2018 was another successful year for the Club:

We increased our pool of players in both the 1st and 2nd XI so much so that captains had difficult selection decisions to make for most games and I have to commend both captains and their vice captains on how they carried out their duties. It should also be noted that pretty much without exception those that didn’t make the team showed maturity and understanding in accepting the decision. There is a good spirit around the club and it is in such behaviour that this is best shown.

The increase in our pool of players led to consistency on the field of play and an overall improvement in our performances both home and away. The 1st team finished 4th in the league and the 2nd team excelled in all competitions, reaching the final of both the league cup and the 20:20 competition and winning their league in the most convincing manner and I have to say that our future looks bright.

Of course these performances don’t happen by accident or by luck, although they do have role to play. We have made our own luck and responded well to what the season threw or bowled at us and we have done this, in part, I believe, because of the work that has gone on behind the scenes. Stuff that has allowed the players to play to the best of their ability and to enjoy being part of NCCC. So thank you everyone who has done their bit, who have made a difference.

2018 saw a lot of non playing changes: a new website, greater use of social media, more effort to get people in to watch, new training equipment, a facelift for our tea room and kitchen, more formalised training sessions, involvement in Allstars cricket programme to name but a few.

Before I move to this coming season I would like to say that I am very happy to continue as President if re-elected.

2019 will throw up different challenges:

Hopefully, players from last season welcome out of hibernation, dust off their boxes and make plans to improve their personal performances. Some may take a step sideways and work on the development of other individuals or the team. We’ll all be a year older and wiser with something different to bring to the club. I want to ensure that whatever the NCCC means to you, you feel included and valued. I want you to want to give something back.

I fully understand that we are all volunteers and that our time is precious. I also understand that we all participate in the game for different reasons, in different ways and at different intensities. The same goes for training. It is important that we all understand and live with that, however uncomfortable that may be for some of us.

At an administrative level, there has been a significant changing of the guard within NoSCA and the HCDG and I hope that we, as a club, will work with both groups to take cricket forward as a viable, attractive sporting option for all age groups and abilities in Inverness.

We need to consolidate what we’ve done to date and revisit some crucial areas -

We need to be more active in local schools and I would like to build on the work of HCDG within primary schools and Shaun and Will’ at the High School.

We have some younger players who are interested in coaching and I would like them to work with HCDG, and have the opportunity to be involved with local Primary schools.

We need to look at all of our administrative and communication systems and ensure that they are up to date, effective and compliant with legislation. This work has started.

Our constitution is outdated and needs to be aligned with our new ambitions. This work has, also, started and hopefully today we will make some meaningful changes. Thanks Ollie and Stewart for getting us started with this

Possibly, the thought of working on the constitution makes your heart sink and I have to say that until very recently I felt the same. But if we substitute the word “constitution" with “values” it makes more sense. It sets down what we do, why we do it and how we go about it. So please participate in this.

Why do we need to do this? Well, for our protection and the protection of others and secondly,

if we want to apply for any form of funding or grants, the first thing that funders look at is our administrative systems - especially those systems that are a legal requirement.

Our 5 year plan again, is out of date and will need aligning with our new constitution. This job will need to take a priority and a sub committee will take on this job. Again, thanks to Olli for taking this forward

We need to make more use of Sub committees and they will be a new addition to our development strategy and will give opportunity for more people to be directly Involved in the clubs development and future. For “fun”, I have made up a list of the things that go on behind the scenes. I’m sure there’s stuff I’ve missed but you’ll get an idea on how much is involved. Historically, things have happened because of the efforts of one or two people or by chance if someone remembers. I would like to see the responsibilities shared by all members and not left to chance

So, in a while we will be re-electing our 2019 committee who, if I am re-elected as President, will be forming sub committees with specific responsibilities. I would like to emphasise, at this point, do not volunteer to be on a committee or sub committee unless you are able to be fully involved.

Having said all of that. If not nominated or re-elected I will support the new President to the best of my ability.

Away from cricket itself, I have been working as the Chairman of the Northern Meeting Park Group and I hope that you are all familiar with our aim; that is to bring the NMP in to community ownership and get the gates of the NMP open. Along side that, as club president, I have been in discussions with HC regarding the playing of cricket at the NMP and how it fits in with the HC view of how the park could be used in the future

As you can imagine there is a fair degree of overlap in the discussions.

Very briefly, The current situation is as follows.

**The HC**

Still see the cricket as a hinderance to holding activities in the park. The siting of the square and its fragility (my word) being the main issue.

See the argument of “we have always been there etc” as no longer relevant.

Have no long term plans for the development of the park in general apart from “more of the same” ie, concerts and large events. They have no plans for developing the building itself.

Would like to see the two Inverness Cricket Clubs play at Fraser Park and have dangled carrots in an effort to facilitate this (this has been discussed by both clubs and turned down but is still on their agenda)

Would consider funding (to what extent) the installation of artificial playing surfaces for cricket at NMP

**The Northern Meeting Park Group**

Want to buy the NMP and run it as a community venture

Are applying for Charitable Status

Want its current users - us and the schools - to continue pretty much as is.

Want the gates to be open every day and for the park to be used more widely.

Want to install a Child Care facility and Coffee Shop in the building

Want to bring back smaller, community centred events

Want other sports to be played at the NMP

The NMP to be a successful “business”

Want to investigate the option of reinstating a building on the site of the old West stand

Are applying for funding to complete a feasibility study, obtain architectural reports and prepare a 5 year business plan.

Have been “offered” a 25 year lease at £1 per year by HC. Which they have turned down.

Have been told, by HC, that they are unlikely to be offered full ownership. Which they have contested.

Have a target date of Autumn 2020 for completion (plan A)

**NCCC**

Want to continue to be able to play cricket at the Northern Meeting Park and have it as their Home ground.

Support the aims of the NMPG

Has aspirations to become an integral part of its surrounding community

So, as I said, 2019 will throw up more challenges for us at NCCC but I really feel that we are well placed to move on both on and off the field of play.

Let’s do it.