



Thank you Chair and thank you for giving me the opportunity to tell you a little bit about our club as we hurtle towards the new season. I'm Colin Mercer and I'm President of the Club.

Over the winter, and in readiness for the new season, maintenance has been carried out on the nets and a new mower has been bought to cut the grass on the outfield. I think we can already see that The Green is starting to look rather good as we move towards the new season in just over three week's time. Adjustments have also been made to the sight screens to make them more manoeuvrable by hand rather than by the tractor you may have seen chugging its way across the Green with sightscreens in tow..

On Friday evenings during the summer, there are scores of boys *and* girls practicing and training on the Green which shows that our junior section is growing year by year. In recent months, the Junior Cricketers have been busy with indoor nets at Moultsford Prep and Cranford Schools. Outdoor sessions will begin on Saturday 12th April for the hard ball groups and the girls-only Warriors section will start on Tuesday 22nd April. All Stars and Dynamos Cricket return from Friday 9th May and we already have a good take up of places – we expect to welcome 70-80 children to the Green on Friday evenings.

The Senior Club now consists of Men's and Women's teams. The Senior XI, led again this year by Ian Potter, have their first net session on 10th April in preparation for the opening match on Sunday 27th April, the first of twenty four scheduled for this season. The Women's team, led by Alex Smith and Ali Stokes, will be playing soft ball games including hosting a festival on Sunday 11th May.

We remain very conscious of the privilege of being able to play cricket in such an outstanding location and being able to use the superbly refurbished pavilion as our home in the summer. However, we appreciate the value of the pavilion to the whole village as a venue for parties and other events and with this in mind we have reduced the number of Saturday ground hires to ensure reasonable availability to everyone. The Pavilion will be used by the club for most Sundays until the end of September for matches, on Tuesday evenings until August for girls training, Friday evenings for All Stars and Dynamos from May until the middle of July and Saturday mornings will be for Junior Training until the end of August. There are occasional junior fixtures to be played on Mondays, Wednesdays or Thursday evenings.

I must make mention of the small and dedicated army of volunteers who enable this club to thrive; the Officers of the club, to the qualified coaches, safeguarding officers, activators and helpers who give up many hours of their time not just during the playing season but during the winter as well.

And finally, on behalf of the entire Club, I must record our grateful thanks to the Parish Council and to the wider community of Warborough and Shillingford for their continuing and much appreciated support. Long may it continue.

Colin A Mercer

President - Warborough and Shillingford Cricket Club

Wednesday 2nd April 2025