**Report from the Chair December 2022**

As the December AGM approaches, my thoughts turn to the events over the last year and would like to congratulate those who have helped keep cricket going despite numerous challenges. Our member clubs, the ACO, ECB, sponsors parents and volunteers are the strength we rely on to keep our beloved cricket being played inclusively at every level.

I am pleased to be able to report that 2022 was a good year for Isle of Wight cricket, at grassroots and our county representative teams. This year the weather enabled the most games of cricket island clubs have seen for many years and I personally enjoyed visiting quite a few grounds to watch. I would like to offer many congratulations to not only the competition winners but to all who participated in any form.

I am sure many of the clubs have felt a void since Stuart left us. I would like to reassure you that the IWCB is doing its best to help and assist whenever required. I am always available and we have two directors in Steve Holbrook and Simon Wratton who are responsible for leagues and clubs. Please feel free to contact us with any questions. We have been in talks with Hampshire CCB to discuss the possibility of some administration tasks be outsourced to them. This is ongoing and will help us in the short term. We will not lose our identity or our funding. The amount of reporting and policies that are now required for all county boards to be compliant is an enormous task for any individual. We are hoping that support in these areas will allow our organisation to grow and will improve our ability to serve our community. We are and will always be IOW and the arrangement with Hampshire, if agreed, will be temporary.

We have taken on three new employees this year:

* Alex Barton as Women & Girls Development Manager,
* Martin Blackman as Lord Taverners Disability Development Manager
* Andrew Jasper for all things admin and social media.

This has allowed us to bring opportunities to all areas of our community and continue to develop the next generation of cricketers. I hope that the clubs have felt this support and our desire to improve their sustainability and growth. We will continue to look at ways that the IOW cricket clubs need our support and endeavour to find solutions to adversities.

Many clubs offered National programmes to the local children with AllStars & Dynamos sessions throughout the summer. This was very successful and I would like to offer a massive thankyou to the workforce of coaches and volunteers who delivered these programmes providing opportunities to the 344 children who took part. Engagement with these programmes will create the future generation of club members and I am incredibly proud of the success we have had. This year has also seen a surge of girls playing club cricket. Ventnor, Arreton, Ryde, Freshwater and Cowes cricket clubs have all competed with all-girl teams. For the first time we have had an girls u12 league and two u13 all girls teams playing in the u13 Island league. A womens team from Ryde CC played for the first time in the Hampshire league Div 3 south finishing 3rd. The team has been entered to play again in 2023. There has also been

three womens softball touring teams visited the island this summer and played matches at Ventnor, Cowes and Arreton. The growth of the women and girls game has been a huge success and we will strive to continue with this progress.

As well as club cricket, we have also seen fantastic County and professional cricket played on the Island. Newclose CCG hosted the Hampshire v Northamptonshire Royal London cup match in August on one of the hottest days of the year. A fantastic event attended by many young and old cricket enthusiasts. This year, we have had county age group boys teams representing age levels from 10 to 18 and girls at 13s, 15s. Not forgetting our over 50s and Disability Super 9s representing the IOW in ECB competitions. We are still awaiting confirmation that we will be accepted to play NCC T20 cricket in the summer of 2023. A number of matches were played this year which proved our level was appropriate for the NCC T20 competition.

In closing I would like to thank the clubs and their officers and volunteers for their hard work, the umpires, scorers and parents who are absolutely the backbone to our efforts in facilitating the quantity and quality of cricket being played at all levels.

I would also like to give my personal thanks to my fellow directors on IWCB: Hugh Wells, Martyn Richards, Claire Everard, Ben White, Dave Cox, Steve Holbrook, Simon Wratton, Charlie Bennett and Hugh Griffiths. Thanks to Ross Whyte who took on responsibilities as Treasurer for the IWCB and helped springboard our systems into the future. Special thanks must go to Richard Webb who has helped the finance team in so many ways. Richard stepped down last year but has been a continued support to Ross & Claire and the board.

I would like to give *my* thanks to Martin Blackman, who has stepped into his role as Disability Development Manager seamlessly and has had huge success in his short time of working with the IWCB. To Alex who is the driving force behind the success of our W&G programme and the many other coaches who work at the indoor training sessions during winter and lead our teams during the summer (Andy D, Jasper, Ross, Jake, Alex, Ollie, Darren, Ben and Dan). I cannot finish this part of my report without some words of thanks to Andy Woodward our head of performance and EPP coach. Without his drive, commitment, passion, and high quality of coaching, we would not have reached this far in our development of CAG cricket.

*Kate Barton*

*IWCB Chair*

*28/11/2022*