

Old Warren
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Re: Broadwindsor Cricket Club

Dear Friends of Broadwindsor Cricket Club:

There is so much to treasure about the Broadwindsor Cricket Club. When our existence first came under threat, with the new owners sending us a supposed eviction notice, it prompted me to go back over the materials that were bundled, disorganized, in a folder, and compile the first draft of a history of the club.

There were the copperplate minutes of a meeting in 1923, when the Club was founded – which meant we were coming up on our centenary (even Johnners is not that old!). There was a previous C. Smith who, it must be said, was a vast improvement on the current version – he opened the batting and the bowling in 1929, along with various other local names who still appear for the team (the 21st Century iteration of A. Crawford is an improvement on his 1929 doppelganger).

There was so much that was extraordinary about the club, as it rose to the heights of being voted in as one of Wisden's five top grounds in the country. I particularly love the fact that the residential home that overlooks the pitch asked us nicely to trim the hedge so that their residents could sit out on the balcony watching the games, and listening to leather on willow. There is something wonderful about being able to give joy to spectators who, like my own 93 year old mother, are probably enjoying the game at a very visceral level (and who are only mildly disturbed when I get called for another wide!).

There is much we need to do to make the club all that it can be. We need to recruit more youth - I hope my 12 year old, Wilf, will eventually take on my role, when I retire to take up scoring. We need to bring more women into the game here, just as the women's game has exploded nationally. I would like us to beautify the ground still more. Having been voted into the elevated status of "Chair", I hope we can achieve all this for our centenary in 2023.

But all of that is currently threatened with oblivion. We might work hard to save this local and national treasure, so that generations may enjoy it in the future.

If we do our job now, perhaps one day I will even get to sit on the balcony of the residential home myself!

Yours sincerely,



Clive A. Stafford Smith JD, OBE*

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