

Chairman's Report to the 2025 General Meeting.

Firstly, I would like to extend our congratulations to all the divisional winners and in particular to Challow & Childrey on their promotion to the Home Counties Premier League div 2. We wish them all the best in their HCPCL adventure and in the nicest way possible, hope not to be seeing them again any time soon.

2025 saw the introduction of several new clubs and several additional teams from existing clubs to the league, all of whom I am confident were a welcome addition and made a positive contribution. As you will see from the agenda, we have further applications for 2026 from both new and existing clubs. The league committee have worked closely with the applicant clubs to ensure they meet our requirements for entry, and we would encourage you to elect these teams to membership.

The closure of the Mid Bucks League and the difficulties experienced by some other leagues has certainly had an impact on this and it is testament to our progress over recent years that these applications have come to us. We are, however, conscious of our geographical spread and have set physical borders for future inclusion. Whilst we appreciate the responsibility we have as a League to club cricket in our area, we have no plans to extend that area. It is the intention of the League going forward to work with other league structures close to us to maintain a healthy environment for both recreational and aspirational club cricket.

A key factor in attracting new clubs has been the drive in the League to improve ground standards. We have been encouraged by the work done by many clubs, but there remains plenty of room for improvement. The League Secretary will be writing to all clubs shortly after the AGM with more on this.

We are continuing to make progress on the provision of non-playing or neutral umpires, but there is still a long way to go before this is extended throughout the league. Whilst the committee can administer this and offer training and guidance, we are not in a position to take on the recruitment of new umpires. You as the clubs are best placed to do this and it is an important part of your participation in the league. Please continue your efforts in this area and in the provision of scorers as it is universally agreed that these two factors make the game more enjoyable for all concerned.

Please also note that as a club you are ultimately responsible for the behaviour of your players on the pitch. There was a significant increase in the number of disciplinary charges this year, something we would like to see reversed for 2026.

The cup competitions continue to be popular and have been very successful. Our thanks go out to Paul Salway and Barrie Pudwell for their excellent work here and we would encourage all clubs to support these competitions where you can.

I would like to thank the entire management committee for their continuing work in an expanding league. We are glad to welcome 2 new members for 2026 which brings us up to a full quota of 15, however if you feel you are able to contribute something to the running of the league, please contact the Secretary. We are always appreciative of an extra pair of hands. The committee is made up entirely of volunteers and they give their time freely and without recompense. Please keep this in mind in your exchanges with them.

It only remains for me to wish you the very best for the festive season and in your pre-season preparations for 2026.

David Warner
Chairman
Cherwell Cricket League