



## **BRIGHTLING PARK CRICKET CLUB**

### **MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**12<sup>th</sup> March 2025 – 7pm**

**THE SWAN INN**

The meeting commenced at 7.20pm with 11 in attendance. Steve Leeves chaired in the absence of Gardie who was represented by his brother Henry. It is worth noting that of the total attendees 6 were non-playing members plus the groundsman.

Apologies were received from 8 members.

#### **Special Note**

The meeting was a poignant one for senior members coming just a week after the funeral of David Gasson. For many years David held various positions at the club including Hon Sec, Fixture Sec, Groundsman and Captain. His distinguished career both as a batsman and a bowler spanned almost 50 years and his passing is a huge loss to the club, the village and the church.

See fundraising and any other business sections for more on David.

**Minutes of AGM 2024** – The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting of the club.

**Treasurers Report** – The treasurer, Melanie Richner, presented a summary of the accounts for the season showing a bank balance of £1,644.02. Income for the year totalled £1,025.50 whilst expenses came in at £1,154.77. The situation is not a healthy one and if it were not for the generosity of Harry Wills who covered the cost of the mower maintenance it would be dire.

Club Sec Steve Leeves then went on to outline areas of financial concern having analysed the bank account in some detail. These observations, along with the financial summary, are attached as an appendix to these minutes and should be read by all members.

**Averages 2024** – not available at date of meeting.

#### **Election of Officers**

- Chairman – Gardie Grissell
- Treasurer – Melanie Richner (resigned)
- Hon Sec – Steve Leeves (resigned)

- Captain – Sam Richner
- Vice – Seb Stovell & Laurence Flint
- Umpire – Neil Pope
- Groundsman – Matt
- Scorer/Media – Maisy Evershed

The treasurer and Hon Sec tendered their resignations but will stay on until replacements are in place. The process will require a new bank account as the current Metro Bank Community Account needs to be linked to someone with an existing Metro account and so is not a case of just amending signatories. A club minute approving the opening of an account will be required along with a brief description of the club's activities. All necessary templates can be provided by Treas/Hon Sec.

**Votes of Thanks** – Gardie and Henry for continued use of the ground, Neil Pope for umpire duties, Ricci for fixtures, Steve & Mel for Hon Sec and Treasurer duties, Lully and Tim Keeley for providing cricket balls, Matt for the ground and Harry Wills for covering the mower bill.

**Fixtures for 2025** – Ricci Kent presented a list of fixtures for the 2025 season with 6 confirmed home games and 6 away. Two games and venue are yet to be confirmed.

The Village Tournament will continue this season with Brightling Park taking a turn at collating all the figures for the points table. New captain Sam Richner kindly volunteered his girlfriend Maisy for this role in addition to her scoring duties.

Fixture cards to be produced by Hon Sec & Treasurer

**Subscriptions & Match Fees** – Club subscriptions have remained the same for many years and it was agreed that given the financial situation they should be increased this season. Members are now asked to pay £30 per year. Match fees to remain at £5 per game.

**Teas** – Matches against any touring sides will include tea. Other than that it will remain “bring your own”. The need for jugs/cups for drinks was discussed

**Team Selection** – Captain and Vice will deal with this via specific Whatsapp group.

**Groundsman/Ground Maintenance/Equipment** – the ground was very well looked after by Matt for a fee of £10 per hour and the meeting was happy to continue with his services for the coming season. Matt agreed to the same hourly rate however he was conscious of the financial state of the club and suggested a way of reducing costs would be for him to sell all the old unused/broken machinery and deduct any proceeds from his invoices. This was considered a welcome if over generous offer which Henry Grissell was keen to have minuted.

The usual issue of mower renewal/maintenance was discussed and Ricci Kent kindly offered to cover the £300 cost of a fully serviced replacement through his business.

Lully Keeley will provide new balls for the season.

Boundary flags and a couple of umpires coats are required.

New laminated public liability signs are needed covering car parking, flying cricket balls and the surrounding ponds.

**Public Liability Insurance** – The club intends to stay with Mann Broadbent for the coming season with a likely premium in the region of £250 - £300 (renewal subsequently received at £268 due 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025).

**Cricket Dinner** – Some kind of awards function at the end of the season was preferred and to be discussed and confirmed.

**Fundraising** – This subject needs some serious attention in addition to ensuring that all subs and match fees are paid (see appendix ‘notes in financial reports for AGM 2025’).

The pub quiz has historically raised a decent amount however there hasn’t been one for a while. Venue is an issue with the pub getting increasingly busy with midweek diners. Discussions about alternative venues including the village hall were had and will continue, watch this space.

The club had acquired an unused Grey Nicolls cricket bat which was amongst the cricket equipment belonging to Dave Gasson. It was agreed that this be put up for auction on the club WhatsApp group to raise some funds. (Subsequently sold for £230).

Henry Grissell mentioned the Flower Show Committee and The Village Trust as other possible avenues of funding.

### **Any Other Business**

- **Going forward (Finance)** - since the days of covid, the number of VP donations has dwindled. This is partly due to the suspension of cricket during lockdowns when regular contact ceased. Historically VP’s received a letter each season inviting them to donate. This hasn’t happened recently because of uncertainty about contact details still being valid, of anyone moving away from the area and in the worst case anyone dying. A VP recruitment drive is needed and a reminder sent to those known to still be with us and in the area. The Park also used to make a substantial profit from teas but this became an issue even pre-covid when finding anyone willing to do it with only basic facilities proved problematic. When cricket did finally re-start the covid restrictions buried it. It is also vital that all players pay their £5 match fee. It is now a simple operation of using a banking App to transfer and it was suggested that the captain might like to consider gathering the team together pre-match and all pressing the buttons together!
- **Going forward (players/commitment)** – The lack of players was evident by the numbers at the AGM. Brightling Park CC is not alone in this situation and a discussion revealed some worrying trends across many neighbouring villages and towns. Common to all is the lack of youngsters available and Brightling Park is a good example where the actual village is hardly represented on the weekly team sheet and hasn’t been for many years. Some attendees volunteered to speak to other clubs to see what they are doing, if anything, to try and improve the situation in their locality and if we can learn anything from it.
- **Dave Gasson Memorial** – it was agreed that a permanent memorial of some kind should be placed at the ground in memory of Dave. The exact form and cost to be discussed by Hon Sec/Treasurer and the Grissell family.

- **EGM** – Given the uncertainty over the future of the club it was agreed to hold an EGM in October 2025 to review the situation and gauge ongoing commitment. Notice will be given via the usual channels.

### **Summing up by Chairman**

The chairman was sorry that it wasn't the cheeriest AGM he'd been to in almost 40 years membership however he was pleased that there was still a flicker of willingness to carry on even if it was by an ever-dwindling number.

The main point he wanted to press home was that cricket clubs don't run themselves and they don't run on fresh air. Payment of subs and match fees covers essential costs. Members might also give some thought to perhaps thinking of other ideas for fund raising and/or organising efforts themselves rather than just expecting them to happen.

He looked forward to a much larger crowd at the October EGM, a larger bank balance and a larger membership (all paid up!).

The meeting closed at 9.17pm

Signed as a true record of the AGM 2025

Stephen Leeves  
Hon Sec BPCC