

CONSERVATIVE CLUBS MAGAZINE



July 2025 75p



Cheers! – ACC Annual General Meeting Report

July 2025
75p



Farewell, and Thank You ACC

Having stood down after ten years as Chairman of the Association, I wanted to write through the magazine to express my thanks to all at the ACC, not only for these recent years, but for all the many memories of my relationship with the Clubs whilst in political service.

As I know some may have heard me say before, my very first political speech at the age of fifteen was delivered at the Huntley Unionist Club in Bury at the encouragement of the wonderful Bill Hemmingway. Clubs in Bury played a key role in securing that marginal seat for Mrs Thatcher and John Major in the 1980s and early 90s, and I was forever grateful to them for my start in politics. The North West and its Clubs, with great Club characters and our annual weekend conference, remained a constant highlight.

Being elected in your home town is an honour indeed- to be selected and elected again for your new home was a rare gift, and clubs in North East Bedfordshire gave me and the Conservative Party full support for the rest of my thirty two years as an MP.

But the wider Clubs movement was always also close to my heart, seeing the effort my room mate in the Commons, the late and great Ken Hargreaves put in, and a young man called Philip Smith begin to transform our Association into what it is today. So I relished the opportunity to move from the Council to the Chair, and have deeply appreciated your support ever since.

I have had great support from, and must thank, all the team at the ACC and Council, who have given of their time unstintingly, not least during Covid, when their advice and encouragement was crucial.

From fifteen to seventy years of age the ACC has been part of my life, and I look forward to the odd invitation to the AGM in future to keep in touch.

Thank you so much.



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CLUB LAW AND MANAGEMENT

Reminder – Automatically Renewing Contracts

All Clubs should be aware that Business to Business contracts can contain a clause which will automatically renew the contract if not cancelled with sufficient notice.

A Club recently discovered that a five year agreement they had entered into automatically renewed for a further five years since they had failed to provide at least six months notice prior to the end of the original 5 year period that they did not wish the contract to continue.

It is a sensible exercise for Club Committees to undertake to review all contracts and establish when each contract ends and if the contract will automatically renew if no action taken and what steps need to be taken for the contract to be ended. Clubs will want to ensure that if they do wish to end a contract or stop an automatic renewal from taking place that they diarise to send the correct termination notice at the correct time.

Bird and Howe

Bird and Howe have recently filed a legal Money Claim against an ACC Club. We understand that they are also in the process of claiming that other ACC Clubs owe them money. This is in relation to Business Rates agreements with this firm.

We are supporting the Club in question and if any other ACC Club has had legal action taken against them by Bird and Howe please let us know.

We remind all Clubs that Bird and Howe are NOT an ACC Recommended Supplier.

Statement from ACC Recommended Insurance Providers Club Insure: The importance of working with a reputable Insurance broker

Clubs need to be aware of the dramatic rise in unscrupulous and unethical brokers. We have been notified of deceitful and untrustworthy individuals trying to con club managers into switching to their inferior insurance product. They promise artificially reduced renewals, when in actuality their cover is inadequate and leaves your club exposed to major risk.

Time and time again, we are seeing brokers taking advantage of the trust clubs place in them. From providing policies with overly onerous conditions, to consciously underinsuring your club for

artificially reduced premiums; these brokers are taking your premiums and leaving your club at major risk of serious financial loss or even closure.

Remember: if it looks too good to be true, it probably is.

It is essential to do your due diligence on your broker before arranging or switching insurers. You must look out for their experience, their longevity, their specialisms and their track record.

Some of these brokers also try to present themselves as already working with you on your insurance even though they don't know

your club, trying to trick you into revealing your policy information.

Protect your Club - Use Club Insure

The answer to staying protected is to work with a reputable specialist broker. The ACC is partnered with

Club Insure as we believe in their face to face service and have received consistently positive testimonials from the hundreds of ACC clubs already working alongside them. Club Insure will work closely with you to ensure your club has the best correct cover.

Financial Conduct Authority Reminder

Following a spate of Registered Societies being cancelled by the FCA, the ACC is issuing an urgent reminder to all Clubs registered with the FCA to ensure you are submitting Annual Returns and Accounts to the FCA.

If you are unsure if you are registered with the FCA please contact the ACC for clarification or follow the guide below:

Go to <https://mutuals.fca.org.uk>

Enter the name of the Club. If you are not listed you are not registered with the FCA. If you are listed it will take you to a screen where you can review your recent filings with

the FCA.

If your filings are not up to date please submit the missing Annual Returns and Accounts ASAP.

See the pictures below for examples. The final image is taken from an ACC Club that has just been re-registered by the FAC for consistently failing to file Annual Returns with the FCA.

Clubs which have Trustees tend not to be registered with the FCA and therefore do not have to submit returns but if you are in any doubt please double check by checking the FCA website or contacting the ACC.

The screenshot shows the FCA Mutuals Public Register interface. At the top, there's a search bar with 'Club Limited' entered. Below the search bar, there's a table of documents. The table has columns for 'Date of Document', 'Description', and 'Download'. The documents listed are:

Date of Document	Description	Download
12/06/2024	Cancellation of a society.pdf	[Download icon]
21/04/2016	Notification of Charge.pdf	[Download icon]
31/12/2014	Annual Return and Accounts.pdf	[Download icon]
31/12/2014	Annual Return and Accounts.pdf	[Download icon]
31/12/2011	Annual Return and Accounts.pdf	[Download icon]
31/12/2011	Annual Return and Accounts.pdf	[Download icon]
31/12/2010	Annual Return and Accounts.pdf	[Download icon]
31/12/2010	Annual Return and Accounts.pdf	[Download icon]

Mutuals Public Register

The Mutuals Public Register is a public record of mutual societies registered by the Financial Conduct Authority. It has information for societies currently registered, and those no longer registered. The types of mutual societies include:

- Registered societies, including:
 - Co-operative societies; and
 - Community benefit societies
- Credit unions
- Building societies
- Friendly societies

Summary disclaimer

Pubwatch or Similar Local Scheme

Clubs often ask the question: 'Is it lawful for a club to join a Pubwatch Scheme?' The simple answer to this question is, 'Yes it is.' However, the wider answer to this question is a little more complex.

Under the Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Certain Persons) Act 1980, courts have the power to deal with persons convicted of an offence on licensed premises in which violence was used or threatened. They may make an order excluding the convicted persons from licensed premises for a period of between three months and two years. The order may apply to the premises where the offence was committed or to any other specified licensed premises. If a person breaks an order, a further penalty of a fine or imprisonment may be imposed. It should be

noted that the order applies to licensed premises and, therefore, by definition is not extended to clubs.

In various parts of the country, police authorities have been active in setting up Pubwatch schemes. Where an individual is reported to have been violent on licensed premises, his name is circulated to all members of the scheme. He is then banned from all the premises of scheme members. It is possible, therefore, for a ban to be imposed, although there has been no actual conviction.

The significance of Pubwatch schemes for clubs is that in some areas where Private Members' Clubs have been invited to join and to observe the ban on named individuals. While this may be a contribution to discouraging violence among the drinking fraternity, membership of

a Pubwatch scheme could produce problems for clubs.

The rules adopted by most clubs lay down their own course of action for the disciplinary treatment of club members and provide the committee with the authority to reprimand, suspend or expel any member who infringes the rules or any member whose conduct in or out of the club is prejudicial to the club's interest. Such rules will always provide that members shall not be disciplined without first being given a full opportunity to defend themselves before the committee.

It must be appreciated that a club's rules provide members with certain rights. These rights cannot be taken away by the imposition of an automatic suspension or expulsion required by a club's membership of a Pubwatch scheme. If an attempt were made to do so, a member would almost certainly win an appeal to arbitration. Therefore, it

is clear that membership of a Pubwatch scheme may raise some possible conflict with a club's rules.

There are certain benefits for clubs joining Pubwatch schemes but clubs must do so with the clear understanding that they cannot subscribe to every aspect of a scheme's requirements. For example, some schemes require participating pubs and clubs to permit police access to the premises at all times. Registered clubs are established as private places and in normal circumstances a police officer does not have access to a club's premises without a warrant. Such a condition in joining a Pubwatch scheme should therefore be rejected.

If a Pubwatch scheme is operating in your area, then find out whether there is any value in your club becoming involved but bear in mind the fact that clubs are, by their very nature, independent.

Questions and Answers

Q We have a car park which is intended for Club Members only. We frequently have non-members using the car park. Is there anything we can do to prevent this behaviour?

A There are a number of ways to deal with cars which are parking without authorisation in the Club's car

park.

One of the most effective ways is to simply install a physical barrier although I accept that this is not practical for every Club.

Alternatively, pursuing parking invoices through civil action can be very effective. If the correct documentation is affixed to the car park then a Parking Charge Notice can be affixed to cars parked in the

car park without authorisation. These notices will inform users of the car park that a fee will be charged if the car does not have the authorisation to park in the car park. If the person, once issued with the notice, does not send payment then the Club can simply pursue this matter through the small claims court.

I suggest obtaining clear photographic evidence of the car parked and the signs which indicate that the charge notice will be issued and the level of which the charge has been set at. This documentation will assist with any resulting legal claim. You will need to place signs in the car park stating the cost of unauthorised parking and then attach a notice to any cars which use the car park without authorisation stating that they have to now pay this cost to the Club otherwise legal action will be taken to enforce payment. Essentially, by parking in the Club's private car park it will be

considered, if proper notices have been displayed in the car park, that they have entered into a contract with the Club and will therefore pay the agreed rate listed on the car park signs.

There are also third party companies, such as Flashpark.co.uk, which will deal with this type of enforcement on the behalf of the Club although we have no direct experience of these companies.

Q Is it worth placing a notice in the Club stating that visitors use the Club at their own risk? A Committee Member thinks that this would prevent the Club from being liable in the event of an accident.

A Whilst you can place such a notice there is not too much point. The Club cannot contract itself out of UK legislation so a sign would not prevent the Club from being liable in the



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CLUB LAW AND MANAGEMENT

event that an injury occurred which was preventable had the Committee taken proper precautions and preventative steps.

The best use of the Committee's time is therefore to undertake a risk assessment of any potential hazards on the Club's property. Once the Committee have identified any possible risks steps can then be taken to either resolve these risks or prevent as far as possible an accident occurring (e.g. in the event of a low ceiling a notice can be put up warning guests of this hazard). It is good to perform routine risk assessments as a matter of course and to retain records indication when the last risk assessment was undertaken, what hazards were identified and what steps were taken to resolve these hazards.

Q For a number of years we have had difficulty attracting Committee Members. This year we are very short of Committee Members and we are not sure the Club can continue if we cannot find new Committee volunteers. Do you have any advice regarding this problem?

A The situation you have described is obviously concerning. The Club can only operate with an elected Committee which can make decisions on behalf of the Club. The Club's closure would be a very real possibility if new Committee Members cannot be found.

You should therefore try and find willing volunteers to stand for election prior to the nomination period closing. Assuming you do not get more nominations prior to the close of the nomination period then you can ask for further nominations from the floor of the AGM to fill the vacant Committee positions.

I think you have to be honest with the Members and inform them that the Club will likely have to close if no one is willing to volunteer to help

run the Club. The Club is a membership organisation and Members do need to be willing to volunteer their time to help run the Club and they cannot leave the running to the Club to an ever decreasing number of loyal volunteers. Members have to be willing to devote some of their time to the running of the Club and allow existing Committee Members and Officers a break from their obligations.

Hopefully if the Members are given the ultimatum between offering their time to assist the Club or seeing the Club close that this will be the spur to get some more volunteers for the Committee. The Members simply have to understand that the Club cannot continue to be run without new volunteers being found. Can I suggest that you take this approach at the AGM and see what the response is.

Q We are considering moving to a new till system and there is a significant start-up cost associated with new till systems. Do you think this is a good use of Club funds?

A I can confirm that more and more Clubs are moving to modern till systems. These types of till systems are able to provide a lot of data which can be useful for the Committee to examine. The tills can identify the most popular drink at specific times of day in the Club and the exact usage of the Club day by day, hour by hour. This can assist with future Committee decisions regarding product selections and opening times. You can also quickly see if a product is underperforming and look at ways to resolve this situation.

New till systems also easily enable initiatives like Club loyalty cards to be used which either provide a discount for Club Members or enable Members to loan money onto these cards which can then be used in the Club (often offering a slight 'bonus'

when depositing funds onto a membership card as an incentive for Members to use this system).

You are right that the major downside to installing new till systems is the initial set up cost but I think the idea of a new till system is worth discussing within the Committee and considering whether it should be an objective for the Club to pursue in the future.

Q A neighbouring ACC Club has recently entered into a sale and leaseback arrangement with the ACC and are pleased with the outcome. Is this a service which is offered to all ACC Clubs?

A I can confirm that the ACC operates a sale and leaseback service which has proved popular with over 150 Clubs. There are some Clubs that would benefit greatly from the scheme and in other cases it would not be the correct solution for a Club's particular situation and perhaps a simple loan from the ACC to the Club might be a better starting point. All Sale and Leasebacks are done on a bespoke basis after discussions with the Club in question and all ACC Clubs are welcome to approach us regarding the sale and leaseback service and to seek further information.

Q Our club rules state that guests may only enter the club two times per month. Are we therefore in breach of our own rules and not the law by allowing an individual to use the club more than twice?

A If you are currently allowing guests into the club more than twice a month you are not in breach of the Licensing Act 2003 but you are in breach of your rules. The club should either enforce its current rules or modify them to give the club more flexibility on these matters. The law therefore allows the club far greater flexibility on

guests and their attendance than your own club rules currently allow.

Q We wish to plan an Open Day for the club in an effort to encourage new members into the club. We intend to open on a Saturday morning from 11am to 1pm to allow potential members to call into the club for a coffee, view our facilities and get to know the benefits of becoming a member. How can we legally invite these people in without signing them in as members' guests?

A I confirm that such an event would be possible if the club applied for and obtained a Temporary Event Notice.

Whilst some open days can be successful this will only happen if the members are prepared to become involved. However, I think it is important for clubs to actively promote their roles as part of their local communities.

Q The Committee wish to implement a system where Members pay a lower price for drinks than their guests or other users of the Club (such as when a private event is being held). Can you confirm that such a pricing policy would be legal?

A We can confirm that such a policy would be entirely appropriate. With the introduction of modern tills this business model is becoming more popular in Private Members' Clubs and provides a clear reason for guests to become Members of the Club. Depending on the till system the Club is using there are a few days that this policy can be implemented, we have certainly seen cases where an employee simply chooses 'Member' or 'Non-Member' when serving and the till then calculates the correct price based on that information.

Industry Insights

Industry Insights aims to provide a whirlwind tour of who's doing what in the club sector, from latest launches and new products to business acquisitions and market research into the hospitality sector at large.

The Global On Premise – tracking trends and seizing sales

Where are the big category, channel and occasion opportunities in the UK's On Premise and around the world? Graeme Loudon draws on CGA by NIQ's expert new analytics solution to reveal the big trends and areas of potential.

CGA's On Premise Measurement (OPM) service shows there are encouraging movements in the ever-evolving world of the On Premise. Despite pressure on consumers' disposable incomes, the value of beer sales has increased by 0.5% in the last 12 months—the result of people buying fewer drinks but spending more when they do so. However, volumes have been steadily moving closer to growth in recent months too, and if the upward trend continues at the current rate, we can hope to see beer volumes back in positive territory in the second half of 2025.

Optimism is raised further by signs of growing spending confidence among consumers. CGA's recent research has shown that people remain as eager as ever to visit the On Premise in 2025, and some are starting to go out a little more often.

The proportion of British consumers eating out in the last month rose by 2 percentage points between March and April, and restaurants and other dining outlets have been outperforming other venues for drinks sales growth in recent months. With beer moving to value growth in the dining channel, it's clear that food-led occasions are presenting some of the best opportunities in 2025.

Category analysis shows tequila and beer in growth

Spirits sales have fallen by 2.5% over the last 12 months, but some categories have performed better than others. Tequila stands out as the only category recording value growth in the last 12 months, with sales up 1.4%, having gained share from other spirits in both dining and drinking outlets. Tequila has been notably strong in the US (up 0.7%), Canada (up 8.8%) and Britain (up 3.6%), but weaker in European countries including Germany (down 0.8%).

Vodka has been another relatively resilient segment—especially in Ireland and Canada—and remains the largest sub-category in spirits, though



tequila is catching up fast.

Over in the beer category, value growth has been particularly encouraging in countries including Germany (up 2.6%), Australia (up 2.4%) and Ireland (up 9.3%), but negative in the US (down 1.5%) and France (down 1.4%). By sub-segment category, beer has been in modest growth while cider has been down.

Globally, polarisation in spending has led to a stronger performance for more premium beer brands, while the no and low alcohol category continues to grow as some consumers moderate their intake.

The consumer outlook

Consumers' spending remains under pressure in many territories, and global economic concerns may continue to impact their confidence. However, there are some positive indicators for the rest of 2025. Globally, CGA's Consumer Pulse data shows four in five (80%) people had visited the On Premise to eat in the last month, while nearly half (46%) had been out to drink.

It's abundantly apparent that consumers have a deep attachment to bars and restaurants and view them as places where special occasions are celebrated, and memories are made. In Australia, half (51%) of consumers have enjoyed a special occasion in the On Premise in the last three months. In the US, two thirds (67%) agree it plays an important role in how they celebrate special moments, and 71% think it offers an atmosphere that they can't replicate at home.

This brings some good opportunities for premium brands, as consumers are more likely to spend extra on their drinks during special and celebratory occasions. With so many consumers still under financial pressure, this is where many premium brands are likely to perform best over the rest of 2025.

The survey also reveals which countries are most upbeat about prospects. In both France and Italy, 21% of consumers said they planned to visit bars, restaurants and similar venues more often in the next month—substantially more than the 12% and 8% who intended to go out less in these two countries.

• [cgastategy.com](https://www.cgastategy.com)

Cask brewer kicks off a Summer of celebration brews

Greene King continues to introduce new seasonal cask beers for the bar and this June it's celebrating women's sport with a new beer, Back of the Net, and bringing back a blast from the past, Amplified. The two beers are available throughout July.

Amplified, a 4% ABV golden ale, was first launched in 2017 as part of a partnership with a well-known radio station, and it's making a comeback to the seasonal calendar this year as Greene King continues to celebrate a love of music.

The beer is a blend of grapefruit, orange, mango and pineapple notes, complemented by herbal and floral undertones.

The brewer is also celebrating the upcoming women's football tournament this summer with Back of the Net, a 4% ABV golden ale with citrus and tropical fruit characters, described as a perfect beer to have on the bar to entice customers to raise a pint to women's sport.

Both golden cask ales will be available in firkins and pin format (36-pint containers).

Alan Fulcher, Technical Brewer at Greene King Brewery, said: "Both of our beers are about celebrating key moments this Summer with a refreshing pint. We've seen great uptake of our seasonal cask beers so far this year and each one is there to drive excitement and celebrate special moments on the bar."



The 2025 Fresh Cask Releases calendar includes 15 limited-edition beers, available at special points throughout the year to celebrate the seasons, sporting occasions, and collaborations with other brewers.

• valueforvenues.co.uk

FIFA Club World Cup 2025 on DAZN included in TNT Sports subscription



TNT Sports has reached an agreement with DAZN to make all FIFA Club World Cup 2025™ games available to TNT Sports club customers this summer at no extra cost.

The FIFA Club World Cup 2025™, a new and expanded month-long tournament, kicked off on 14 June, two weeks after the end of the European domestic football season.

The tournament, made up of 32 teams from across the world, includes Premier League teams Manchester City and Chelsea alongside Paris Saint-Germain, Real Madrid, Bayern Munich, Inter Miami, Al-Hilal and Boca Juniors.

The opening game saw Egyptian club Al Ahly take

on David Beckham-owned Inter Miami, while Chelsea's first game kicked off on June 16 at 8pm, and Manchester City took on Wydad AC on Wednesday, June 18.

The final takes place on Sunday, July 13 at 8pm.

Alasdair Collis, Vice President Commercial Premises TNT Sports, said: "Live football is the biggest driver of additional footfall for our sport customers and the FIFA Club World Cup™ is a hugely exciting global football tournament which will enable our customers to continue to show top-flight club football, both mid-week and at weekends, after the end of the Premier League season."

• tntsportsbusiness.co.uk

Champion Beer of Britain – final six contenders revealed

CAMRA has named the top IPAs, milds, bitters, blonds, pales and golden beers in the UK.

The winners in these six categories will join the finalists already

announced at February's Great British Beer Festival Winter, and all 12 will battle it out to be crowned Champion Beer of Britain 2025. The overall winner will be announced at the Great British Beer Festival, NEC Birmingham, in August. The winners in the six categories were:

- **Mild: Penzance, Mild (3.6%).** Grainy malt coffee and chocolate dominates the taste with dried fruit notes.
- **Session Bitter: Butcombe, Butcombe Original (4%).** Sweet tasting bitter with malt dominating over a trace of dark fruit.
- **Premium Bitter: Cairngorm, Wildcat (5.1%).** Malt predominates but there is an underlying hop character through to the well-balanced aftertaste.
- **IPAs (English and New World): Elusive, Oregon Trail (5.8%).** A bold and bitter classically styled west coast IPA.
- **Session Pale, Blond and Golden Ales: Track, Sonoma (3.8%).** A well-balanced sweet, fruity beer with moderate bitterness and plenty of citrus hops.
- **Premium Pale, Blond and Golden Ales: Church End, Fallen Angel (5%).** Sharp, full flavoured bitter with an edge of lemon.

• greatbritishbeerfestival.co.uk



Tap into something special with Jennings Brewery



As part of the revival of Jennings, the brewer has opened-up membership offerings.

A £100 bonus credit is on offer, to be added to Annual and Lifetime membership accounts to spend in the Taproom.

The membership categories are:

- **Brewer's Friend Digital Member** – £30 per year
- **Malt Master Annual Member** – £100 per year
- **Brewmaster's Circle Lifetime Member** – £1,000 one off payment

• jenningsbrewery.co.uk

Prices of core menu products expected to rise

With staple products recording price increases ahead of the headline rate of inflation, Lynx Purchasing poses the question, should clubs raise menu prices or try to absorb the increases?

Clubs and Hospitality businesses are already dealing with increased costs in areas such as staffing and business rates, and the increase in staple products is an added concern.

Rachel Dobson, managing director of Lynx Purchasing, said: "The ability to absorb further cost increases is limited, but at the same time, consumer confidence is very fragile.

"Hospitality businesses are already dealing with increased costs in areas such as staffing and business rates. Their ability to absorb further cost increases is limited, but at the same time, consumer confidence is very fragile.

"Although the headline rate of inflation is relatively low, it's forecast to increase across the summer, and at the same time there are a number of products where prices are rising at higher rates."

Areas flagged up for concern in the Summer 2025 Lynx Purchasing Market Forecast include:

- **Meat:** Beef prices have been rising in the UK and across Europe since the start of the year, driven by lower production and continued high demand. Pork is also seeing price increases, with demand running ahead of producers' ability to increase capacity. Suppliers are advising that further increases should be expected for pork and beef products across the summer.
- **Poultry:** Higher prices for both fresh chicken and pre-made chicken products, such as wings and burgers, are forecast for at least the next few months. British poultry producers are calling for a relaxation of planning rules which limit expansion, while the continued impact of restrictions aimed at reducing the spread of avian is affecting the market globally.
- **Potatoes:** Potato prices have continued to increase, in the aftermath of extreme weather



impacting both availability and quality of last year's crop. Operators who can use a broader range of varieties, without worrying too much about size and appearance, will be in the best position to make the most of available supplies.

- **Dairy:** There was a sharp increase in the price of butter in March, with supply once again affected by demand running ahead of the time needed to expand herd size. Cheese also saw prices increase, which is likely to continue across the summer, while egg supplies are seeing shortages due to avian flu.

"Clearly, there are some costs that operators can't control," said Dobson. "However there are definitely

areas where it is possible to make savings. A disciplined approach to purchasing has never been more important, and operators need to work more closely with suppliers to ensure they are making the most of produce when it's at its best in terms of value, quality and availability.

"Purchasing discipline doesn't stop at the point of delivery. Managing food waste in the kitchen and throughout the business can have a dramatic impact on costs. All too often, plates that are piled high with food when they're sent out to the customer, come back with food left on them, which has to be thrown away.

"This waste is not just costly in terms of the money that was spent to buy the food, it increasingly carries a cost in terms of disposal. Most businesses are now required to separate food waste for collection. This has already been an eye-opener for many businesses, prompting them to look again at the amount of food that is simply thrown away."

• lynxpurchasing.co.uk

Conservative clubs to shine at the Club Awards

Conservative Clubs are invited to enter the Club Awards to throw a spotlight on all the commitment and hard work that goes into running a busy club. The Awards also applaud the professionalism of individuals, as well as the dedication of committees, volunteers and club officials.

Conservative clubs can be rightly proud of their many successes at the Awards, and last year saw Christchurch Conservative Club collect the coveted Committee of the Year trophy.

To discover the categories and to nominate your club and/or your colleagues, visit the website below.

• clubawards.co.uk





Get carried away this Summer with Fiesta

The Fiesta range from Nisbets UK is designed to make summer a little greener with its latest recyclable and compostable disposables for holding both hot and cold food and drinks, making them ideal for club outdoor events and festivals.

Mark Conron, Group Head of Customer Communications, Nisbets UK, said: "Our Fiesta range of packaging is strong, practical and comprised of compostable or recyclable materials.

From renewable bamboo to recyclable plastic, operators can choose from a range of food and drink to-go products. We have made it as easy as possible to find the perfect container for any type of food or drink."

The Nisbets Fiesta range offers over 210 recyclable items and upwards of 150 compostable Fiesta products.

• nisbets.co.uk

Lockhart's exhibitor line-up for Catering Innovation Show

Lockhart Catering Equipment, part of the Bunzl Catering & Hospitality Division, has provided an updated exhibitor list for its debut trade show, the Catering Innovation Show which takes place on 28 October at the Business Design Centre in Islington, London.

Over 60 exhibitors are already confirmed, cover-

ing both light and heavy equipment.

The event also includes a Live Theatre run by Chef HQ and the chance to win £5000-worth of catering equipment.

Free tickets are available at the dedicated website.

• cateringinnovationshow.co.uk



Luxury doughnuts from Just Desserts

Just Desserts has introduced a selection of freshly handcrafted doughnuts, from iced classics to decadent delights with rich chocolate, smooth caramel and indulgent fillings.

• justdesserts

Picota cherries ripe for Summer recipes

With Picota cherry season starting this month, Spanish celebrity chef Omar Allibhoy has created three new seasonal Picota recipes to demonstrate the versatility of the cherry variety.

Picota cherries have been produced for decades at family-run farms on the high mountainsides of Spain's picturesque Jerte Valley.

The naturally sweet variety boasts a fleshy, crunchy texture as well as a long shelf life and a deep red colour



• Picota Cherry Basque Cheesecake

This twist on a Spanish classic combines the traditional Basque cheesecake with a buttery biscuit base, while celebrating the natural sweetness of Picota cherries. The extended cooling time guarantees the perfect fondant centre that makes this dessert truly special.



• Pan-fried Hake, Picota Cherries, Chorizo and Artichokes

This dish celebrates the versatility of Picota cherries in savoury applications. The combination might seem unusual, but the sweetness of the cherries perfectly balances the smoky chorizo and delicate hake.



• Picota Cherry, Butter Bean, Green Bean and Mint Salad

This vibrant salad combines the sweetness of Picota cherries with creamy butter beans and crisp green beans, creating a dish that's both satisfying and refreshing. It's Omar's modern take on a Spanish bean salad, where the Picotas become the star, adding an unexpected but delightful twist that makes this dish perfect for summer entertaining.



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- Competitive finance packages

Annual General Meeting Report

The Chairman's Opening Remarks

The Chairman, The Lord Smith of Hindhead CBE, welcomed guests and representatives to the 131st Annual General Meeting of the Association of Conservative Clubs and in particular Ben Obese-Jecty Member of Parliament for Huntingdon. He commented that it was an important day for him, having joined the staff of the ACC in 1987, to be chairing his first AGM in his new role.

The Chairman thanked and paid tribute to Alistair Burt for his steadfast contribution to the ACC as Chairman over the previous ten years and went on to congratulate Charles Littlewood on his appointment as the ACC's new Chief Executive Officer.

Formed in 1894, the ACC had been a faithful and steadfast part of the Conservative family in both good times and times which have been more challenging. The ACC continued to stand proud in delivering the best service and

advice to its member clubs and in so doing, provided a cornerstone of the Party's physical presence throughout England, Scotland and Wales.

The Chairman asked the meeting to stand for a moment's silence in memory of all colleagues who had passed away during the past year.



Lord Smith of Hindhead CBE

Chairman's Report on the Work of the Association

The Chairman said it was a great pleasure to report on the work of the Association of Conservative Clubs for the past year and that it was always satisfying to follow a financial report showing that the ACC has strengthened its financial position and was investing in the continuation of our Conservative, Constitutional and Unionist Clubs.

131 years on from the year in which the ACC was founded, it was useful to remind ourselves that today the ACC had no bank finance, no mortgages on the extensive property portfolio and had sizable cash reserves.

The Chairman reminded the meeting that the ACC was the only Club Organisation which provided loans to their member clubs. Fortunately, most Clubs got in touch to say they are starting to have difficulties when the difficulties were starting. What we have to make sure is that all Clubs got in touch when they had a difficulty rather than ever leaving it too late.

ACC Clubs continued to have a variety of different names from

Conservative to Constitutional and Salisbury to Beaconsfield. They often had their own locally known name such as the Duck Club, the Cold Feet Club or the Blue House. In fact, some of those Clubs had their local name for such a long time that members struggled to remember what the actual name of the Club was. It was clear however that all our Member Clubs, whatever their title, shared a common goal and also shared common successes and problems.

The Chairman said, he hoped the ACC continued to provide ACC Clubs with the best information, advice and support which was available within the Private Members' Clubs sector. The primary object that the ACC was formed to promote; 'To assist and encourage the formation of Clubs throughout Great Britain with similar objects and the management of such Clubs'.

The ACC was a company limited by guarantee, there were no shareholders; there were instead members or subscribers which were of course the member

clubs we served, represented by those at our AGM. We were truly a family of common interests and shared values.

Conservative Clubs had always been a powerful political force but they were also vital community hubs and we had many good news stories from across the country covering charitable donations and other community activities which were published in the monthly magazine.

The Chairman thanked the ACC's national suppliers and recommended companies; Dransfields for the excellent service which they provided to their many ACC customers; our insurance providers, 'Club Insure' whose continued professional approach to ACC Clubs was much

appreciated and to K&M Club Refurbishment, all of whom the ACC were pleased to continue to endorse.

Finally the Chairman thanked the ACC Officers and Council Members and all the ACC staff for their loyalty and commitment to the Association of Conservative Clubs.

The Chairman said that much had been achieved in recent years, and that he was confident that ACC Clubs would continue to fulfil the Conservative objects for which they had been established, maintaining our position as a corner stone of the Conservative family.

The Chairman concluded that it was a privilege to serve the Association as its Chairman.

Statement of Accounts for the Year Ended 31st December 2024

The Chairman called upon Mr Thomas Leeming, Hon Treasurer of the ACC and Hon Secretary of the Conservative National Property Advisory Committee, to propose that the Statement of Accounts be received.

Mr Leeming had pleasure in reporting that the income and expenditure account for the year ended 31st December 2024 showed a surplus of £2.78 million, another strong result for the ACC, enabling the continued work in supporting Clubs.

During the year £1.6 million of new loans were made available to support clubs, with £839,000 being repaid from the total loan book and a further £1 million being recouped by purchases within the Sale & Leaseback programme. The amount of loans to Member Clubs at the year-end stood at just over £5 million. Interest on loans remained stable at £241,000.

The Accounts also showed rental income from the sale and leaseback of Club properties had increased by some 10% from £1.53 million in 2023 to £1.69 million in 2024.

The ACC held investment property, the majority of which were sale and leaseback investments, with a carrying value of over £37 million, comprised of over one hundred and thirty four club properties and some ancillary land, commercial and residential property.

The company had carried out its

annual exercise of reviewing the valuation of its property portfolio, including commissioning a sample of reports from its surveyors. Following this review, no material valuation adjustments had been made. It continued to be the company's policy not to revalue upwards in anticipation of potential 'development' gains that could be crystallised in the event of the ACC obtaining vacant possession of the properties.

Income from the sale of IA Tickets showed a slight increase in 2024 to £38,900. Commission income showed a lower receipt of £62,000. Legal and professional fees increased from £40,000 to £60,000. This was in line with expectations.

Interest paid to depositors increased sharply from £276,000 to £316,000. The total Club deposits held remained steady during the year, but the interest rate payable increased from 1st January 2024.

The year end result is that the total net assets of the Association of Conservative Clubs stood at £38,719,581.

Mr Leeming thanked the Accountant and Auditor Andrew Brooker of Begbies Chartered Accountants and concluded by saying that it gave him great pleasure to, once again, propose that the accounts as set out be received by the Annual General Meeting. The proposal to receive the Accounts was seconded and carried unanimously.

The Chief Executive's Report

In introducing Charles Littlewood to present his report, the Chairman advised the meeting that Charles was born and raised in Suffolk and had attended Southampton University where he studied law. Joining the ACC in 2009 he quickly became efficient in understanding the complexities of Licensing, Employment, Trust, Mutual Society and Gambling Law, all of which were an intrinsic part of the ACC's work. In recent years he had mastered new property skills in the increasing role that the ACC played in helping clubs to continue to operate in changing and challenging times.

The Chief Executive thanked the Chairman for his kind introduction and paid tribute to Lord Smith of Hindhead for his stewardship of the ACC during his long tenure as the Chief Executive. He added that he hoped to be able to rely on his knowledge and good instincts for many years to come.

The Chief Executive was delighted to announce that the ACC continue to provide so many clubs with financial assistance. With £6 million currently on loan to our clubs, members would appreciate that there were many positive stories to be heard of how we had been able to give some Committee's breathing space in order to change the direction of membership usage and sales; to review expenditure and staffing and to get back to a profitable trading position.

In addition to loans to Member Clubs, the ACC had spent over £37 million pounds in purchasing Clubs on Sale and Leaseback basis to ensure those Clubs had the means to go on supporting their members and local communities. He made the point that there was not much point for Clubs owning bricks and mortar if they could not pay the utility bills.

The Chief Executive said that whilst the ACC could help our Member Clubs, it could not do everything and without a dedicated core of Officers and staff, and without members making the choice to either support their club or not, any club's future would be uncertain.

He went on to say that it was important to remember how much the drinks industry had changed in

recent years. 70% of alcohol today was now consumed at home; as a nation we were drinking 14% less alcohol than we were 10 years ago; young people were less likely to drink alcohol than at any other recorded time (almost a third of under 25s abstained from alcohol) and 40% of all alcohol purchased was purchased by only 10% of the adult population.

On average some 76 pubs vanished each month from the communities they served. Between 2017 and 2024, the number of pubs slumped from more than 42,000 to 35,000.

The Chief Executive reported that last year, the ACC saw ten clubs close. Like the rest of the hospitality industry, the ACC were not immune from changing social habits but I thought that our Clubs had broadly bucked the overall industry trends. The ACC would continue to do what it did best, providing safe, comfortable, attractive venues, which were friendly and welcoming to people who had the same outlook on life and who shared the same values.

All operators within the leisure industry were being faced by challenges of a changing market and changing social attitudes, but the Chief Executive said that he sometimes wondered whether everyone involved in the Industry understood this vital point.

The Chief Executive reported that it was currently dealing with a Gambling Commission Consultation which suggested that Clubs with a gambling machine may need to start to do the following. Firstly, to dispose of any old analogue gaming machines which could not be remotely updated with the latest whims of the Gambling Commission. Secondly, install new gaming machines which would force a player to select how much they wanted to spend and how long they want to play for. Then tell the gaming machine to nag the player if they went over those limits. Then force a Club employee to go over to the player and nag them some more. All because a grown adult wanted to put a tenner into a gaming machine on a Friday night. The Chief Executive said that in view of these types of proposed regulations that he would not blame anyone who

thought they would rather stay at home.

The Hospitality Industry was the third largest private sector employer. Three million jobs were directly supported through Hospitality UK. That was 9% of all UK employees. In fact, one in three of all new jobs created last year was created by the eating and drinking industry. In the last twelve months, Labour had increased tax on employers and increased business rates.

The Chief Executive said that he hoped no one was put off opening a pub or club, despite what he had said. Find a venue. Apply for any Licensing Qualifications which may be needed. Apply for a licence. Advertise the licence to the public for 28 days to see if anyone objected. Be granted the licence. Open the venue. Say hello to a new neighbour who decided to live next to a Pub or Club when they purchased the house but now would rather not want you as a neighbour and want you closed down. Be told you need a licence to put the radio on. Be told you need a licence to put the TV on. Be told you need to chastise someone who wants to lawfully gamble. Be told you need to remind someone ordering

an egg and cress sandwich that it has egg in it.

The Chief Executive continued by saying that, "Where once we may have been a nation of shopkeepers we are now fast becoming a nation of box tickers."

The Chief Executive said that he believed the ACC had achieved a great deal over the last few years and he hoped his report today demonstrated that much could be achieved in the future. That success however had only been achieved due to the excellent and loyal team at the ACC and he thanked, in particular; Lesley DiPopolo, accounts manager, Josephine Willoughby, in-house Solicitor, and Andrew Brooker, the ACC's Accountant for all that they had done throughout the year.

He also thanked the ACC Council for their support and of course to the ACC's Member Clubs for everything which they did in order to maintain the high standards and reputation of private members' social clubs which played such a vital part to so many communities throughout Great Britain.

The Chief Executive concluded by saying it was a privilege and an honour to serve as the ACC's Chief Executive.



Guest Speaker



In introducing Ben, the Chairman advised the meeting that he had been elected to Parliament in July 2024. Ben had stood in the 2019 General Election in the Hackney North and Stoke Newington constituency against Diane Abbott.

Prior to becoming a Member of Parliament, Ben had attended the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Duke of Wellington's Regiment on 11th December 2004. He was promoted to lieutenant on the same day, 11th December 2004. He moved to the Yorkshire Regiment after his first regiment was merged with others and was promoted to captain in 2007.

Ben had served a tour of duty in Iraq, only three months after completing his training and he also served a tour in Afghanistan in Helmand Province. Following his service in the British Army, he had enjoyed a career in banking.

Mr Obese-Jecty thanked the Chairman for his kind introduction and said it was a privilege to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Association of Conservative Clubs.

He informed the meeting that

he was not fortunate enough to have a Conservative Club in his constituency but that he visited the nearest ACC Club to him in his neighbouring constituency, both informally and where special events had taken place. He said that he recognised the hard work that was undertaken in maintaining the presence of Conservative Clubs and the vital importance of maintaining a Conservative footprint. He recognised the challenging times for the Hospitality Industry, knowing that there were a lot of competing leisure interests and that the younger generation did not go out to pubs and clubs as they once did. He thanked all ACC Clubs for the work that they did in keeping that spirit alive all across the country.

Mr Obese-Jecty said that becoming a new member of parliament in the last election had been a challenging time. Coming in to opposition after fourteen years of being in government and also having to shoulder the burden of reputation and, effectively, the ill feelings from the general public towards the Conservative Party had been a difficult task to undertake and a difficult balance to strike. It was however also something that he knew that he wanted to do and it was something that he took great pride in being able to do, in terms of trying to get on the front foot, helping to bring the Party back to a position where more of the population would be happy with us as a Party and wanting to put the Conservatives back into power.

He went on to talk about his time standing in Hackney North and Stoke Newington in the 2019 election, which was Labour through and through, with just a

smattering of green and very little blue, that had involved having some pretty robust conversations with people on the doorstep. He learnt then that there is sometimes a real challenge in making your case as a Conservative.

Mr Obese-Jecty reminded the meeting that with only 121 Conservative Members of Parliament, including the new intake of just 26 Conservative Members of Parliament, all those new MP's had very quickly found themselves given a task 'straight off the bat', rather than earning their spurs, learning their trade on the backbenches, and instead were coming in as whips and as PPS' straight away in order to sure up that lack of footprint and to make sure that there was always an opposition in the chamber to be able to take on the Government. And that, in itself, had been very eye-opening.

Mr Obese-Jecty said he did not think the Conservatives had been helped by the speed of the demise of the Labour Party which seemed to have burnt an awful lot of goodwill in a record amount of time and, if anything, their fall from grace had come too quickly; effectively meaning that the major beneficiary had been Reform, as a party unencumbered by having had any previous responsibility.

It was vital therefore that the Conservatives got back on the front foot, reinvented ourselves as a Party and made sure that we

returned to those Conservative roots, not only, combat the threat of Reform, but also to start winning back some of those people who went to the Liberal Democrats who, for no reason, should have quintupled the size of the number of MPs that they had in the last election. It was vital that we won back people from across the political spectrum.

Mr Obese-Jecty once again thanked the Association of Conservative Clubs for all the hard work that it carried out and that working together as a united Party, we could make sure that we returned a Conservative government in 2029.

The Chairman thanked Mr Obese-Jecty and reminded the meeting that in the past, the AGM had invited Prime Ministers, Chancellors, Home Secretaries and Secretaries of State of almost every department and that he thought Mr Obese-Jecty had delivered an excellent speech. In a light hearted vote of thanks, he mentioned that in 2001, he had stood for Parliament for the Constituency of Newcastle upon Tyne and said it was good advice to any candidate to visit as many clubs as they could, in order to meet people who do not always 'finish off the sentences' that politicians expect. The Meeting expressed its appreciation of Mr Obese-Jecty's speech and the generous gift of his time, by acclamation.



Annual General Meeting Report



Resolution to the Party Leader

“That this Annual General Meeting of The Association of Conservative Clubs sends The Rt. Hon Kemi Badenock MP, the Leader of the Conservative & Unionist Party, its continued

support and pledges the Association’s ongoing assistance to the Party.”

The Chairman proposed the Resolution which was carried by acclamation.

Pages From The Past

In this month’s Pages From The Past we go back to September 1950 which featured an amusing article by a ‘Disillusioned Secretary’ about how to kill a Club.

I am sure many Club Secretaries will read the article 75 years after it was first published and nod their head at some of the points made by the anonymous author!

In a similar vein of things rarely changing, there is correspondence about a lack of enthusiastic flag flying in the UK compared to our continental neighbours. Whilst it is perhaps the USA which is very well known these days for fervent

flag flying it is interesting to note that even in 1950 flag flying was a discussion being had by people within the UK. The letter also makes reference to Oxford Bags Pacifist Period. This was style of trousers called the “Oxford bags,” an influential design that achieved extreme popularity in the 1920s. Of course, in the cyclical world of fashion, the popularity of the Oxford bags didn’t end with a single tenure; they came back in the 1970s, and then, arguably, in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Whether or not the author of the letter lived long enough to see ‘Oxford Bags’ make a triumphant return is unknown...

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HOW TO KILL A CLUB

By a Disillusioned Secretary

1. Stay away from your meetings by all means.
2. If and when you do go, be sure to come late and mumble about what's already taken place before your arrival.
3. Kick and howl if you aren't appointed on committees; but if "the buck is passed to you", then refuse to serve.
4. Don't get "rooked" in on any work details.
5. Don't contribute anything except malicious criticism when asked for your opinion on an issue.
6. Complain constantly about those who do the work, pointing out that your club is run by a clique.
7. Never discuss the functions of your Club until you need its help.
8. Accuses active members of being "office seekers".
9. Look out for sore-heads with whom you can join in an effort to create discussion.
10. Lag behind in your dues until threatened with expulsion, then declare you are discriminated against.

CORRESPONDENCE

TERRITORIAL OR TRAVELLER!

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,

Is your correspondent, in the August issue, correct in saying that as Britishers we are **traditionally** less enthusiastic than some of our continental neighbours at hoisting our national flag?

We may be now but certainly were not before 1914 and the disastrous advent of the wilting youth of the Oxford "bags" pacifist period between the wars.

It is just that patriotism is out of fashion. If it were not so we should have more Territorials and fewer fellow travellers in Britain today.

Yours faithfully,

N. F. COOKE.
(Colonel N. F. Cooke, E.D.)

122, London Road,
Biggleswade, Beds.

The following I.A. Tickets are cancelled:—

Ticket No. 12732, which was issued on 2nd January, 1950, to Mr. Payne, of the City Conservative Club Ltd., Cardiff.

Ticket No. 12741, which was issued on 3rd January, 1950, to Mr. G. Lacey, of the City Conservative Club Ltd., Cardiff, having been lost.

Obituary

We regret the death of:—

Mr. Lewis Ormerod, aged 66, of Blackburn, on the 26th July, 1950. Mr. Ormerod was a Committee man at St. Silas's Conservative Club, Blackburn.

★

Mr. Cecil Palk, age 59, of Newton Abbot, on the 14th July, 1950. Mr. Palk was a lifelong member of the Newton Abbot Conservative Club.

★

Mr. James I. Atherton, aged 58, of Wigan, at the end of July. Mr. Atherton was a member of the Wigan Conservative Club.

★

Mr. Bernard Whittle, aged 68, of Lostock Hall on 26th July. Mr. Whittle was a member of the Lostock Hall Conservative Club.

★

Mr. David Harold Ward, aged 55, of Warrington on the 22nd July. Mr. Ward was a member of the Warrington Conservative Club.

★

Mr. John Thomas Collings, aged 67, of Tooting on 21st July. Mr. Collings was a founder member of the Streatham Conservative Club.

★

Mr. Richard Beal, aged 76, of Blackpool at the end of July. Mr. Beal was one of the oldest members of the Bispham Conservative Club; he was also a Trustee, and life member of the Club, and a member of the Wainwright Conservative Club.

★

Mr. John Roscoe, aged 55, of Wigan on 23rd July. Mr. Roscoe was a member of the Swinley Conservative Club.

★

Mr. George Thomas Bagguley, aged 90, of Newcastle on 6th August. Mr. Bagguley was a member of the Newcastle Conservative Club.

★

Mr. Charles Friend, aged 74, of Launceston. Mr. Friend had been a member of Launceston Conservative Club for over 50 years and was the oldest subscribing member.

★

Mr. W. H. Sherrin, aged 87, at his home, 32, Fitzmary Avenue, Margate. Mr. Sherrin was a well-known member of the Margate Constitutional Club.

★

Mr. Charles Aldred Mackness, aged 73, at 20, Westview, Clitheroe. Mr. Mackness was a member of Clitheroe Conservative Club.

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