

Winsley Cricket Club

Club History

Winsley Cricket Club was established in the 1920's by local men and fixtures were established against other local town and village clubs. The current ground at The Downs was rented from the Knatchbull family who owned the Manor House and adjoining land. Eventually a pavilion was built and opened in July 1937, this was subsequently replaced in 1970 by a larger building. Interestingly the old pavilion was taken down and taken to the Poplars Inn at Wingfield where it was re-erected and still serves as a cricket pavilion today. The club continued to flourish with first Mrs Knatchbull and then her redoubtable daughter, Miss Beatrice Knatchbull, being Club President. When eventually she sold the Manor in the mid 1980's the new owner, Denis Gilmer, took her place. An enthusiastic cricket fan he was a great supporter of the club.

In April 2003 the pavilion was set fire and destroyed. This proved to be a seminal moment in the Club's history as the membership, led by an enthusiastic Committee, set to developing plans for a new clubhouse that would take the club forward. With a massive effort by members and friends, some grant money and generous gifts from other clubs in the area the new clubhouse was completed in time for the start of the 2004 season.

Sadly Denis Gilmer died shortly after the pavilion was destroyed, nevertheless his family remained very positive towards the club. To provide long-term security of tenure for the club negotiations were completed with the Gilmer family to acquire a part ownership of the ground. Since then we have relaid the square, acquired a set of covers, installed a permanent net and greatly improved the outfield and practice facilities.

On the field for many years the club played predominantly friendly fixtures, however with the advent of local leagues Winsley joined first the West Wiltshire league then the Wiltshire Cricket League, running a 1st and 2nd XI in these competitions. In addition the Whitbread National Village Knock-out competition was entered and in 1981 they were successful in winning the Wiltshire section and progressed to the last 16 nationally. They repeated winning the Wiltshire section in 1993 sadly losing in the next round. The first Youth Section was formed in the 1980's and developed in a series of stages.

Latterly the club entered the West of England Premier League structure with 1st and 2nd XI's playing in their respective Wiltshire divisions, in 2011 the 1st XI were champions in the division and promoted to Glos/Wilts division for the 2012 season. The club formed a 3rd XI in 2009 and entered Division 8 of the Wiltshire Cricket League winning promotion at the end of a successful inaugural season. One of the principal aims of the 3rd XI is to provide a transition from Youth to Senior cricket.

Our Youth section now has around 100 members under the age of 15. We run competitive teams in the Bath and District League at U15, U13 and U11 age groups. Younger players – under-9 – play in kwik cricket festivals. Coaching sessions take place on several days of the week and we have the support of a team of coaches drawn from the club and many enthusiastic parents.

The club is affiliated to the England and Wales Cricket Board and The Wiltshire Cricket Board.