

DRAFT

WILTSHIRE COUNTY CHESS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the 2026 Annual General Meeting held at Chippenham Chess Club on Tuesday 19th. May 2026

In attendance: R Carver (Vice-President), J Bourne (Chairman), R Ludlow (Secretary), P Owen (Rating Officer), S Zeidler (Treasurer), A Ransom (Tournament Secretary), Ms F Headlong, G Price, and D Ross

1. Apologies had been received from A Gladwell, P Girdlestone (Junior Chess Liaison Officer) and D Auld.

A period of silence was observed to remember two colleagues who had recently died: Nick Wingfield, President of the Association, and Peter Richmond.

The wisdom and experience which Nick brought to bear on our meetings were always greatly appreciated.

Peter had been a very fine player and coach. He had been Wiltshire champion no fewer than seven times and had trained multiple England junior champions.

2. The minutes of the 2025 AGM were accepted and duly signed by the Chairman.

3. There were no matters arising, not otherwise on the agenda.

4. The positions of President and Chairman

(RL took the chair) J Bourne announced his intention of resigning from his position of Chairman and of seeking nominations for the position of President.

His resignation was accepted and he was duly nominated by FH and seconded by GP for the role of President. The subsequent vote was unanimous. RL informed the meeting that JB had served as Chairman for 30 years and that he had been an outstanding Chairman. He was warmly thanked and congratulated.

JB resumed the chair and proposed Fenella Fielding as Chair of the Association. She was seconded by RL and the vote was unanimous. JB explained that he had known FH for many years and that she had been an outstanding supporter of chess in the County. He knew that Fenella would be an outstanding Chair. FH was congratulated by the meeting.

JB would chair this evening's meeting.

5. Reports from Officers:

a. The Chairman (JB) had asked for his heartfelt thanks to be expressed to all officers of the Association for their hard work, especially AG and RL. The officers rendered his job easy and straightforward.

b. Secretary (RL) - no report

c. The Treasurer (SZ) distributed copies of the Summary of Accounts, explaining that the financial situation was healthy, there being a balance of £881.66p. He stressed the need, when players were paying outstanding fees, for payment to be made directly to the ECF, and not to the County. He also encouraged people to pay online, rather than by cheque, which incurred a fee.

A new club in Calne wished to be affiliated to WCCA and had paid the fee. At this stage they did not wish to play league chess.

The Summary of Accounts was accepted.

GP believed that there was a new club in Westbury.

SZ would establish the position concerning cheque signatories,

d. Ratings Secretary (PO) - no report. PO was warmly thanked by the meeting for his hard work.

e. Junior Chess Liaison Officer - PG was absent.

FH reported that the situation in junior chess had been very healthy until some eight years ago, but it tended to 'go in waves'. The Wiltshire Junior Chess Committee is currently dormant. There were three large junior clubs in Swindon, one being Moonrakers.

f. Tournament Secretary - (AR) announced that the annual Blitz tournament would take place on Monday 7th September at 7.30 at Chippenham Chess Club (Langley Burrell). there would be a maximum of 20 players. The entry fee would be £3.00 for adults and £1.50 for juniors.

Despite AR's best efforts, the Women's County Championship has not materialised. FH had fed back a number of ideas about the format.

JB remarked that some women resented women's only tournaments and wanted to play against men.

g. League Secretary - AG was absent. He had produced a written report that would be circulated by RL. AG did not wish to stand again as League Secretary. There is a query as to whether Adrian will maintain the website.

h. Vice-Presidents - RC had no report.

6. Presentation of trophies

The North v. South Tournament had been introduced as a replacement for the Major League. It had been won by the North. The trophy (previously Major) was presented to GP, representing the North.

The Wiltshire League had been won by Swindon A, with 15 points; the trophy (previously Intermediate) was presented to GP, Chairman of the Swindon Club. Trowbridge A were in second place with 14, and Devizes third with 10.

Addendum to 5c. International chess at senior level

SZ, who represents Wales at a senior level, had been asked by Gary Loyden (not present) about the Senior European Championships. SZ reported that the English team

was composed largely of grandmasters. A more realistic option was the World Senior Championships which were open to any club in the 50+ and 65+ age categories.

7. Election of officers

All officers, except President, Chairman (please see item 4 above), and League Secretary (please see item 5g) expressed a willingness to stand again and were re-elected unanimously. there were no nominations for League Secretary. It was vital that this position be filled as soon as possible.

8. Appointment of auditor

It was confirmed that we did not need an auditor.

9. Subscription rates

There would be no change; the situation would be monitored.

10 and 11. Establishing leagues, rating limits and teams for next season

GP distributed a number of charts, which were impressive and very clear. One listed all Wiltshire League players (2025/26) in order of rating; another listed players in order of rating club by club; another demonstrated how differences in rating points affected the likely result of a game. Another chart proposed rating limits, league by league, based on **teams**, not on individual players. Finally, another chart showed which leagues were appropriate for which clubs.

GP was thanked most warmly for his hard work, which would inform decisions for next season. Decisions would be made in September at the Executive Committee meeting.

12. Report on county chess and the Swindon Rapidplay

BOg was absent, but RL reported that the Chiltern League County B Team Tournament had proved most enjoyable; four matches were played, the other counties being Berkshire, Hampshire and Oxfordshire. There had been 'play off' matches for the final places. He did not have the final results.

SZ had not received a request from BOg for reimbursement of the hiring fee for the Wiltshire venue.

13. Potential problems arising from late finish of games when increments are used

This is a problem, or potential problem, for Swindon and Chippenham. A decision would be made in September on time controls; it was emphasised that a prompt start at 7.30 was essential.

(FH has since done some valuable research. It seems that 75 + 10, rather than the current 80 + 10. would suit us well.)

14. Purchase of additional County equipment and disposal of analogue clocks.

After much discussion it was decided not to purchase more equipment. It was felt it would get little use; also, clubs were willing to loan equipment for county matches. PG would be consulted as to whether schools could the analogue clocks.

15. Communication problems, eg in relation to North/South fixtures

It was unanimously acknowledged that communication had been poor in this area. Club chairmen and team captains should always be kept fully informed in such circumstances. It was noted that it was unlikely that the North/South fixtures would take place next season.

16. WCCA Constitution updates: fees, member list, etc.

GP pointed out that the Constitution needed updating; it was 14 years out of date. RL undertook to study the Constitution and propose amendments.

17. The Executive Committee meeting would take place on Wednesday 16th September at 7.30 pm at Langley Burrell, as previously agreed.

18. The 2027 AGM would take place on Tuesday 18th May at 7.30 pm, again at Langley Burrell.

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