us. It was our biggest take ever on the bar. Sadly this looks like it may not happen this year so we could lose a chunk of revenue. I have huge concerns that although our balance sheet looks healthy most of our revenue comes from these events, plus darts/Aztecs & support from associate social members rather than cricketers at the bar! My thanks to our serious drinkers! We always put on social events for you but numbers seem to have dwindled and your support is needed. We are always on the lookout for grants & sponsorship opportunities if anyone has any leads please let us know? If anyone can land us some sponsorship we will look to repay you with reduced match fees/Membership. We aren't afraid to spend money but will only spend money when the circumstances are right & when we can improve the club with the right investment.

## **CLUB, GROUNDS & VOLUNTEERS**

We play on a public park so we aren't able to do everything we would like to but we have brought the ground up to SPL standard & Chiv continues to work miracles on the square & maintains one of the best wickets around. Chiv also maintains QE2 when doing his proper job. The QE2 has now become a great wicket. Unfortunately due to ill health Chiv is stepping away from the ground this year & will be a huge loss & I personally wish to thank Chiv for all his efforts. Thanks also to Paul Wastell, Ian Prentice & Dan for their help on the square. Steve Taylor is stepping away from his committee role. Steve helped us out tremendously when we got to the SPL & what he has done for the club will never be forgotten. Sue Froggett took on the Club's Secretary role for one year, eight years later she is stepping down! Thank you for your service. The Club House renovation was completed thanks to a huge effort from the Committee & numerous individuals. Massive thanks to

Danny Hosey, Jason Sargent & Tony North in particular. There are still a few jobs to be done but these will get done when time allows. The Club now looks amazing & has received plenty of compliments from jealous opposition teams. If you build it they will come is a famous quote from 'Field Of Dreams' which seems true except where Hythe cricketers are involved it would seem! The electronic scoreboard was repaired & up & running for the start of last season although there is an issue with visibility when the sun is out . Please remember the club is an ageing building at least fifty years old & needs constant maintenance. This, like everything, is generally done by volunteers & can be a slow process because we aren't tradesmen. We also have plans to reverb the showers in the home & away changing rooms. We are a step closer to permanent net facilities having been given permission from Hythe & Dibden Parish Council Amenities Committee to move forward with planning. Once granted we will move on to fund raising. If all goes to plan hopefully we will have these in place for the 2027 season. Thanks to Andy Grave for his efforts with this. We continue to negotiate with Churchill Homes & have had one hugely positive meeting with them.

The club is only as strong as its members & volunteers. Please remember that without these volunteers most of them are giving up their valuable time for nothing & with no real reward & should be treated like the superstars they are! Thanks to our wonderful spectators. Our 'ultras' are there every week drinking & supporting the club & have a massive impact on bar revenue .Thanks to all these people from the bottom of my heart.

I say this every year but the biggest enemy of the Club is apathy! I'm sick & tired of people whining about putting the nets & rope out/away. These were all purchased to improve the ground & the rope in particular to stop cheating. The 1s certainly lost a close game the other year to the boundary not being clear! We don't have any superstars here these days so if it offends you that much to get stuff out & put it away respectfully, fuck off elsewhere. It should also be noted that the usual whingers are the ones wearing incorrect kit & not paying their membership. I will be taking a keen interest in memberships this year so pay up or talk to me if there is an issue. I don't understand why you often see four different shirts being worn by individuals on match days. You wouldn't play football in the wrong kit & you wouldn't see Fawley, Bashley, Sway or any serious club wearing different shirts or caps. How do you expect to be a team if you can't even wear the correct kit! Also stop blaming every defeat on the opposition's 'ringer' rather than your own shortcomings. Ben Rogers Dad played for Bramshaw for years that's why Ben plays for them. Tom Clark started his playing days at Droxford why shouldn't they turn out for them when their league clubs don't play Sunday cricket? If Tom Clark doesn't play Droxford are all out for a hundred. The best one I heard last year was that Lymington's ringer ruined the Slam game by taking five catches at deep mid-wicket! The ringer at Wellow etc etc the list is long, strange how the games never been ruined when our 'ringers' Keegan, Jonjo etc 'spoil' a league game or friendly match?!

Anyway that's my little rant over wishing you all the best & hopefully a very successful 2026

Mike Bowman Chairman Hythe & Dibden CC