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Dear North Enfield,

Following a successful 2022 season, 2023 saw a slight reversal in membership numbers across the club. We lost the services of several senior players for a variety of reasons (change of scenery, re-location, other life commitments, break from playing etc), and the oldest junior age group was no longer able to raise a full side (with several members progressing into senior cricket).

The club also lost two esteemed members in the latter half of the year, with both Mike Hislop (vice president) and recent former Chairman Richard Barber (life member) both passing away. NECC offers our condolences to their respective families – they will be missed.

For those who are interested, our tally of memberships across the club (with 2022 figures in brackets) is as follows:

Full Senior Members: 13 (22)
Social Players: 3 (4)
Student/Young Adults: 15 (13)
Juniors: 58 (69)
Social: 74 (80) (note: includes junior parents)
Life Members & Vice Presidents: 6 (6) active/occasional players, 36 (33) others

The positive for having fewer senior players is the increased opportunity to play across both weekly match days for those who can/are willing – but beyond that it's a challenging position for both captains and the club committee to manage. Desperately needing every available body for the majority of league matches and remaining competitive is an uphill struggle, and the need to give young players opportunities to impact matches in a meaningful way (and not just field for 40/50 overs) is a further complication. Thankfully, the spirit across all senior sides and the club overall remains strong, and I'm confident our existing members will be back for more action this year.

The junior section remains key to the club's current and future prospects. As per previously, Nick Munt continues to oversee the age group planning and logistics whilst maintaining our safeguarding requirements – my thanks to him and all the coaches who perform a largely unsung voluntary workload which brings a lot of joy and excitement to our younger players. The club needs coaches, assistant coaches and age-group managers to keep our junior section thriving – both from a financial and playing position. If you think you could help with this, even on a part-time basis, please get in touch.

Disappointingly, we had a first membership "default" since I began the role in 2020, with a committee member failing to pay both subs and match fees with no explanation forthcoming. This serves to highlight that the club cannot rely on trust or goodwill alone when it comes to

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payment of fees due. I'm grateful that such incidents are rare, and the overwhelming majority of members were proactive in both membership payment and communication.

Whilst membership payments were relatively smooth, payment of match fees was more problematic. When fixtures weren't rained off, the club should receive ~£300 per weekend from ~30 different players. It only takes a handful of these transaction to go wrong, or not be made at all, to cause a multitude of WhatsApp enquiries/chasers to be made. For a week or two that's fine, but after eighteen weeks it's particularly painful. There is no ideal solution to this, but paying online is the simplest method to securely ensure that club match fees are paid and verifying beyond doubt who has paid what amount. Assuming our existing system continues, please make it a routine to pay for your own match fees only and on the day that you've played (not the Sunday or Monday after).

For 2024 subscription fees, I'm proposing to keep all existing prices the same. Our overall costs for 2023 were higher in some areas and lower in others, and as we're set to switch bank accounts this year as well it's simplest to keep all else in place for another year. That means subscriptions rates as follows:

Full Senior Membership = **£145** (was £145) (inc. Social Memb. for partner)

New to NECC Senior Member – First Year Discount = **£72.50**

Social Player (participation in up to 6 matches) = **£72.50**

Young Adult/Student = **£70** (was £70)

Social Membership = **£15** (was £15)

Junior Member = **£105** (was £105) (inc. Social Membership for parents/ guardians)

(note: **£75** for Senior/Life/VP/Social Player Member son/daughter)

Siblings of Junior Members = **£65** each (was £65)

Adult Cricket Match Fees: £13 for Adults/Social Player, £7.00 for all others

Special/Social Match Fees (e.g. T20 games): £7 for Adults/Social Player, £4 all others

Junior Match Fees: TBC by Nick/Junior Coordinator for age groups

My hope for 2024 is to reverse the downward trend and ideally improve our playing membership base. Those who have joined the club in recent years have provided welcome positive feedback with a view to returning for more action – if we can pick up a few further players, retain the ones we have and keep our youngest members striving for senior cricket then we can look forward with additional optimism.

Lastly, I'd like to convey my thanks to all involved in helping NECC meet the needs of our members – so much goes on behind the scenes as we continue to make our mark within our local community.

Dan Vanniasingham

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