

Wanstead & Snaresbrook Cricket Club
(incorporating Snaresbrook Football Club)
founded in the year 1866

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KEATONS

2017 ECB Royal London National Club Championship Winners

2018-2022 Development Plan

Our vision is 'to remain a top recreational cricket club'. This will be achieved by 'nurturing - through our community of families and partnerships - the development of recreational cricket to the highest of standards and to provide all members with the opportunity to enjoy the game and fulfil their potential'

Report of the Development Planning Group to Members of the Management Committee

Summary of findings

Members expressed considerable support for the Herons. "The right choice for my family and me." A preparedness to address the changing nature of recreational cricket - the shorter form of the game - an increase in girls' and women's participation and a much lower entry age for juniors, has produced positive outcomes.

The demanding agenda recommended in the development report five years ago has been successfully delivered. The management team is to be congratulated for the tasteful refurbishment of the clubhouse and other facility improvements. Refurbishment of the nets is the next major project to be considered.

The club has introduced a number of operational changes, including a formal internal disciplinary procedure to ensure that it meets 'best standards', and a newly refashioned social committee.

Having previously adopted the 'vision' to become a leading recreational cricket club, the next five years are bound to be increasingly challenging. Against the backdrop that many clubs now struggle to meet adult and junior fixture commitments, sustainability will be our number one priority. We enjoy considerable support from our County. A change in the County structure for the first class game - which may not happen - is likely to have a significant impact on major recreational clubs.

Succession changes have been successfully addressed in the past. More can be expected during the next five years; the management structure will need to be continuously critiqued. A more structured volunteer recruitment and training program is under consideration. Our social media usage should be reviewed to ensure that the club's communications strategy delivers efficient outcomes.

There may be potential to increase financial support from our members and from new sponsorships. The Herons' evolution has moved in the direction of a multi-cultural club with respect for its members' individual differences and enthusiastic support for our shared love of cricket. As the County regional structure extends to East London, we see a potential role to support the growth of cricket in the area. The Herons' commitment to 'Community' includes a number of high profile overseas community tours; more are planned.

Our thanks go to the volunteers, who supported the preparation of this report, from member surveys and interviews. We are also grateful for the refreshingly independent review of the external environment.

Recommendations to Management Committee

To form a regular feature of the agendas

- To approve the preparation of a PR style report on the Herons for current and potential members, sponsors, grant providers and the wider cricket community.
- To review the effectiveness of the club's management structure and how to deal with retirement of key personnel.
- To consider a more structured volunteer recruitment and development program including the appointment of a volunteer co-coordinator to identify, communicate and monitor vacancies. An integral feature of this is to continually raise awareness that the Herons is a members' club and not a service provider.
- To identify an assistant to understudy the Welfare Officer. The (re) appointment of members of the safeguarding panel, with clear identification on Friday evenings and at other major events – perhaps with photo display and identification badges – should be implemented.
- To include a representative from the Ladies section on the social committee
- To prepare a communications strategy.
- To consider a better explanation of junior player development (Friday coaching groups and coaching programs, manager groupings, access to junior and adult matches).
- To consider the possibility of re-establishing a Grounds Committee, with responsibility to look at the maintenance aspects of all cricket-related facilities at the club, including the nets.
- To consider the introduction of a Women membership category similar to the men's 'occasional players' option.
- To research the potential for securing additional contributions from members, for example with the use of appeals, to fund specific capital projects, and to review our approach to providing assistance to members with particular financial hardship.
- To continuously seek sponsors and recognize that they can often provide a valuable source of advice.
- To monitor the efficiency of the clothing supplier – attendance at junior registration has been agreed.
- To establish a project to refurbish the Overton Drive permanent nets.

Detailed Report

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Development Planning Group (“DPG”) has prepared this report following completion of a members’ survey. It provides details of the main findings including recommendations for the Management Committee to consider.
- 1.2 The development planning process has been a feature of the club’s ethos for over twenty years. It is intended to publish a PR style report for both members and the external environment. The external environment includes members and potential members, sponsors, grant providers, and the wider cricket community. It should be subject to approval by the Management Committee prior to publication.
- 1.3 Topics in this report are considered under the following headings:

Section 2 – Terms of reference and survey process

Section 3 – The changing nature of recreational cricket and the Herons

Section 4 – 2012 Development Plan revisited: a pleasing outcome

Section 5 – Important initiatives introduced since last plan

Section 6 – 2018-2022 Strategic observations and recommendations

Section 7 – Operational issues and responses

2 Terms of reference and survey process

- 2.1 While development issues are considered at each Management Committee quarterly meeting, a more thorough study, including seeking members’ opinions and a review of the external environment, is conducted every five years by the DPG. The findings and recommendations reflect the views expressed by the general membership of the club and the Management Committee members. The DPG then provides advice and recommendations about the key aspects the club should consider in the next five years.
- 2.2 Questionnaires were sent to all members of the club. In addition, focused feedback was obtained from interviewing a random sample of members from different membership groups – parents of younger members, players aged U15 to U19, team managers, adult team captains, members of the Management Committee, social members and the playgroup, ground facility providers and the football section. When evaluating

responses, interviewers were required to emphasize the confidential nature of their work. When reporting to the DPG they were requested not to reveal the identity of the interviewees and to look for recurring themes rather than place excessive emphasis on a single perspective.

- 2.3 In total approximately 50 members were interviewed.
- 2.4 Finally, a review of the external environment was made, specifically the changes and trends affecting cricket that are likely to have an impact on the club, and to identify impressions about the club generally. Findings were collated following written and verbal submissions from a number of individuals representing the wider game in Essex and beyond, none of whom have any direct connection with the club.
- 2.5 The findings include both “strategic” – potential long-term developmental issues – as well as “operational” issues.
- 2.6 The Management Committee would like to express its thanks to the members of the DPG, whose names and specific roles are shown in Appendix A. To achieve a higher degree of confidentiality, interviews regarding the external environment were conducted by a non-member of the club, Andrew Shields, to whom we are particularly grateful for his valuable contribution. His report and our response to it are shown in Appendix B.

3 The changing nature of recreational cricket and the Herons

- 3.1 A detailed discussion on trends and changes that can be anticipated to impact on recreational cricket - and our club response - is articulated in Appendix B
- 3.2 The playing membership statistics – Appendix C – set the scene, and require explanations.
 - The age profile has become considerably younger and demanded a reallocation of managerial resource to cope with the change.
 - Girls and women’s cricket is becoming more popular.
 - There is the continuing challenge to manage participation levels against a background of clashes in fixture dates with other sports, school curriculum timetables, private tutoring and – regrettably – cricket administrators. The County are working hard to reduce the last.
 - While participation levels have increased at the club, sadly, there has been a noticeable decline in participation levels in cricket generally. Many traditionally strong

junior clubs struggle to field regular sides and this has the consequence of cancelled fixture commitments. One response is to design cricket matches for fewer players, for example eight a side events, but this results in fewer players entering the game. This does not necessarily reflect less enthusiasm but probably competing activities and a lack of volunteer support. It seems inevitable that club mergers and/or teams being selected from more than one club will be necessary in the next five years.

- 3.3 Club activity has changed in other ways. The Herons have nurtured its community ethos with regular high-profile overseas tours.
- 3.4 Cricket formats are moving towards the shorter game. This popularity is emphasised with the national club T20 final highlights being televised now.
- 3.5 The squad approach and more midweek fixtures in adult cricket require more players. A tendency for shorter matches and fewer players in junior competitions increases participation costs.
- 3.6 We support the Essex League Committee's initiative to introduce vertical leagues below the 1st XI Premier League, rather than the restrictions placed on the first and second teams under the present arrangements. A partial move in this direction with vertical leagues for 3rd XI's and below has helped improve standards across our six adult Saturday sides. Our women's team has entered the Southern League but travel commitments have restricted progress to higher divisions.
- 3.7 There appears to be increasing recognition by Sport England of the social value of sport in multicultural environments. The County district region, where the club is located, is to embrace East London, which is a particularly vibrant multicultural area. The Herons, one of the largest recreational clubs in this enlarged region, can be expected to play an important role in the extended district's development.
- 3.8 There is little room for doubt; our club has changed considerably over the years. It is far larger and has responsibility for a much broader variety of cricket-related activities. We argue in Appendix B that it is beneficial for the club to manage a broad range of activities rather than have a narrower focus.

3.9 Will the current County set up remain? This is a perennial topic but one of considerable importance to major recreational cricket clubs. If a new structure involving fewer tier one clubs was to be fashioned a degree of amalgamation of the remaining first class teams and major recreational cricket clubs could be expected. Of course, it might not happen but we need to remain a modern and progressive club to avoid becoming lost in the fallout.

4 2012 Development plan revisited: a pleasing outcome

4.1 The 2012 plan included a number of demanding recommendations, which the Management Committee has satisfactorily addressed.

4.2 The detail is revisited in Appendix D

5 Important initiatives introduced since last plan

5.1 Protocols and/or policies have been agreed on the selection of juniors for adult matches, arrangements for GDPR (data protection) compliance, approval of overseas community tours and coaching, including “The Accreditation Scheme and Young Coaches”.

5.2 We have introduced internal discipline procedures to maintain acceptable standards of conduct. These go beyond the level of league penalties. They involve the formation of an experienced panel of practitioners.

5.3 Improvements, including the introduction of an identity stamp, have been made to the junior registration procedures on Friday evenings.

5.4 A refashioned social committee has been established, to both promote and manage club events.

5.5 A more structured volunteer recruitment and volunteer development program is under consideration. The main idea is to tap into our main resource, members and the parents of junior members, to get more volunteers involved in club activities with ongoing succession plans in mind.

6 2018-2022: Strategic observations and recommendations

- 6.1 Sustainability is the number one priority.
- 6.2 The member survey indicated overwhelming support for the club (“This is the right choice for me and my family”) and for the volunteers who work so hard to run it. Inevitably, a number of comments were made. Many were constructive and some were critical. The key strategic observations and recommendations to the Management Committee are identified below. Comments of a more operational or tactical nature are addressed under section 7.
- 6.3 We must continually enforce our message that The Herons is a members club and not a service provider. Club subscriptions and match fees are to support club activities and are not a payment for a service. We want members who ask “what can I do for the club” rather than “what can the club do for me.”
- 6.4 There is positive support for the senior management team and no reason to consider changes. The Management Committee serves the club with a balance of practical skills. It also has an excellent record of addressing important succession changes. The service profile suggests that more changes will be necessary during the next five years. The management structure of the club needs to be continually reviewed as and when key personnel retire. As this process unfolds the concentration of responsibility on a limited number of officials and contingency planning in general may require attention.
- 6.5 The appointment of a volunteer co-coordinator role should be considered to identify, communicate and promote vacancies
- 6.6 The longer-term replacement of the important Welfare Officer role must be carefully managed. Steps should be taken to identify an assistant to understudy the present incumbent, who is highly experienced in the role. The (re) appointment of members of the safeguarding panel, with clear identification on Friday evenings and at other major events – perhaps with photo display and identification badges – should be implemented.
- 6.7 The women’s section should have a representative on the social committee.
- 6.8 By comparison with best standards, the management of the club website is highly effective. It is kept up to date and provides an active and important communications role. There has also been a marked increase in the use of social media and other electronic communications. Meanwhile, the club has had to address data protection legislation and safeguarding issues against the backdrop of exposure to potential misuse of digital communications; e.g. live streaming and gambling. This is a vitally important topic for a

club the size of the Herons, where maintaining control over multimedia and data sites is bound to be problematic.

- 6.9 A communications strategy should be prepared.
- 6.10 The President, Chairman and senior officials are to be congratulated on the Overton Drive pavilion and ground refurbishment. Careful planning and wise use of financial resources have resulted in a tasteful and practical outcome.
- 6.11 The main identified capital project for the club in the next 5 years is refurbishment of the Overton Drive permanent nets. The Management Committee should explore ways to raise funds to finance this, which is estimated to cost up to £75,000.
- 6.12 It is important that the current nets, and indeed other facilities, are maintained properly.
- 6.13 The feasibility of reconstituting the grounds committee to look at the maintenance aspects of all cricket-related facilities in the club should be considered.
- 6.14 Recreational cricket is becoming more expensive. Financial security will be an essential requirement to achieve sustainability. We consider the four sources of funding; bar and social, member contributions, grants and sponsorships, including marketing opportunities.
 - 6.14.1 Bar and social: Net income from recent social events has been modest, something that the social committee is addressing. Early indications are encouraging.
 - 6.14.2 Members' contributions: subscriptions and match fees. A survey of the subscription and match fee structure of local clubs has indicated that we are comparable, albeit at the top end of the range, relative to other major recreational clubs but expensive in comparison to clubs playing in lower standard leagues. Having regard to our facilities and the range of cricket standards we provide, it is considered that junior and men's subscriptions and match fees offer good value for money. However, our women's subscriptions are expensive by comparison with other clubs for those women and older girls, who play relatively few matches.

- 6.14.3 A review of women's and girls' subscriptions should be undertaken to ensure that the charges represent fair value. The possibility of introducing a membership category similar to the men's 'occasional players' should be considered
- 6.14.4 Members' voluntary contributions: There appears to be an opportunity to invite members to make additional or higher financial contributions. This facility is already available by either selecting to make a donation with the subscription or through 'The Friends' of the club. However, the survey indicated that few members had heard about The Friends. A different approach is to ask for contributions for specific projects, for example the response to a recent appeal to finance the purchase of a new trophy cabinet was generous. Other areas where we could consider additional membership funding include bursaries for members with modest means and/ or for sponsorship for young members to attend Community projects. This is an important issue for a leading recreational club and one we would like to think we handle in a discreet and compassionate manner. Whether a more formal and transparent approach would be preferable should be considered.
- 6.14.5 Key considerations must be the continuation of our resolve to maintain an ethos of inclusivity and the need to preserve our community sports club status.
- 6.14.6 Sponsorships: We were pleased to secure good sponsors, a principal recommendation in the last development report. We are especially grateful to Keatons, our lead sponsor. We are regarded as a good partner and aware that successful sponsorship management involves understanding the needs of the sponsor.
- 6.14.7 We must pay more attention to the visibility of sponsorship boards. They can become obscured by overhanging trees
- 6.14.8 We should give our sponsors more recognition by associating them with trophy awards. This idea has been recently introduced.
- 6.14.9 Sponsors can often provide advice as to the organization's development; we must not overlook this resource.
- 6.15 Our core values (inclusive, community and an integrated club) are authentic and have become an important feature of club ethos during the last fifteen years. Set against the backdrop of our success, the contribution we expect to make as a member of our

County's vibrant multicultural East London region and our community programmes in general, we should consider whether there is scope to actively market The Herons brand to attract more sponsors.

6.16 Social events and programmes run by The Herons need to be better advertised. We do not tell our members and other supporters about them. Could we market ourselves more actively? The substantial volume of social media 'hits', when our adult first team played in the 2018 inaugural MCC v National Club Champions match at Lords, was an eye opener. This should be considered as part of the Communications Strategy.

7 Operational issues and response

7.1 This section addresses comments from the members' survey that were more in the nature of operational or tactical issues. They are detailed in Appendix E and, having regard to their importance, commented upon in the Club Response, which follows each comment.

On behalf of the Development Planning Committee

Matloob Piracha and Len Enoch

August, 2018

Appendix A Members of Development Planning Group

Interview team	Membership category
Jossee Gritten	Parents of u/5 to u/9 juniors
Feroza Patel	Parents of u/10 u/11 juniors
Bindya Patel	Parents of u/12 to u/14 juniors
Shahjahan Aziz	u/15 to u/19 playing members
Adnan Akram	Junior managers of boys and girls teams
Chris Powell	Men's adult players, captains and v captains
Serena Mahandru	Women players, 20 years and older
Ramon Chesney and Jim Coker	Slow Coaches
Matloob Piracha	Members of management committee
Andrew Shields*	External environment
Ruth Martin	Social members and play group
Trevor Hebden	Grounds contractor and club facilities
Len Enoch	Football section

* Chairman of South Loughton Cricket Club

Appendix B Report on the external environment and club response

How are The Herons perceived and what changes need to be considered? The comments below are taken directly from the report prepared by our external volunteer interviewer.

Positive Attributes

- 1 Wanstead is a leading club for its commitment to community cohesion; the pathway opportunities it provides; and for sticking to its core values of being a community club in the heart of East London.
- 2 The club genuinely seeks to provide opportunities for all. The only overt barrier to participation is a sensible restriction on numbers in the junior section to ensure all participants receive reasonable opportunities to play and be coached (however, see 'Challenges' below).
- 3 The club has built very strong relationships within the game locally, regionally and, increasingly, nationally. These have helped to increase its profile.
- 4 The women's and girls' programmes are exemplary, widely admired and justly popular with opportunities for all standards from beginner upwards.
- 5 The club has a strong governance structure and excellent administration, closely tied to its values and aims.
- 6 The club is prepared to do what is right for the long-term rather than the short-term.
- 7 Wanstead is regarded as one of the role model clubs with a booming junior section providing the majority of their senior players of the future.
- 8 The club's success on the pitch reflects well on SNEL (Shepherd Neame) and Essex cricket.

Negatives

- 1 While Essex cricket and the SNEL can be proud of Wanstead's achievements, the 1st XI is often regarded by other teams and umpires as poorly behaved and in the last few years has been at, or near the bottom of, the Disciplinary table compiled by umpires.

Club Response: Wanstead recognises the importance of good conduct. The Club takes these matters seriously and as a result an internal disciplinary procedure, which includes a panel with experienced umpires, has been established to address future behaviour standards. We would like to point out though that Wanstead has received unsolicited letters of appreciation from other clubs for our 1XI's sense of fair play and good sportsmanship.

- 2 There is a perception that senior membership of the club is expensive, especially for those playing in lower XIs who may play most of their cricket at inferior grounds and will rarely or never play at Overton Drive.

Club Response: Subscriptions and match fees are at the higher percentile compared with other large recreational clubs and are expensive compared with smaller clubs. There is a process of continued benchmarking and we feel that, having regard to the level of free coaching provided to juniors and range of cricket standards, social cricket and club facilities that available, our charges reflect value for money.

- 3 Are fees for the financially disadvantaged available? If so, how are they communicated and managed?

Club Response: This is an important issue for a leading recreational club and one we would like to think is handled in a discreet and compassionate manner. Whether a more formal and transparent approach should be adopted will be considered.

- 4 There is a perception that much of the club's positive activity is vested in a small number of individuals. The club may need to focus on business contingency should certain key individuals step down or retire.

Club Response: There is recognition for the need to broaden the club's management resources.

Opportunities

- 1 Due to the club's level of success, there is a degree of jealousy among some other clubs. This can lead to assumptions being made without taking the time to listen to the way that Wanstead has developed.

- Wanstead are, it is understood, keen to aid the development of other clubs, individuals and organizations but this is perhaps not widely enough known and would benefit from proactive communication.
- It needs to be clear that such assistance is altruistic in nature and available to all clubs, individuals and organizations. This would counter the perception that Wanstead's outreach work is mainly focused on locations (inner East London) and communities (BAME/student) that are primarily potential sources of new players.

This can be crystallized into:

- Greater support with community cohesion in East London, leagues and community programs.
- Greater support with the development of volunteers and role models from East London communities.

Club Response: Active involvement through the East London (Met) district is addressing this issue; the aim is to nurture a climate where support is available to fledgling and existing clubs. The burden of work should be spread wherever possible although the club recognizes that it has an on-going role that will involve a bigger share of the heavy lifting.

2 Challenges

- Greater pressure from the ECB around developing the game to meet Sport England focuses.
- Bolstering the game's volunteer network. Not so much coaches but chairs of committees, treasurers, ground staff and general volunteers.
- Playing numbers in senior weekend cricket will continue to level off or maybe decline further. Leagues will have to consider more radical changes to keep players engaged and active.
- There has to be greater willingness to experiment with formats: shorter games, restrictions on runs scored/overs bowled to ensure all players can contribute, removal of draws, integrated league structures etc. The success of the ethnic Sunday leagues is in large part due to a level of creativity around formats.
- We have to be ready for the introduction of coloured kits, and recognise both the potential (widening exposure and revenue opportunities) and challenges (corruption) of social media, possibly including streaming of games. Again, many Sunday leagues are to the fore in such thinking.
- Facility provision is a headache. Few councils now see sport as a core service, leaving cricket particularly vulnerable. The decline in quality and increase in cost of council-managed facilities will force some clubs into extinction. The redevelopment of ageing facilities will reduce, and will almost certainly be multi-sport. Cricket will have to fight its corner.
- Movement of committed players to those clubs where quality of provision is more certain. This could undermine the overall structure of the game in Metropolitan Essex, enabling a small number of clubs to thrive while others suffer a serious loss of players. This is not good for the overall health of the game.
- Cricket is a game for everyone with huge potential for integration and cohesion in the community. Most 'traditional' clubs in Essex welcome a diverse membership, built on the principles mentioned above – of being a 'member' of a 'club'. However, it is clear that integration is not always a two-way process – reference the increasing number of single-ethnicity clubs and leagues springing up, in which players from those communities choose to play in preference to traditional clubs and leagues. This is a reality and needs to be recognised.
- Access to funding will become even tighter and funders will want clear evidence that their input will (a) raise levels of activity, especially among the currently inactive; and

- (b) enhance community cohesion. Cricket can deliver both these outcomes if it allows itself to be adaptable.
- Funding within cricket will be increasingly tied to ECB initiatives and objectives, as shown with the targeting of ECB Small Grants this spring to clubs involved in programmes such as All Stars and women and girls.
 - Clubs and leagues which best understand their place (status, SMART objectives, effective planning) in the modern game are the most likely to survive and thrive.

Club Response: We do not disagree, these are the challenges recreational cricket must address. Flexibility is likely to be a pre-requisite to survival. We certainly do not have all the answers. Specifically:

- We share the dilemma in communicating what it means to be a club. In today's 24/7 society, too many members, players and particularly families, see the club as a service provider. Wanstead has tried to change this perception and we aim to continue with our efforts in this regard. We believe that good social cricket (in our case the Slow Coaches) and community programmes that may offer opportunities for juniors to develop leadership skills go a long way to address the problem, but certainly not all the way.
- Wanstead's survival, like any other recreational sports clubs, is dependent on the adults doing the heavy lifting required to develop our juniors. Wanstead has been described as a 'community of families'. We have an army of prospective volunteers ready to be introduced to their club. Our active volunteer programme seeks out individuals willing to offer their services to the club.
- We recognise the proliferation of single ethnicity clubs, but we prefer our model, which is an integrated cricket club with multicultural membership. We think everyone benefits from the shared belief of enjoying a phenomenon called 'cricket'. Our core principles are to be an inclusive, community and integrated club. The club makes every effort best way to ensure that each member and member group enjoy a fair share of attention and club resources.
- It is relevant to examine our membership differences which are more than ethnicity and cultural. Our membership data indicates significant gender and age variations. There are also considerable contrasts in skill levels, which range from beginners and players who demonstrate modest abilities to those approaching the first-class game. There are members whose sole focus is to play cricket and those who find the social interaction and/or participation in community projects rewarding. This leads to the integration of our members, one of our core objectives. The question is, "does the integration of these diverse membership interests under a single club add value or is the outcome a club that loses focus and where people get lost and isolated?" We think that we are stronger together. While we have considerable differences, our membership provides the opportunity to bring together likeminded people. We have no given right to enjoy this status; on the contrary, we must work even harder to preserve it.

Appendix C Player statistics – a 15 year history

	2002	2007	2012	2017
Playing members				
Men	63	105	134	180
Women	–	13	16	40
Juniors	278	326	336	359
Total	341	444	486	579
Juniors				
Boys	255	279	281	298
Girls	23	47	55	61
Total	278	326	336	359
Juniors include aged 5-8	37	27	36	136*

* Weekly attendance varies considerably, often much lower

Appendix D 2012 plan revisited

Principal Recommendations to Management Committee and Outcomes

- Consider plans to adopt a financial focus; specifically to look for a principal club sponsor
OUTCOME: A quality club sponsor, Keatons, is now in place
- To improve the appeal of food and beverage potential
OUTCOME: Staff change has been made, topic still under consideration.
- To arrange for the efficient supply of club clothing.
OUTCOME: new arrangements are now in place, some issues surrounding delivery times are being addressed.
- Progress plans for the refurbishment of the Overton Drive clubhouse and the fencing at Nutter Lane
OUTCOME: work completed and to a high standard. Overton Drive is now a tasteful and practical club house, meeting best standards.
- Continue to work with our County board and the ECB in promoting an improved climate for recreational cricket including a reduction in costly bureaucracy
OUTCOME: Two senior club officials have provided hands on support. This is ongoing and time consuming but outcomes are encouraging if slow.
- Identify options to engage members and supporters through various media.
OUTCOME: ongoing project. Immense improvement to updating of web site.
- Develop a succession plan.
OUTCOME: A major change during the period was the appointment of a new head of junior cricket and new treasurer, successful outcomes. Juniors management is an evolutionary process and developing.

Appendix E Identification of operational Issues and response

These observations are from the members' survey and include the club response

1 Player development and communications generally

- 1.1 A number of respondents commented about a lack of clarity on the development programme for players from entry to the club through to progress in adult cricket. There were no criticism of the quality of coaching but a feeling that communication was inadequate.
- 1.2 A related issue was the need for clarification on players' access to the County programme.

Club Response:

- The entry age of our juniors has been going down over the past few years. Consequently we tend to introduce some of them to matches at an earlier age. However, we have to pay careful attention to false parental expectations of more frequent matches for 7 to 8 years old. A more formal communication on this and other refinements to our development programme will be implemented. It would be impractical to publish specific plans for each player but at the commencement of the summer season following registration, a written communication will be circulated to all members explaining our general approach to the development of young players including their participation in adult cricket. .
- Junior team managers will advise players' parents on County activities.

2 Coach and player on-going training

- 2.1 Some members did not seem aware that the club has a programme of coach development and on-going training. Some correspondents were not aware that the club runs tactical workshops on captaincy, tactics and umpiring for example (although it is acknowledged that these are infrequent) and that there is an internal Junior Accreditation programme..

Club Response:

- Better communication is necessary. Clearly, some members do not read the club's website.

- We will attempt to introduce a little more formality in the appointment of our young players to the Junior Accreditation programme and generally communicate our contribution to the development of junior leadership skills, e.g., DoE. Ideas to investigate include a formal contract between the club and young player, some form of junior communication forum, perhaps along the lines of a junior member advocacy facility. We must keep up to date with contemporary developments along these lines.

3 Slow Coaches

- 3.1 It was commented that the importance to the club of this concept is not always appreciated. In some respects, its uniqueness gives it an 'acceptable' aura of exclusiveness.

Club Response

- More effort should be made to increase members' awareness of the importance of the Slow Coaches to the club.

4 Social

- 4.1 Specific questions were included in the survey on club social events. Comments included suggestions for:

- More fundraising events in the club (perhaps a bit more culturally varied events).
- Improvement in choice of food on Friday evenings.
- BBQ events on occasional Fridays and at least once a month in May, June and July.
- More organized events to appeal to the Herons culturally varied membership.
- More variety and better drinks at the bar.

Club Response:

- Discussions along these lines are under way. Some of the ideas have already been successfully adopted.
- 4.2 The new social events manager would like wide authority to develop initiatives and for recognition to be given for funds raised to support specific functions

Club Response:

- This matter will be discussed in the Management Committee meeting and the decision will be taken accordingly.

5 Other topics

- 5.1 There were some complaints about slow delivery of club clothing. However, on investigation of this issue it was clear that ordering procedures were not properly adhered to, which resulted in delays. It has been agreed that the supplier will attend Overton Drive during a couple of Fridays at the start of the cricket season so that required kit could be purchased on the spot.
- 5.2 There was a suggestion that some relatively minor work on the Nutter Lane football pitch might eliminate or reduce flooding which results in lost matches.
- 5.3 We continue to enjoy a successful partnership with the Overton Drive Lakeside Playgroup, which commenced in the 1970s. As the club has gained experience at working with younger children, we arranged a mini cricket event with the playgroup. It was successful and we have been asked to do this again.