

GRANTHAM CRICKET CLUB

CLUB DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018/19

CLUB BACKGROUND

Grantham Cricket Club is based just outside the town of Grantham in Lincolnshire and is affiliated to the ECB through Lincolnshire Cricket Limited, with a secondary affiliation through Nottinghamshire Cricket Board. Club members are able to access training and guidance through both of these organisations. The Club maintains close links with Lincolnshire County Cricket Club and hosts the LCCC minor counties fixture over three days in July or August each year. For the first time in 2017, we hosted a second XI fixture for Nottinghamshire CCC, and are delighted to be hosting the Nottinghamshire CCC 2nd XI three times in 2018.

DEVELOPMENT DURING THE 2017 SEASON

The Club finished 2017 in a varying positions of strength, with its first team finishing the season in second place in the Lincolnshire ECB Premier League, and winning the fair play award. As a Club with absolutely no paid players, we are proud to have achieved so much in this league. The Club entered the South Nottinghamshire Cricket League, which has caused some frustrations that we intend to put right over the coming months. Not being able to play at Gorse Lane has affected players' enjoyment of this league. We take these comments on board absolutely and will work to put things right next season. Our Sunday 1st team competed well in their first season in the Rutland and District League premier division. One success we are hugely proud of is the Sunday 2nd team, who under the captaincy of a new Captain, Neel Stevenson, won division 2 of the Grantham and Melton Cricket Association. In the last few seasons, we have aspired to make this a team for the development and transition of juniors into senior cricket, and have done this well, but have never managed to translate this into success on the pitch. Neel's enthusiasm for guiding and encouraging his team has made this team a fantastic place to play cricket, and we see this as one of the real positives of the 2017 season.

New for 2017, the Club became involved in delivering the ECB All Stars Cricket programme to 5 to 8 year olds. Participation in this training was higher than in previous years when we delivered our own 'mini cricket' sessions. Feedback from our All Stars and parents has been extremely positive, and we invited the All Stars to come to the junior awards night, where they all received a medal, and hopefully, parents began to understand where All Stars fits in to the wider junior club. All Stars sessions have taken place on a Friday evening and we have received so many positive comments about the atmosphere at the club on a Friday that we will consult with parents with a view to moving all junior outdoor training to Fridays in 2018. We look forward to beginning to transition our oldest All Stars into the U10 training sessions and team when they are ready to do so.

PROGRESS AGAINST THE 2017 CLUB OBJECTIVES

Certain of the Club's objectives appear on each iteration of the development plan, and reappear for the 2018/19 update, even though they have seen positive outcomes in 2017. For example, encouraging all players to abide by the spirit of cricket, and seeking to increase participation are targets that the club will always focus on. The following summary gives a brief update against the objectives identified as Club priorities for 2017:

Objective A - Senior players:

- To re-launch senior training to encourage higher participation from the third and fourth team, and to support transition for juniors into open age cricket **achieved**
- To agree captaincy for 2018 early and to promote the role of team captains within the Club **achieved**
- To continue to play in the most appropriate leagues for each team **achieved**
- To encourage all players to follow the spirit of cricket and to deal appropriately with those who fall short of the acceptable standard **achieved**
- To appoint a new head of women's cricket and re-launch new participation opportunities for women **partially achieved – participation has increased. Head of women's cricket to be appointed in 2019**
- To investigate the use of Teamer for selection of senior teams **deferred to 2018 as a result of not having a permanent secretary in post**

Objective B - Junior players:

- To continue entering different age level teams in the local youth league **achieved**
- To ensure that all players follow the spirit of cricket as defined by the ECB **achieved**
- To provide 30 weeks of structured coaching for all juniors **achieved**
- To include juniors in senior squads **achieved**
- To progress the older and most competent juniors to train with the seniors **achieved**
- To nominate juniors to County squads **achieved**
- To increase participation by girls **partially achieved – participation increased at women's team level**
- To appoint parent managers to each junior team **achieved**

Objective C – Committee:

- To encourage Captains to take on responsibility for attending League AGMs along with other club members as appropriate, to encourage them to take responsibility for their teams and to fully understand League procedures **achieved**
- To increase participation by volunteers at every level in the Club **ongoing**
- To find a new solution for cricket teas for the 2018 season **achieved**
- To communicate effectively with club members by a variety of means **achieved**

Objective D – Pavilion:

- To investigate changing bar suppliers **ongoing**
- To maintain current standards in the pavilion **achieved**
- To hold a social event once a month out of season **achieved**

Objective E – Ground:

- To maintain a standard of ground acceptable to Lincolnshire CCC and Nottinghamshire CCC **achieved**
- To continue to aspire to be the best ground in the local leagues **achieved**
- To install ball stop netting and move the wicket on the second pitch to allow all senior teams to play at home in 2018 **ongoing pending grant funding**

Objective F – Membership:

- To maintain a fair pricing policy to ensure cricket is as accessible as possible **achieved**
- To retain and expand on membership in all categories **achieved**
- To have an open membership policy and to welcome all potential members **achieved**

Objective G – Finance:

- To keep the Club's finances in good order by effective monitoring **achieved**
- To ensure that all running costs are retained in the budget **achieved**
- To increase sponsorship by working in partnership with local businesses **ongoing**
- To relaunch fundraising and encourage more active participation by club members **achieved**
- To investigate all funding streams for the development of the indoor centre at Gorse Lane **ongoing**

THE 2018 SEASON

At the time of updating the Club's development plan, we are mid-way through the 2018 season and preparing for a full Clubmark re-accreditation. The Club has learned many lessons from the decision to field a team in the South Nottinghamshire Cricket League in 2017, and from playing home matches at the King's School. Communication within the Club has improved, most noticeably through the appointment of a new Club Secretary, and through the Club's recognition that Playcricket emails are not always the most effective way to communicate with players. Through greater use of our Facebook and Twitter pages, and WhatsApp groups, the committee can communicate rapidly and effectively outside of their monthly meetings. Dan Webb, as first team captain and a member of the management committee, takes responsibility for filtering messages to captains, who communicate effectively with their own squads through texts, emails, and WhatsApp groups. The Committee feels that the Club is now much better informed, more cohesive, and a much happier unit, with a sense of ownership amongst leaders at all levels in the Club. A member survey was conducted in June 2018, the results of which have been used to review progress thus far in 2018, to help us understand what could be improved immediately for the remainder of the season, and to inform our longer-term goals for 2019 and beyond. There is a suggestions box in the pavilion, and the Committee feels that Club members are good at raising any concerns or suggestions that they have.

Subscriptions have been increased this year, to a level that the Committee now feels is reflective of the costs of playing cricket, on a sliding scale based on the amount of cricket that each category of membership has access to. This was communicated to members prior to the Annual General Meeting, with members having the opportunity to provide feedback both at the AGM and beforehand by phone, email, or at training sessions. For members taking advantage of training and matches, the costs still are lower than those of local Clubs that charge match fees. The vast majority of members accepted the increased subscriptions and understand the costs of running the Club. For all categories of membership the option to pay monthly is available, to spread the cost of cricket throughout the year. Students and unemployed adults are eligible for reduced subscriptions, and occasional players are able to pay match fees rather than full subscriptions. A hardship fund is available and the club remains determined that cost should not be a barrier to playing cricket.

The Club was successful in its application for grant funding through the England and Wales Cricket Trust and received £2000 towards the cost of replacement sightscreens.

TRAINING

The junior and senior training schedules are well-established. Over the 2017/18 winter season year, we hired a local indoor facility and juniors will be trained for four weeks in November, and then weekly from January until the end of July. Seniors train weekly from January until the end of the season. We now have 12 ECB accredited Club Coaches, including two level 3 coaches and 9 level two coaches. We are incredibly

proud to support coach education on an ongoing basis, and always provide financial assistance to Club members wishing to develop their coaching skills.

As part of the continuing programme to improve training, the club is trialling 1 to 1 training sessions and progress reports for junior cricketers. This programme will commence with the oldest and most promising junior cricketers, and be rolled out to all junior cricketers if the trial proves to be beneficial for cricketers, coaches and parents.

The closure of the indoor cricket centre remains a source of disappointment and frustration, but the Club is in the process of designing, and raising funding for, the construction of an indoor sport facility at Gorse Lane. This will predominantly be a cricket facility in the evening and at weekends, but will be available for other activity during the weekdays, to support the Sport England initiatives for encouraging people to become more active. We will work with local schools, the NHS and local community groups and aspire to have an inclusive facility that makes a difference to the local community. The Club is currently investigating options for indoor training for this year, and is hopeful of being able to work with Priory Ruskin Academy to use their facilities in a reciprocal, and more cost effective, arrangement.

LEAGUE ENTRIES FOR 2018

Junior numbers are healthy and increasing. We have entered an U13 team into the Newark league. Teams have also been entered at U10, U11, U13 and U15 into the Lincolnshire Youth League. These are mixed teams, as we do not have sufficient numbers of girls at the moment in one age group to enter a separate girls' team. There is a constant focus on women and girls' cricket; recruitment strategies have proved effective in increasing the number of women playing and training, and a number of junior girls play in the women's team. We still do not have enough junior girls in one age group to enter a team into a girls' league, but this is under review and would be done if numbers permit.

The Club continues to field four senior teams on a Saturday, with the first team playing in the ECB Premier League, and one in each of the premier and second divisions of the South Lincs and Border League, and one team in the South Notts Cricket League. The Sunday First team will continue to play in the Rutland League. The Sunday 2nd team will continue to play in the GMCA, and has been promoted to division one of the Grantham and Melton Cricket Association, where it continues to play competitively. The ladies team is still facing some frustration in the Lincolnshire Women's Cricket League, with opposing teams conceding fixtures. The Club is delighted by the growth in the women's section, and we look forward to continuing to work with County to find opportunities for women to play competitive cricket.

Following a meeting with the South Nottinghamshire Cricket League at the end of the 2017 season, and following discussion with parents of U13 and U15 players, the Club entered a team into the South Notts Development League for the 2018 season, which is proving to be a great success. This league is the first of its kind in the UK; 32 over matches, no requirement for teas, and with the intention of having 7 or 8 juniors playing with 3 or 4 older cricketers, with the juniors taking the most active roles on the pitch. We feel that the inclusion of this team reinforces the player pathway from junior to senior cricket, and will help us to try to buck the national trends of player numbers dropping off at the age of 15-16.

CLUB STRUCTURE

The day to day running of the Club is managed by a Management Committee which meets monthly and includes the Chairman, President, Head Groundsman, Club Captain, First Team Captain, Secretary, Club

Welfare Officer, Head of Cricket and Junior Club Chairman. Three committees sit beneath this; ground, pavilion and catering, and junior club.

The Junior Club is supported by a Junior Club Chairman who, along with the Head of Cricket and Club Chairman, has responsibility for the development of junior cricket at Grantham. Each junior squad has been allocated a qualified coach who will select squads and attend all fixtures, as well as a parent helper/manager.

LOCAL COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL LINKS

The club maintains links with the Grantham Preparatory School, who use the Club's ground free of charge for training and matches as required. For the first time this year, Priory Ruskin Academy are using the ground to host home matches; the school has had no cricket pitch since it was rebuilt in 2014, and has been playing all of its cricket fixtures away, so we are delighted to be able to support them and look forward to developing the relationship with Priory Ruskin. The Club is proud to host two Primary Schools Softball Cricket festivals each year for year 5 and 6 children, in conjunction with Schools Sports Co-Ordinator and Inspire Plus.

The club's facilities are made available for representative fixtures, and we will be hosting junior girls, boys and women's fixtures for the Lincolnshire County Board, as well as a three-day MCCA fixture for Lincolnshire County Cricket Club. This year the club will host Nottinghamshire CCC 2nd XI three times in 2018 and will be developing the relationship with Nottinghamshire CCC into 2019 and beyond.

The club is used by many different community groups who are able to take advantage of our fantastic facilities and low hire costs. Witham Wheelers Cycling Club use the ground and pavilion year-round, and host two national cycling events at the Club each year. Little Wickets have commenced sessions at Grantham in 2018, and we hope to develop the relationship with this organisation further. Some further examples of community use include hire of the pavilion for activities such as baking classes, committee meetings and rehearsal space.

DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT IN 2018/19

The Club successfully applied to the EWCT for £2000 towards the cost of purchasing two new sightscreens. The Club has moved to Kingfisher, who are the ICC sponsors, and as part of the incentive package has received two new display fridges, and new pipes and coolers. A Committee has been established to progress the development of the indoor cricket centre, and a planning application will be submitted this summer.

Investment on the ground continues under the guidance of Keith Exton, to maintain and improve what is now recognised as a first-class facility. As part of its programme to develop the standard of potential outgrounds, Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club provided an interest-free loan of £15,000, repayable over 5 years, to enable final works to be completed in order for the Club to be able to host 1st class matches from 2019 onwards. The hosting of first class fixtures and the development of the indoor cricket centre will take up much time and effort in 2018 and 2019, but this does not detract from the day to day running and continuous improvement of the club for the benefit of its members, who remain the highest priority.

VOLUNTEERING IN THE CLUB AND THE WIDER CRICKET COMMUNITY

The committee had concerns this time last year about the management of local leagues, with many key personnel standing down at the same time. Fortunately, all local leagues in which the club competes now have a full committee and thus far, new appointees appear to be doing a very good job. All leagues are expressing concerns about the availability of umpires and scorers.

As a Club, we recognise that cricket administration has grown beyond that which can be reasonably expected of volunteers. All clubs benefit hugely from the systems that are in place to run leagues, but the demands on key league personnel are now so onerous that current incumbents are standing down, with apparently little realistic chance of them being replaced on the same basis. As a Club, we feel it is time for member clubs to recognise that the very small amounts of money we pay the leagues to enter a team are an unrealistic contribution for the huge amounts of work they do for us.

Following Shelley Clayton's resignation as Club Secretary in July 2017, Jo Green and Joe Peck covered the role of secretary until April 2018, when Mari Whitehurst was appointed. Having a permanent secretary in post makes a huge difference to the running of the Club. Whilst the club still relied heavily on Playcricket for club-wide information, the club is moving away from the previous position of all communication coming from the secretary, and captains and junior managers are taking a much more pro-active role in liaising with their squads.

The Club is perhaps better served than many other clubs in terms of the number of volunteers taking an active role in supporting and running the Club. Areas in which we continue to struggle a little are catering and scoring.

CLUB OBJECTIVES FOR 2018/19

Through discussion at Committee level, with local leagues and boards, with our County Clubs and through consultation with its members, Grantham Cricket Club has identified the following objectives for 2018/19:

[a] Senior players –

- To agree captaincy for 2019 early and to continue to promote the role of team captains within the Club
- To continue to play in the most appropriate leagues for each team
- To encourage all players to follow the spirit of cricket and to deal appropriately with those who fall short of the acceptable standard
- To appoint a new head of women's cricket
- To investigate the use of Teamer for selection of senior teams

[b] Junior players –

- To continue entering different age level teams in the local youth league.
- To ensure that all players follow the spirit of cricket as defined by the ECB
- To provide 30 weeks of structured coaching for all juniors
- To include juniors in senior squads
- To progress the older and most competent juniors to train with the seniors
- To nominate juniors to County squads
- To increase participation by girls
- To appoint parent managers to each junior team
- To provide one to one coaching sessions and written reports annually for juniors

[c] Committee –

- To appoint a new club secretary **achieved**
- To increase participation by volunteers at every level in the Club
- To communicate effectively with club members by a variety of means and update the club website

[d] Pavilion –

- To investigate changing energy suppliers
- To maintain current standards in the pavilion
- To hold a social event once a month out of season

[e] Ground –

- To maintain a standard of ground acceptable to Lincolnshire CCC and Nottinghamshire CCC
- To continue to aspire to be the best ground in the local leagues
- To install ball stop netting and move the wicket on the second pitch to
- To progress the development of an indoor cricket centre
- To install a fence to protect the outfield **achieved**
- To relay the outfield
- To purchase flat sheeting **achieved**

[f] Membership –

- To maintain a fair pricing policy to ensure cricket is as accessible as possible
- To retain and expand on membership in all categories
- To have an open membership policy and to welcome all potential members

[g] Finance –

- To keep the Club's finances in good order by effective monitoring
- To ensure that all running costs are retained in the budget
- To increase sponsorship by working in partnership with local businesses
- To investigate all funding streams for the development of the indoor centre at Gorse Lane