

# *CONSERVATIVE CLUBS MAGAZINE*



January 2018 50p



## **Happy New Year To All Our Readers**

**Leslie Smith Presented With Badge of Honour**

**Sheerness Conservative Club Celebrates 120th Anniversary**

**2018 – Dates For Your Diary**

# ACC Trials Video Conferencing

*CONSERVATIVE  
CLUBS  
MAGAZINE*

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The ACC are pleased to communicate with our Member Clubs in many different ways and this year we have decided to trial video conferencing. Clubs already communicate with us through email, phone calls, letters and seeing us in person at regional meetings but now we are adding video conferencing to this list for a trial period. We accept that for some matters Clubs prefer to discuss a situation face to face and it is sometimes difficult to arrange a physical meeting quickly. It is with this in mind that we are announcing a trial of video calling/conferencing with the ACC which will hopefully allow a face to face discussion to take place swiftly.

The trial is using Amazon's Alexa app and to take part in the trial Clubs or individual Officers must have a Smartphone, an Amazon Account and the ACC video calling number saved in the phone as a contact. Create a contact called 'ACC Video' using the number 07596 596646.

If you have a Smartphone and an Amazon Account you can contact us by video calling by downloading the Amazon Alexa App from either

Apple App Store or Google Play App Store. Once you start the App you will be prompted to enter your Amazon Account details and set up the App. Once the short set up process is complete there is a button at the bottom middle of the App screen which resembles a conversation bubble. Once this button is clicked it will take you through to the 'Conversations' screen where you can select 'friends and family' and you can then select 'ACC Video'.

Assuming that an ACC employee is available, this will then connect the video conference session. You can also schedule with us in advance a time and date for the video conference to take place.

We will be trialling this service during the 2018 and shall update Clubs through the Magazine with any further information which may be required. If, at the time the call is made, you are connected to a Wi-Fi network the video call will be free of charge, otherwise it will simply use data as part of your phone's data allowance.

If any Clubs have questions regarding video conferencing please let us know.

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# West Bridgford Conservative Club raises a further £500 for Guide Dogs



A further sum of £555 was raised by West Bridgford Conservative Club for The Association of Guide Dogs for the Blind at their Autumn Fayre on Saturday 11th November. This is in addition to their earlier charity foundation during 2017.

Club Secretary, Peter Brunger, said 'Each year the Club supports a chosen charity and members work long and hard to raise money through a number of events. This year we are delighted to be supporting Guide Dogs for the Blind which does so much to help both blind

and partially sighted people get their lives back. It costs around £55,000 to train each guide dog and provide support during its working life so contributions like these are vital to the continuing work of the charity.

The Club would like to sincerely thank all those private individuals and businesses who so generously donated prizes for the stalls, tombolas and raffles or helped by displaying posters or otherwise advertising the event.'

So far, the Club has raised almost £3000 for the charity during 2017.



West Bridgford Conservative Club.

## CLUB REFURBISHMENT



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# ACC Services

## Loans

Loans can be arranged from as little as £1,000 to £500,000. We provide loans at competitive simple interest rates, currently 4.75%, and all loans commence with a three year period of fixed interest. Loans are repaid over a term to be agreed on an individual basis with each Club in order to create a manageable and sensible time frame for repayment.

## Trusteeship

The ACC Trusteeship Service is a free facility offered by the ACC. The transfer of Trusteeship to the ACC has increasingly become popular amongst unincorporated clubs and there are two main benefits for the Club. The first is that the ACC will pay for all legal expenses involved with the transfer of Trusteeship. The second is that the Association's financial and legal resources are such that the Club's position will be greatly strengthened when negotiating loans or defending itself against legal action taken by a third party.

The ACC do not become involved with the day to day business of any Club for which we act as Trustee. The Club will continue to be able to call upon the ACC for advice on any matter without needing to make reference to our Trusteeship. We will only act on behalf of the Club in accordance with the lawful instructions of the Committee and Members. The Club Committee will therefore continue to run the Club's affairs and will only refer matters to the ACC as and when they consider it appropriate to do so



## Sale and Leaseback

Since launching the ACC Sale and Leaseback service, over 70 Clubs have entered into this arrangement with the ACC.

Under what circumstances would a Sale and Leaseback be appropriate? The most successful examples of ACC Sale and Leasebacks are Clubs which have a dedicated Committee and Membership and want to secure their Club's future. By unlocking the Club's freehold, Clubs can be provided the means of repaying debt, often undertaking refurbishments and providing a significant cash sum. The rent payable to the ACC following the completion of a Sale and Leaseback can often be less than a Club was paying for servicing debt.

## Documentation Available Free Of Charge

**ACC Room Hire Agreement** - The room hire agreement is designed to be completed at the time a booking and includes space for a deposit to be taken to secure the room is applicable.

**ACC Catering Franchise Pack** - The ACC Catering Franchise pack can be used by Clubs which have a franchisee who uses the Club's facilities to prepare and serve food within the Club. The Franchisee Contract permits the Committee to decide if the franchisee shall pay a set fee per month to the Club for use of the Club's facilities, shall pay to the Club a percentage of the profits from the sale of food or that a combination of both methods of remuneration shall be utilised.

**Health and Safety and Risk Assessment Documentation** - The ACC has extensive documentation to assist a Club in creating a Health and Safety policy and conducting regular risk assessments. This documentation is available free of charge. Examples include template health and safety documentation, risk assessment forms and practical advice on completing a Club risk assessment and first aid information.

**Candidates for Admission Sheets** - The admission sheets can be posted on the Club's Notice Board to detail prospective new Members and have spaces for: Date, Candidate Name, Address, Occupation, Proposer, Seconder.

**To obtain any of the documentation packages please email [charles@toryclubs.co.uk](mailto:charles@toryclubs.co.uk) or phone 0207 222 0843. To enquire about any of the ACC's financial assistance packages please email [assistance@toryclubs.co.uk](mailto:assistance@toryclubs.co.uk) or phone 0207 222 0843.**

# CLUB LAW AND MANAGEMENT

## Dates For Your 2018 Diary and Reminders

Club Secretaries will have in their minds – and hopefully in their diaries – the dates by which certain returns and applications

have to be made. I hope the following check list will assist Clubs in carrying out this useful exercise.

### Club Premises Certificate

Whilst there is no specific renewal date of a Club Premises Certificate it is necessary for an annual fee to be paid to the local Licensing Authority in order for the Club

Premises Certificate to remain in force. Therefore, look out for any renewal invoice received from your local Licensing Authority and ensure that it is paid promptly.

### Fees for a CPC

Rateable Value	Band	Annual Fee
No rateable value to £4,300	A	£70
£4,300 to £33,000	B	£180
£33,001 to £87,000	C	£295
£87,001 to £125,000	D	£320
£125,001 and above	E	£350

## Performing Rights Society & Phonographic Performances Ltd

The PRS and PPL Licenses need to be renewed each year. These Licenses cover different types of copyright payable for playing any type of music within the Club.

There are two types of license required to be paid to the PPL depending on whether the Club plays background music or uses recorded music at a dance or discotheque or similar function. In the case of the latter, the fee is on a

sliding scale basis.

In January, fees are payable to the PRS. These payments are fixed under an Agreement with the PRS and the appropriate fee for a Club is calculated according to the type of music used. There is often confusion between the licenses of the PPL and PRS but, as a general rule, if a Club has music it must have both of these respective licenses.

### Audits

Clubs registered under the Industrial & Provident Societies Act, the Friendly Societies Acts or the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act must submit an Annual Return to the Financial Conduct Authority no later than the date required under the terms of the Club's particular Rules. Failure to comply may result in prosecution. Such Clubs must also ensure the annual fee is paid, the amount of which depends upon the Club's assets.

Clubs which are incorporated as companies must ensure that their company returns are made to Companies House by the agreed submission date in order to avoid fines and must also ensure that their Accounts are filed.

Unincorporated Members' Clubs are not required to submit annual returns or to file Accounts with any outside body.

In addition to the above, please make a note of the date for VAT returns, insurance renewal and the Club's TV licence.

## Temporary Event Notices

Clubs are able to apply for up to 15 Temporary Event Notices per calendar year. A Temporary Event Notice allows Clubs to hold events which are open to the public such as Open Days and Beer Festivals

or simply private events which are not held by Members. A Member holding a private event and inviting their guests will not normally require a TEN to be obtained.

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## Insurance Good Practice Information

**ACC Recommended Insurance**  
Supplier Club Insure offers advice on burglar alarms and general security.

### Protect Your Business

The physical, emotional and financial impact of suffering a burglary can take a business a long time to recover from.

Having an adequate alarm system installed and adhering to basic security advice can effectively deter any wannabe thieves or petty criminals intent on harm.

Alarm systems offer two forms of protection; deterrence and detection. In the event of an intrusion, most basic alarm systems will trigger an audible or visual alarm. For better protection, many insurers insist upon a monitored alarm system; not only will this system react with a physical alarm, but it will also notify emergency responders of the situation.

### Where to Start?

A quick search on the internet will return thousands of alarm companies, which can be overwhelming and discouraging. Club Insure suggest the following six steps to ease your search:

1. Establish what type of alarm your Insurance Company requires
2. Seek advice:- ideally through a personal referral or local law enforcement
3. Find a company with certified employees:- various training courses are available throughout the UK designed to educate people in fitting and maintaining alarm systems; at the very least they should be a qualified electrician

4. Evaluate work history:- one of the best ways to determine if an alarm company is credible is through consumer claims and work history
5. Organise meetings with potential companies:- your consultation should consist of a building inspection and security recommendations for your property
6. Learn how to use your system properly – ensure all necessary staff are trained in setting the alarm; regular tests should be carried out. NB; IF AN ALARM SYSTEM IS FITTED, THEN IT **MUST** BE SET WHENEVER THE PROPERTY IS VACANT. IF THERE IS ANY FAULT OF PROBLEM IDENTIFIED ON THE ALARM THEN THE PREMISES **MUST NOT** BE LEFT UNOCCUPIED UNTIL THE ISSUE HAS BEEN RESOLVED.– IF THIS IS **NOT** ADHERED TO THEN YOU MAY FIND YOURSELF NOT INSURED IN THE CASE OF A BREAK IN

A number of Club Insure clients have been affected by thieves entering the premises during normal trading hours and tampering with the magnetic alarm contacts. This means that when staff try to set the alarm when closing up for the night the alarm does not arm properly. This error might be identified from a message on the alarm panel or perhaps a different tone on the alarm. It is vital that your staff recognise whether the alarm is set properly or not.

### General security advice

#### Money

- Minimise the amount of cash you keep on the premises
- Leave the till open and empty after cashing up
- Make frequent pick-ups of money from tills and make regular bank deposits - employees in charge of making bank deposits should always be alert for strangers lingering at the bank. If in doubt, do not make the deposit while a suspicious person is in the area.
- Always ensure that any money in transit to the bank or elsewhere is accompanied by the relevant number of able bodied persons as required by your Insurance Policy.
- Install a good quality safe - be sure it is fireproof and securely anchored. It should be kept in plain view; and the combination should be changed when an employee who had access leaves your business. **THE KEYS TO THE SAFE MUST BE REMOVED FROM THE PREMISES OUT OF BUSINESS HOURS OR PLACED WITHIN A LOCKED SAFE OR STRONGROOM THE KEYS TO WHICH ARE THEMSELVES REMOVED FROM THE BUSINESS PREMISES.**
- Windows should have secure locks and ideally burglar-resistant glass – if absolutely necessary consider installing metal grates
- Always use interior and exterior lighting - installing and using motion sensor lighting is an inexpensive way to deter crime at your business.
- Utilise CCTV – criminal activity can be deterred by placing video surveillance cameras in plain view. Remember, you can only place video surveillance cameras in public areas
- Adapt a key control policy - your business may be vulnerable to theft if you are unsure who has access to your building. Make sure the keys to your venue cannot be duplicated without your permission. Document the names of employees who have company keys or access cards
- Create a visitor access policy - it is important to know who is coming into your business. If possible, have each visitor sign in and acquire a visitor's badge
- Keep expensive/attractive items away from entrances
- Ensure that alarm codes are reviewed regularly and particularly when a member of your staff leaves your employ. Many alarms can be set to give each individual a different access code. This makes it very clear who has operated the alarm at any given time.

#### Internal/External

- Upgrade the security on your doors - deadbolt locks are an inexpensive way to keep intruders out of your workplace and many insurers require this as standard on all external doors and shutters.
- A more advanced way to secure your business is through an electronic access control system - this system will provide a record of who opened or attempted to open every door
- Padlocks, if used, should be close-shackle with matching locking bars. Remember to remove serial numbers from your lock to prevent unauthorised keys from being made


#### General

- Be aware of suspicious strangers loitering in or near your place of business. Take particular notice of people who loiter during the opening and closing times of your business
- Try not to work alone. Studies indicate that the presence of several employees deter criminal activity

Club Insure can be contacted on 0113 205 4319.

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## Questions and Answers

**Q** Each year our club holds one or two events, the admissions to which have, in recent years, been by 'ticket only.' We have some members who question this and say that they must be allowed to enter the club, even if they do not wish to buy a ticket. We would appreciate your clarification of this matter.

**A** The Committee are able to prevent Members from coming into the Club. An easy example of this is when the Club is closed (which is an event which occurs every single day) or often when you allow a private event to take place where Members cannot use the Club, or function room, during that event. The Committee, literally, prevent Members from coming into the Club every single day on account of it being closed.

The Rules provide that the Committee determine the opening and closing hours of the Club. On New Year's Eve you are essentially closing the Club to anyone who has not purchased a ticket in advance.

I would suggest that you inform Members that the Committee have made this decision and that any Member without a ticket purchased will not be able to enter the Club on New Year's Eve. If any Members further complain I would suggest that they stand for election to the Committee next year so they can play a role in the management of the Club.

**Q** We have read some of the previous question and Answers regarding the ACC Sale and Leaseback offer and we are curious whether this scheme may be suitable for our Club. Do you find that Clubs who have entered into a Sale and Leaseback tend to then use some of the money to refurbish the Club? I could see definitely see that some of the refurbished Clubs featured in the Magazine may attract interest from new members. Has this been the case from feedback you have received?

**A** Absolutely. It has been amazing to see the growth of Membership numbers for the Clubs which have undertaken an extensive refurbishment

programme. It is not uncommon for some Clubs which have refurbished the interiors and exteriors, and undertaken a Membership recruitment campaign, to see their Membership levels double since the 're-launch' of the Club.

Sale and Leasebacks are not offered to all Clubs. We speak with any interested Club about how they would use the Sale and Leaseback proceeds and it is fair to say that we are most interested in pursuing such arrangements with Clubs that have a clear plan for how they will use the proceeds to ensure that in the future yearly revenues for the Club will rise. In an ideal situation, a Club will increase its yearly surplus by enough to cover the entirety of the rental payment due to the ACC and hopefully have some additional revenue available to continually re-invest back into the Club. It is fair to say that some Clubs are experiencing problems since for many years the issue of refurbishments and repair work have, quite understandably, taken a back seat to the more pressing needs of paying brewery and utility bills. It does, however, mean that some Clubs start to look a little dated and are not as attractive to new Members.

This is not to say that we will not consider Sale and Leaseback arrangements in other scenarios, we have done and will continue to do so, but ideally a Club will use a Sale and Leaseback to secure its future indefinitely.

**Q** An employee has recently left the employment of the Club and we believe that they will claim that they have been unfairly dismissed. Do you have any advice as to how we should proceed? Some Committee Members think we should make the ex-employee a financial settlement offer in order to avoid a tribunal.

**A** Have you received any formal documentation yet notifying you of the claim? This documentation will be important to enable the Committee establish exactly why the employee is claiming that they have been unfairly dismissed. Whilst I understand that a Committee may hear of a claim before it is actually legally informed of the claim you

will still likely have to wait for the claim to be issued before you can properly review it and make further decisions. Have you already contacted your insurers? It may be that you have legal cover included in your policy and they will defend the case for the Club. It would be sensible to inform your insurers now of the potential situation and then, if you do have legal coverage with your policy, to forward them the formal documentation as soon as it is received.

To a certain extent whether to offer a financial settlement in the event of a claim can be made on a pragmatic basis. If it appears that a claim is likely to go all the way to a tribunal (and some claims may be abandoned half way through the procedure for various reasons) then you can calculate the cost to the Club of defending the claim and also the Committee time and energy that it will take up. A potential financial settlement discussion could begin with that figure, or a figure close to. It may not feel correct from a moral point of view but it can be sensible from a financial and legal point of view. If a settlement can be achieved at a lower cost than defending the claim, and possibly losing, then such a settlement offer should at least be duly considered.

In any event, you will likely need to wait until you can review the exact claim that the employee is making. This will assist in deciding how strong the Clubs' defence is likely to be and will also affect what, if any, settlement offer is made to the ex-employee. If you can use your insurance policy to defend the claim then they will also assist you with these types of decisions.

**Q** We are considering hiring an employee using a 'zero hours' contract although we are not sure if these contracts are still legal and if they are appropriate for use by a Club?

**A** You are correct that there has been press coverage of these types of Contracts of Employment over the last few years. It is typically recognised by most people who engage in the debate over these types of contracts that they are useful to some industries, hospitality being one of those industries. The hospitality industry

needs has wide seasonal trends and also frequent one off events such as parties. This means that many pubs and clubs will have some casual employees who can assist during busy periods. This type of employment can be of benefit to both employers and employees.

It is accepted that many Clubs will need to have additional assistance during special events, to cover established employees holiday time, assist with employee sickness absence and to provide greater bar coverage during peak times of the year such as Christmas. Zero hours contracts can be of use to employees such as university students or employees with family commitments who like the flexibility that these contracts provide.

It is important to be aware that an employee on a zero hours contract does not have to accept any work that is offered to them. A typical Club will therefore have most of its employees on minimum guaranteed hours per week and may have a selection of casual employees who are willing to accept work as and when it is offered. Also remember that just because an employee is contracted to do 20 hours per week does not mean that they will not be willing to work additional hours. You may find that you have sufficient flexibility in your current employees to cover additional hours as and when required.

It is important to note that employees on zero hours contracts are still entitled to the normal employment rights, notably that they will accrue holiday time for the hours which they work and that they must receive the minimum wage.

These types of contracts are unlikely to be banned in the future as most people accept that they can be useful for employers and employees in specific circumstances, the hospitality sector being the key example. It is, however, foreseeable that in the future restrictions may be placed on these contracts to prevent exclusivity agreements being used (stopping an employee on a zero hours contract from working for another employee) and that a code of practice regarding fair use of this contract will have to be abided to by employers.

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**Q** We have reason to believe that financial theft is occurring within the Club although we cannot pin it down to any particular employee. Do you have any general tips about how to prevent cash theft?

**A** Theft is a problem which can affect all businesses, but businesses which involve a lot of cash handling are particularly vulnerable. Prevention is often easier to achieve than cure so it is vital that as many safeguards are taken to prevent cash theft. Theft is often because a person has simply taken advantage of an opportunity, if you remove the opportunity you reduce theft.

People are less likely to steal if they know they are being watched. A video surveillance system helps deter employees as well as catch theft after it happens. Be sure to include cameras in storage rooms and loading areas as well as in public areas. Use high-definition video so you can clearly identify employees and transactions. Limit the access to your surveillance

systems to as few people as possible to avoid tampering. Most local police authorities recommend keeping CCTV footage for a minimum of 14-31 days.

Another way to reduce the chances of theft is to use an exception-based reporting system at your point of sale (POS) to flag possible fraudulent transactions e.g. excessive refunds or voids (ideally managers should be responsible for voids and refunds but at the very least they should be witnessed by a second employee). Review POS several times a week to determine if there are any issues that you need to look into further. Implement surprise audits and regular reconciliations, these might include surprise cash counts. The procedures don't have to be elaborate. If employees know their work could be checked at any time they are more likely to be honest and accurate.

Ultimately, preventing theft is often just implementing common sense ideas. Clubs should minimise the amount of cash you keep on the premises, make frequent pick-ups of money from tills and undertake regular bank deposits.

## ACC Membership Software Price Reduction

The ACC are pleased to announce that the popular ACC Membership Administration Programme has been reduced to £20 for a full package, from £55, and to £15 for an upgrade of a previous version of the software, from £30.

We know many Clubs find this software package essential in ensuring the smooth running of the Club and are pleased that we have been able to reduce the price of this software.

The ACC MEMBERSHIP SYSTEM is designed to keep a record of members contact details and membership payments.

Record each members' contact, address details and photograph.

Easily printout a members recorded details upon that members request complying with the data protection act.

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Facility to keep a record of club locker allocation.

Facility to keep a record of Room Bookings, raise an itemised invoice for the booking and keep track of payments made in respect of that invoice. The invoice will include VAT on entry of your registration number.

A summary of Room Booking payments.

A weekly summary of Room Bookings indicating when a room is available for booking.

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Interface with Progeny Access Control System for security access. Details of which can be obtained by visiting the website at <http://www.progeny.co.uk/>

Use members recorded details to print address labels, membership cards, issue membership renewal reminders and receipts.

Members names and addresses can be exported to Excel or a text (TXT) file for mail merge with Word.

Summary lists of members with user selectable details can be displayed, printed, saved to an HTML, Excel. format or a text (TXT) file and attached to an email.

Saved lists of members can also be used with other third party software e.g. Microsoft Office.

Members renewal information, payments and details of payments can be easily entered and viewed.

A summary of membership fees paid over any period can be easily displayed, printed, saved to an HTML, Excel. format or a text (TXT) file and attached to an email.

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# Award to Councillor Ron Alcock

Councillor Ron Alcock, President of the ACC Eastern Region, has been presented with a Certificate by the Conservative Party marking 35 years of loyal service to the Party. The presentation was made to Ron by Ann Steward in December.

Ron is currently in his 27th year as a serving Conservative City Councillor and he recorded the highest ever personal vote in the history of Chelmsford Council at the last election in 2015. Ron is also the only member of the Constituency Association to have won the 'Campaigner of the Year Award' three times from three different chairmen.

Accompanying the Certificate was a letter from Sir Patrick McLoughlin MP, Chairman of the Conservative Party. In the letter Sir Patrick recognised Ron's many years of hard work for the Conservative Party and all his efforts at supporting Conservative candidates in his various different roles.



**Cllr Alcock and Ann Steward are pictured with: left to right: Geoff Swaine (Chelmsford Club, Chris Godbold (Chelmsford Club), Christine Garratt (Sec. Ass'n Chelmsford), Cllr. Yvonne Spence, Cllr. Philip Wilson, Cllr. Bob Shepherd, Cllr. Graham Seeley, Cllr. Ron Alcock, Cllr. Mike Holoway, Ann Steward (Chair), Andy Plant (Sec. Burnham), Angie Jones (Sec. Chelmsford), Doug Bown (Burnham Con Club).**

## Ellacombe Conservative Club Steward Retires After 37 Years

The Steward of the Ellacombe Conservative Club, Torquay, has retired after serving the Club for 27 years. Steward Ralph Haywood was first employed by the Club in 1980, which saw the second year of Margaret Thatcher's premiership, the year of Ronald Reagan being elected as US President and a boycott of the Moscow Olympics. The average house price was £13,650 and to afford a new state of the art VHS video player and

recorder would set a person back £650.

Ralph will be much missed by all of the Club's Members, in particular the Committee whom he worked closely with for such a long time. To mark his retirement he was presented with gifts from the Club as can be seen in the picture accompanying this article.

The ACC thanks Ralph for his many years of hard work for the Club.



**Left to right: Steve Menzies (Secretary), Ralph Haywood, Bernie Phillips (Chairman).**

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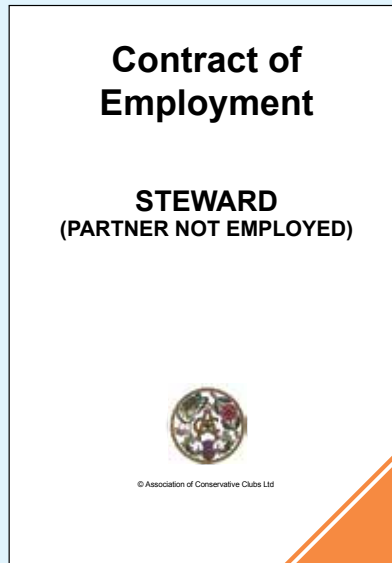
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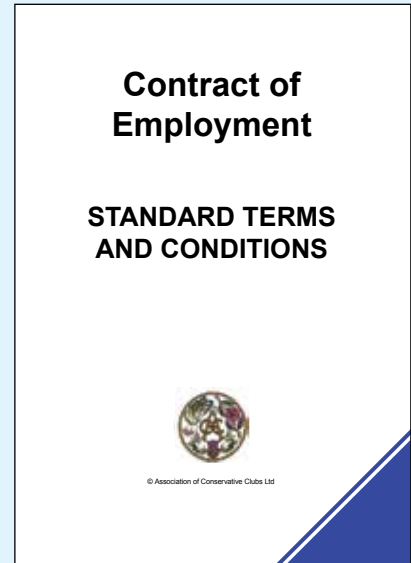
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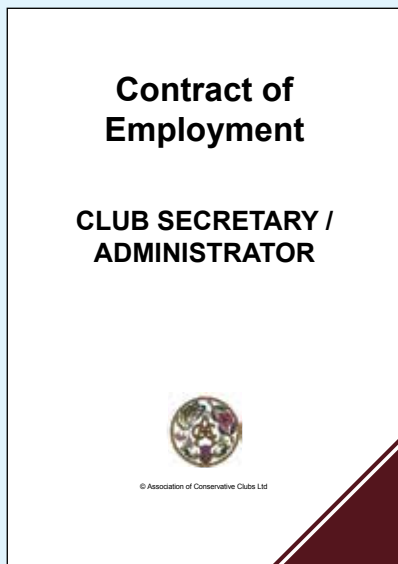
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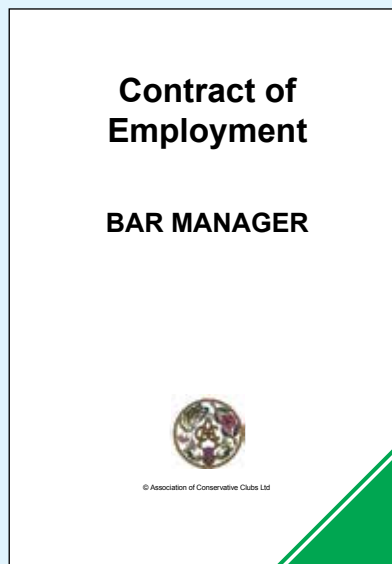
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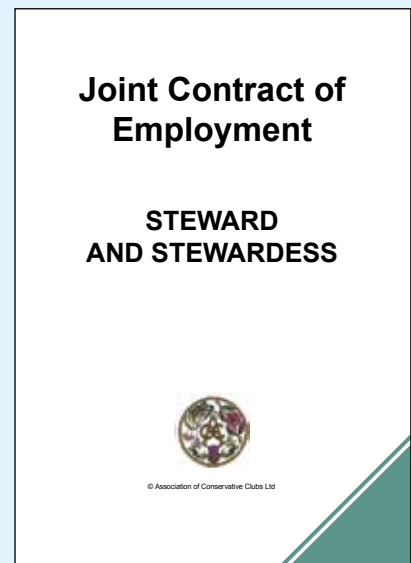
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# Leslie Smith Presented with Badge of Honour for 50 Years of Club Service

Bill Newall, Chairman of the Northern Area, accompanied by Keith Bibby, Treasurer, presented Leslie Smith with the ACC Badge of Honour for his 50 years of service to the Darlington Junior Unionist Club, Durham.

Leslie was first elected a member of the Club on the 10th of October 1967. During Leslie's 50 years as a member he has done two terms as Secretary, the first term being for more than 15 years. When the original Club building was demolished, Leslie was at the forefront in organising the move to its current premises. Leslie also did a lot of the planning for the Club's Silver Jubilee celebrations in 1995. Other tasks include service as a Committee Member, Chairman and relief steward to cover holidays and days off, not to mention his Bingo calling in the role of Concert Chairman. No job was too small for Leslie in

his younger days and the Badge of Honour presented to him on behalf of the Club and the ACC is richly deserved.



Left to Right: Keith Bibby, Trish Howitson, Bill Newall, Les Smith, Carol Smith, Simon Jinks, Sharon Williams and Les Elsworth.

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# North Wales and Borders Federation Meeting Report

The North Wales and Borders Federation held their AGM in November at the Ruthin Conservative Club.

The meeting was opened by the outgoing President Mrs Diane Thomas. All the Officers held their posts, Chairman – David Thomas (Ruthin), Vice Chairman – Alec Riverol (Ellesmere Port), Treasurer – David C Peckover (Ruthin) and Secretary – Paul Rogers (Brymbo). The Presidency passed from Mrs Diane Thomas (Ruthin) to Miss Julie Lambert (Brymbo) and a new Vice President Mr Ken Vine (Shrewsbury) was elected. The Presidency is a post that is held for two years.

In the absence of Julie Lambert her father Colin Lambert accepted the chain of office on her behalf and stated as a founder member of the Federation some 42 years ago he did not envisage at the time that he would have a daughter become President and that it was an honour.

The Rt. Hon. David Jones MP was the guest speaker and gave an interesting and lively talk on where the Government were in the Brexit negotiations which was followed



**Left to right: Colin Lambert, Diane Thomas and David Jones MP.**

by a question and answers session.

Colin Lambert closed the

meeting on behalf of the new

President and thanked David Jones

for his time and Ruthin Club for their hospitality.



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# Sheerness Conservative Club Celebrates 120th Anniversary

The Sheerness Conservative Club has celebrated its 120th Anniversary. During its anniversary year the Club has been undergoing a complete renovation which is due to be completed soon.

The Club is a grade II listed building and is hoping that the renovation will spur an increase in the Club's Membership. Club

Chairman Barry Packer is a builder by trade and has assisted the Club with the renovations and has ensured, as far as possible, that the cost of the renovation is kept as low as possible. A membership recruitment campaign is currently underway with non-members being encouraged to visit the Club to see the renovation work and apply

for Membership. Colin Bastable assists with the entertainment and advertising of the Club states that the purpose of all of this is to ensure that the Club 'survives for another 120 years'.

The grade II-listed building's front is undergoing a makeover which, together with some further sprucing up at the back of the property and a revamp of the kitchen, is estimated to cost

between £16,000 and £18,000.

Mr Packer, who is a builder by trade and has helped with the renovations, said they had been able to keep costs down as a lot of the work being carried out in-house with some of the members stumping up the cash.

Colin Bastable, who co-runs entertainments and advertising at the club, said: "We want it to survive for another 120 years."



The Club as pictured in 1916.



The Sheerness Conservative Club undergoing a renovation.

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## Pages From The Past

In this month's Pages From The Past we go back to April 1902 where the Conservative Clubs Magazine featured a pen sketch of Joseph Chamberlain and also a write up on him along with the sketch. This was part of a regular feature in the Magazine which profiled politicians active at the time. At the time of the article Chamberlain was Secretary of State for the

Colonies, a position he held until 1903. On the 13th July 1906 he suffered a stroke that paralysed his right side although he battled back to regain some mobility. He remained an MP until 1914 when he decided not to seek re-election and later died that same year on 2nd July aged 77. We hope to be able to provide more of these sketches during the coming year.

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## Pen Sketches of Politicians.

### II.—THE RIGHT HON. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN.



[By kind permission of "The Birmingham Weekly Post."]

THE most interesting personality in the House of Commons is unquestionably that of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain. To realise this one has but to look at the effect his entrance to the chamber at question time has upon visitors to the House. "C.-B.," Sir William Harcourt, or Mr. John Morley take their seats without causing comment; but directly the familiar form of Mr. Chamberlain emerges from behind the Speaker's chair there is a perceptible rustle in the Stranger's Gallery and the whisper goes round "There's Joey."

There is no need here to recount the incidents in the career of the subject of this sketch. It has, throughout, been a triumph of brain and personality. On entering Parliament in 1876 as a Member for Birmingham, Mr. Chamberlain brought to bear upon his legislative duties a keen business knowledge which has proved invaluable to him. He has all a business man's love of practical accomplishment, all his distrust of mere dreaming.

Mr. Chamberlain's first appearance at St. Stephen's was interesting. Being new to the etiquette of the House he was at first unaware that no Member, until he has taken the oath, is permitted to wear his hat; so, prayers over, he put his on. At this there was considerable consternation on the benches opposite, for, at that time, Mr. Chamberlain held views well-nigh Republican. Members whispered significantly and wondered how Mr. Speaker would regard this flagrant disregard of a cherished custom. Presently a note was brought in for the unconsciously-erring Member, and when, a few minutes later, Mr. Chamberlain, with perfect deliberation removed the offending headgear, the House breathed again.

Much water has flowed beneath Westminster Bridge since that far-off day, and now Mr. Chamberlain stands forth as the foremost debater in Parliament. His speeches are, as the man, clear, patriotic, and convincing—the ideas expressed, thoroughly practical and logical. He is always master of himself and of the subject with which he is dealing. A child could even understand him, so lucidly does he express his views.

At the beginning of a long speech Mr. Chamberlain trifles with his neatly-written notes. These he places on the brass-

bound box before him—that historic box which bears a hundred dents from Mr. Gladstone's ring—and, having put the edges straight, he fires away. Slowly and deliberately he speaks, using very little gesture. Every movement, however, discloses how thoroughly engrossed he is with his subject, how earnestly he believes in the views he is expressing.

Woe be it to the opponent who interrupts or contradicts him. The voice sinks a little, the muscles of his body tighten, the face becomes a little paler, and then relentlessly does he rend his antagonist. Mr. Chamberlain once declared that he was the best-hated man in the Kingdom. At the time he made the statement it is not improbable that he was. Some people base their dislike of the Colonial Secretary on very curious grounds. One old lady strongly objected to her husband voting for one of his followers because she said that he (Mr. Chamberlain), as a married man, had no business "going about the country with a brazen-faced hussy called Jesse Collings!"

Mr. Chamberlain has made the finest Colonial Secretary the country ever possessed. He has shown our brethren beyond the seas that they are part and parcel of the British Empire. The splendid response they made when Kruger defied the old country was due in no small measure to the patriotic feeling which Conservative Governments in the past have done so much to foster. In this, the Member for W. Birmingham has, in later years, played a prominent part. He has so frequently voiced his views on the subject of Imperial Federation that it is unnecessary to refer to them at any length here. One quotation will suffice. Speaking soon after he first assumed his present position, Mr. Chamberlain voiced his aspiration and said:

"We want to show our Colonial brethren that we have confidence in their future and that we have hope in their closer union with ourselves, so that in future the British Empire, founded on freedom, buttressed by the affections of its several members, fortified by a mutual interest, shall stand impregnable and unassailable 'four square to all the winds that blow.'"

The amount of work which Mr. Chamberlain gets through in a day is amazing; only a business-like man could accomplish one tithe of it. He generally gets down to the Colonial Office about eleven in the morning and first deals with a mass of official documents; then he gives instructions to members of his staff, and grants interviews to Colonial notabilities. Frequently he lunches in the room where he labours when too busy to go to his club—the Athenæum—for the repast. Soon after three he has to be in his place in the House to answer any questions which may be put on Colonial matters. In his private room at St. Stephen's despatch-boxes follow him ticketed with red, green, or white labels, indicating, at a glance, the relative importance of their contents. In addition, Mr. Chamberlain takes an ample share in defending the policy of the Government, being a frequent participant in the debates. Then there are his duties as member for West Birmingham to attend to.

At midnight, when he reaches home, numerous papers and letters await him, and there are, of course, his social and domestic duties to perform. (How few can say that they lead so busy a life as this! No wonder the Colonial Secretary can find but little time for recreation. All forms of exercise he taboos. The sedentary life he follows at one time was a source of considerable anxiety to his friends, who predicted that its continuance would prove his death. The "victim" has helped to bury many who uttered the doleful prophecy.)

About the only form of exercise Mr. Chamberlain takes is walking from the Colonial Office to the House with the eternal big cigar in his mouth. Strange to say, only a few recognise him as he hurries along, probably because he is little or nothing like the majority of portraits and caricatures with which the man-in-the-street is familiar. But once within the portals of St. Stephen's every one knows him, and when the word goes round that "Chamberlain is up"—that is, that Mr. Chamberlain is speaking, members troop into the chamber, never leaving it until he resumes his seat.

Next month:—Sir Michael Hicks-Beach.



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