

LINCOLNSHIRE CHESS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025

Held at the Training Centre, Lindum Construction on Saturday 13th of September 2025, 12.30pm.

MINUTES

Attending: Nigel Birtwistle (Chair), Chris Holt, Samuel Warner, Denis Georgiou, Nick Stead, Peter Sherlock, James Kennedy-Wright, Ben Mason, Carlos Ayton, Andrew Watson

Apologies: William Orr

Opening Remarks

The Chair opened the meeting at 12:35pm and welcomed the return of Bourne to the association and league.

1. MINUTES OF 2024 AGM

The minutes of the 2024 AGM were circulated to attendees, and these were voted as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed by Ben Mason and Seconded by Peter Sherlock.

2. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

3. SECRETARY'S REPORT (Chris Holt)

It has been a quiet year overall. I attended ECF meetings as the association's representative and a copy of my report is in the minutes.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT AND ACCOUNTS (Peter Sherlock)

- *The accounts are appended to these minutes.*

This season we made a surplus of £325.56 compared to a surplus of £81.01 last year and £335.00 in the period 2022/23.

With Louth entering teams in Division 1 and Division 2 the income from subscriptions increased from £300 to £370. An additional Louth team plus a team from Bourne in Division 2 will add an extra £60 next year.

A bumper entry of 38 in the county championships meant that the event made a surplus of £363.99 which included some donations in the form of unclaimed prizes. This is up from £146 last year when there were on 30 entries.

The expenses claimed by the county team captains was similar to last year £311.75 compared with £324.99.

Other expenditure was £45 for the cost of the AGM venue at the Lincoln Labour Club last year and £51.68 paid to David Coates for supporting the web-site.

Given the surplus for the year and the healthy balance I am recommending that county subscriptions remain unchanged at £40 for Division 1 teams and £30 for teams in Division 2.

The meeting accepted that the accounts were a true and fair representation of the association's affairs. Proposed: Ben Mason Seconded: Denis Georgiou.

Matters Arising:

It was noted that there was a payment to the webmaster as it has been discovered that they have been subsidising the web hosting from their own funds for several years.

5. MCCU DELEGATE (Peter Sherlock)

I was unavailable for the MCCU AGM in June so I have no idea what was discussed.

Secretary's note: It was hoped that Ben Mason would attend but he was also unable to do so. Both the Chair and I would have stepped in if we had been aware.

For the sake of discussion, this is Tim Walker's Notts MCCU report:

"We feel we could write a report of about half a dozen sentences, or of half a dozen pages about the MCCU in 2024 and 2025. Hopefully the AGM is pleased we've chosen former option.

Ray Dolan is not continuing as Chief Exec and acting Chair, and similarly Eunice Dolan has stood as president. They had health matters last week and couldn't attend the AGM. We wish them both well.

John and I attended the MCCU AGM last weekend -June 28th in Derby. Paul Sharratt became acting CEO, and Gavin Cartwright as secretary. The Midlands bank account is now with the finance ombudsman, and new account is being set up with another bank. The current proposal, driven by chair at the meeting, is Nottinghamshire will receive a bill for 1/4 of back-levies due 2021-2025 (rest written off). Counties present were in general ok with that. A Nottinghamshire motion to designate a congress in Midlands to give a bursary place at British (if a Midlands Championship does not take place) next year and future years, was passed Nem con. The issue was that the meeting might have been one short of quorate (in personnel and number of counties) attending, so hopefully these developments will stand even if requiring another short ratification. John became non-executive Director, and Tim continued with current roles for another year including MCCU ECF delegate to the ECF AGM in October.

Midlands Under-18 and Under-11 are planned for next season, the former needing a host and venue ideally. Nottinghamshire hosted both last year (Notts won the Under-18's. In Under-11's: we were 4th in the Midlands Championship and 2nd in the National Midlands Zonal).

New counties controller Steve Smithson has spoken to former county captains, me, and is now talking to Neil about ways to develop the county adult game. e.g. about a new format to encourage Notts and other counties to enter more teams.”

6. ECF Delegate (Chris Holt)

This year saw a return to some sanity in the ECF; well at least we did not have anyone trying to take their clothes off which I would take as a win.

The fun this year was Malcolm Pein trying to be Freddie Forsyth; crossing swords with the evil Russian empire as he tried to unmask an agent in the form of a close friend of Viktor Orban being elected to a FIDE office as a Russian proxy. This drew in the International Olympic Committee as paymasters for a large number of chess federations, the US State Dept who were determined not to allow Mr Putin any PR victories during the Biden administration, while there was war with Ukraine and the British Foreign Office who saw the US involvement with the ECF and were panicked into activity lest they were left behind. With all this lobbying power ranged against them, and the threat to cut off their money supply from the IOC and unspecified threats from the US, the Hungarian plant was seen off. Malcolm has been advised not to get too close to windows in high buildings for the foreseeable lest the FSB decide to enact some revenge.

While I admire Malcolm's tenacity and drive, I do wonder if he was going slightly more off-piste than council members might like; an enjoyable tale of intrigue and dirty dealing it undoubtedly is.

In more mundane news, we proposed John Swain's amendment to the membership rates idea to moderate the pay to play fee to £10 and encourage more people to play weekend events rather than the £15 to elevate them to Gold membership but quite the surcharge if you only play one event. While we won the argument, the block voting was against us, especially from Mike Truran. With many directors stepping down, we have an opportunity to reshape the direction of the organisation if we can get a slate of replacements which, at the time of this report, looks somewhat doubtful. The 2025 AGM invite has been circulated for any comments or directions, and I will send any papers I receive before the meeting.

I am willing to stand for another year as I combine the same role with Lincolnshire as part of my job as General Secretary.

7. LEAGUE SECRETARY'S REPORT (Andrew Watson)

This season like the season before went quite smoothly with no major issues to speak off mainly thanks to the WhatsApp group which has helped communication between Captains.

Division 1 was won by Lincoln A with a total of 14 points with Grimsby coming in 2nd place with a total of 11 points. Louth was 3rd with 8 points, Appleby Frodingham 4th with 5 points and Lincoln B 5th with 2 points.

Division 2 was a closer fought battle with Lincoln C on 10 points edging ahead of Skegness and Grimsby both on 9 points, Skegness came 2nd however due to the aggregate game score pushing Grimsby into 3rd spot. Appleby Frodingham came 4th with 6 points, Grantham 5th with 4 points, Louth 6th with 3 points and Lincoln D in 7th position with 1 point.

Stand out players in Division 1 were David Coates playing for Lincoln A who won 7 out of 7 games played. Alexandr Klimchik also did well winning 5.5 out of his 7 games. Grimsby also had 2 Notable players-Andrew Dyce won 3.5 out of 4 games and Githma Madukulpa won 4 out of 5 games.

Notable players in Division 2 included Ian McDonald playing for Lincoln C who won 3 out of 3 games and Andrew Lewis at Appleby Frodingham who also won 3 out of 3. Githma Madikulpa from Grimsby also played well in Division 2-winning 3.5 out of 4.

The only minor issues in the leagues this year were results not submitted on standard league match score sheets but instead on hand drawn bits of paper. On a few occasions it was difficult to read these results when combined with hastily written results. Other officials have suggested that the best way around this issue would be to have the captains enter the results themselves into LMS. This would have the effect of removing the need for results to be photographed with a mobile phone and placed onto the WhatsApp group. It would also improve overall familiarity with the LMS system. Apparently in other areas this system has already been implemented with little to no problems despite initial misgivings. If this was adopted by the LCA any issues or questions could be raised and resolved directly on the WhatsApp group. Perhaps this could be considered?

Matters Arising

The Chair proposed that the league adopt Andrew's suggestion and Captains should be encouraged and assisted to enter their results on the LMS. There will be no penalties as it is treated as a pilot for 25/26. This was agreed by majority vote.

8. Social Media Report (Andrew Watson)

The network of Facebook Groups continues to drive forward The Lincolnshire Chess scene both at a County and very local level. It seems that it is a proven way to drive interest in the individual clubs.

Due to time constraints, I have decided to step down as Social Media Officer but as most clubs now have a Facebook group of their own it should be second nature now to use this as a free way to advertise their local club. Perhaps each club could identify one person responsible for using Social Media to drive interest.

The main concept of how to do this is quite simple. Whoever is responsible for the Facebook Group should also join other groups in their local area-what's on and chat groups. Then

periodically share their Group in the larger local groups along with a catchy comment promoting chess and the benefits it can bring as an activity. Over time locals will get to know that a local chess club is present and will share this with other Facebook users or even mention it to them in passing if they are aware that they have an interest in chess or are looking for something to get involved with.

8. OPEN TEAM MATCH CAPTAIN'S REPORT (Nigel Birtwistle)

There was the usual lack of entries in the MCCU Open Competition for the 2024/25 season with only three counties entering a team. The competition controller Stephen Smithson decided that it would be a good idea reduce the number of boards from 16 down to 12 to encourage more participation from the Counties. Lincolnshire were not in favour of this move as I thought that the only way to get more teams involved was to have more people willing to captain teams. And I was proved right as the only county to enter a new team were Staffordshire. The start of the season was delayed allowing Counties more time to enter but no more entries were forthcoming.

The delayed start meant that Lincolnshire didn't play any matches until the new year. Our first match was against Staffordshire at Bramcote in Nottingham on 18th January. The venue was large enough for our U1650 team to play against Staffordshire as well. Despite the reduction from 16 to 12 board teams Staffordshire were unable to field a full team and had to concede four defaults. So, with a four-point head start we were never likely to lose the match and won easily 10.5-1.5. Our second match against Worcestershire took place at Sharnford in Leicestershire on 8th February. Despite not being at full strength we were still good enough to run out convincing winners by an 8-4 margin and retain our MCCU Open title.

The National Quarter Finals of the Minor Counties Championship took place in early May, and our opponents were Cambridgeshire. The match was very hard fought going right down to the final game and the match finished all square at 8-8. However, Cambridgeshire were the winners on board count and eventually went on to win the Minor Counties Championship for the 2024/25 season. This was the second season in a row that Lincolnshire had lost to the eventual competition winners on board count, but it shows that we are still very much able to compete at this level. I am happy to captain the team again next season and hopefully we can have another successful season.

9. U1850 and U1650 Captain's Report (William Orr)

For the 2024-25 season there were a few changes at MCCU headquarters, with Stephen Smithson installed as the new tournament controller (our own Peter Sherlock having retired from the role). He brought with him some new ideas and a few changes in the competition, the main one being to reduce matches to 12 boards. This brought several counties back into the U1650 section, and even Herefordshire, a side I had never played before, were at one point close to raising a team. In the U1850 section, Lincolnshire were the only entrant.

The first opponent for the U1650 side was Derbyshire, a match that had to be cancelled at short notice, with Derbyshire withdrawing their team from the competition. It was therefore November 30th before we had a chance to play and kicked our season off with a 6.5-5.5 win over Warwickshire. Next was Staffordshire, with a 6-6 draw but with a tie-break on board count for Lincolnshire if the two sides were still on the same points at the end of the season.

The match was played at Bramcote alongside the senior team's match, and with the arrangements made by Nigel, to whom many thanks. The final match was against Worcestershire with a defeat by 6.5-5.5, but the team had done enough to secure a nomination to the national stages.

Meanwhile Derbyshire had belatedly re-organised themselves into an U1850 team, and we agreed a match over 16 boards, with Lincolnshire winning by 12.5-3.5 thanks to many excellent performances. Sadly, I must report that the captain missed his opportunity in the endgame and had to settle for a draw. Thanks to Herman Kok and the Lindum Group for the use of their training centre for the match.

Both U1850 and U1650 teams progressed to the national stages, where teams of 16 were required. First to play were the U1850 side with a quarter-final match against Suffolk, a repeat of last year's fixture. The match was played at Peterborough Bridge Club, while the senior team played at Larch Grove community hall a short distance away. Thanks to Francis Bowers for his help arranging the venues. I had made myself non-playing reserve, reasoning that with two teams in action we should have someone spare but had to play when Keith Palmer was hospitalised a day or two before the match. Unfortunately, we were unable to repeat last year's result and Suffolk won by 10-6.

The following weekend the U1650 team played Surrey at Cogenhoe (I'm informed that this is pronounced "Cock No") and Whiston village hall near Northampton. With both a cricket match and a barbecue in progress alongside the chess match, all tastes were catered for, though concentration was occasionally disturbed by grumbling batsmen returning to the pavilion. The match was played over 16 boards, with several players making their county debut for Lincolnshire but Surrey proved too strong, winning by 10-6 and they would go on to win the U1650 title outright.

There are always a few individual performances worth mentioning. In the U1650 team, Freddie Neal was our best player with 3 wins from his 3 games, and Alan Nelder deserves a special mention for playing regularly while struggling with illness. The U1850 team only played two matches so it's harder to single out any performances, but several players ended with 1.5 from 2 games.

As usual I'm indebted to everyone for their support, and once again I was able to rely on Craig Robinson to get the Spalding players involved and on John Pocock who did the same at Grantham. To them and everyone else, thank you very much.

10. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2025 – 2026 SEASON

President:	Nigel Birtwistle
General Secretary:	Chris Holt
League Secretary:	Andrew Watson
Honorary Treasurer:	Peter Sherlock
Open Team Match Captain:	Nigel Birtwistle
U1650 and U1850 Captain:	William Orr
Social Media Officer:	Andrew Watson
ECF Delegate:	Chris Holt

MCCU Delegates:

Peter Sherlock (MCCU1), Ben Mason (MCCU2)

Webmaster:

David Coates

Life Members:

Robert Dale, Keith Palmer, *Denis Georgiou and Peter Sherlock*

The officers were elected en-bloc, proposed by Nick Stead and seconded by Ben Mason.

The Chair proposed, and was seconded by Chris Holt, that Denis and Peter be awarded life memberships for their longstanding service to the association in many posts.

11. PROGRAMME FOR 2025 – 2026

A. League for 2025/26

There is a new Bourne team and Barton have also been invited which makes 9 in total.

That would make it logical to have 4 in each division and Skegness could be in either north or south.

Moving back to this structure would relieve the pressure on Lincoln as the halfway venue as they would like one match per night. Adding Bourne into the league and having Lincoln host would add to the strain.

The Chair proposed going back to the north and south structure, seconded by Chris Holt this was agreed.

B. County Teams

As last year, there will be a minor counties team, U1650 and U1850.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The county championships will take place on the 11th and 12th of July 2026.

The meeting noted the long service of Fred Jones reaching the 40th year of being chair of Grantham chess club.

The next AGM will take place probably in the 2nd or 3rd week of September 2026, subject to forthcoming dates of the Hull congress, (this should also be the scheduled fixture meeting). Venue to be agreed.

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 1.46 pm and the fixture meeting commenced.

Chris Holt

Secretary

LINCOLNSHIRE CHESS ASSOCIATION**ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

2023/24 INCOME	2024/25	2023/24 EXPENDITURE	2024/25
Subscriptions		Levies	
30.00 Grantham	30.00	- Game Fees	-
70.00 Grimsby	70.00	- MCCU Levy	-
100.00 Lincoln	100.00	0.00 Total	0.00
- Louth	70.00		
70.00 Appleby Frodingham	70.00	Expenses	
30.00 Skegness	30.00	- Minor	-
- Spalding	-	- All teams	-
300.00 Total	370.00	324.99 Total	311.75
Game Fees			
- Barton	-	- Bank Charges	-
- Boston	-	- ECF Yearbook	-
- Grimsby	-	- AGM Venue	45.00
- Lincoln	-	- Donations	-
- Louth	-	- Correspondence Team	-
- Scunthorpe	-	- Web-site	51.68
- Skegness	-		
- Spalding	-	County Championship	
- Minor	-	345.00 Prizes	345.00
0.00 Total	0.00	20.00 Expenses	20.00
		365.00 Total	365.00
50.00 Compensation	0.00		
County Championship		Trophies	
521.00 Entry fees/donations	728.99	100.00 Trophies	-
Sponsorship	-	- Extra Minor trophies	-
		100.00 Total	-
521.00 Total	728.99		
0.00 Interest	0.00	Officers	
		- P.Sherlock (Treas)	-
		- Total	-
871.00 General Fund	1100.99	789.99 General Fund	773.43
- Special Fund	-	- Special Fund	-
871.00 Total	1100.99	789.99 Total	773.43

LINCOLNSHIRE CHESS ASSOCIATION

BALANCE SHEET as at 31 AUGUST 2025

	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2024/25</u>
Balance B/F	2255.60	2336.61
General Fund – Income	871.00	1100.99
- Expenditure	789.99	773.43
Profit/(Loss) for year	81.01	325.56
Balance C/F	2336.01	2662.17
Balance made up of		
Current Balance at Bank		
Current Account	2343.27	2662.17
Deposit Account	0.00	0.00
Total	2343.27	2662.17
Less Debtors	6.66	0.00
Plus Creditors	-	-
Total	2336.61	2662.17

P.G.Sherlock
Hon Treasurer

13 September 2025