

Thornhill CC

Thornhill's first ground was situated where Valley Road Estate now stands. The club played here between around 1861 and 1887.

In the beginning Thornhill Cricket Club was connected to Thornhill Parish Church. Indeed, in the 1880s the church magazine made regular mention of the cricket club, and on one occasion actually referred to it as 'our cricket club'.

The club moved to its present ground in 1887. In the early days, the ground covered 6 acres, 1 rood and 20 perches, and the club paid a rent to the Savile Estate. The venue came to be known as The Combs after the former Combs Colliery.

Archdeacon Brooke put the club on a sound basis in the early days as well as entertaining the famous Grace brothers whenever Gloucestershire played at Savile Town.

1887 witnessed a women's cricket match being played at Thornhill Cricket Club - an unusual event for the era. The match resulted in a draw, with each team scoring all-out totals of 27.

The *Dewsbury Chronicle* reported that the 'novel cricket match' had generated a 'great amount of interest'. The loss of wickets and subsequent low scores were put down to the fact that some of the women were 'too anxious to run'.

In 1889 the club underwent the first of its major name changes: from Thornhill Cricket Club to Thornhill Cricket & Lawn Tennis Club. In 1909 the club embraced the local crown green bowlers – hence the name change to Thornhill Cricket & Bowling Club. This moniker was to stand the test of time.

1911 was a big year for local cricket-watchers as the club installed a bar. Spectators could now sit in the sun, have a drink, and watch the cricket.

Like all cricket clubs, Thornhill have had to think of novel ways to raise money. In 1924 they decided to hold a dance on the cricket pitch!

Having competed in the Heavy Woollen Cup since it first started in 1883, and being finalists on four occasions, Thornhill finally won the trophy in 1942, as war raged across Europe. Thornhill beat Morley by 11 runs at Heckmondwike to bring the trophy home.

In 1945 Thornhill's pavilion was connected to electricity...and in 1952 the club scooped the Heavy Woollen Cup again, beating Hartshead Moor by 3 runs.

The 1960s and early-1970s saw lots of money being spent on the ground - with four phases of ground extensions.

The opening of the 1978 season saw Thornhill sign Colin Peacock, Staincliffe's opening batsman. He was one of three players who had shocked the Batley club by leaving with only a few days to go before the start of the season. Only one of them came to Thornhill, though.

The Thornhill clubhouse was extended again in 1985 – and today stands as a warm, welcoming and multi-purpose facility.